

Lessons King Lear Learn from His Sufferings

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Abstract

In his madness and suffering, Lear learns how fragile and temporary his former power was, and in the play's falling action this insight allows him to be reconciled with Cordelia. He no longer demands that his daughter treat him like a king. He is happy to be treated as a “foolish, fond old man” (IV.act-). King Lear drowned himself in the blindness of love towards his daughters, whom he might thought of the importance of selfless love towards him. Lear's eldest two daughters (Goneril and Reagan) were only greedy to his kingdom wealth and property.

He faced many obstacles and his end was disasterous due to daughter's hatred towards the father. Lear realizes his mistakes as a king and as a father, and his brief reunion with Cordelia offers a partial redemption. Yet the pain of Cordelia's undeserved death sends him back into madness and suffering, and he literally dies of a broken heart.

1. Introduction

King Lear is a best tragedy of Shakespeare's writing and a masterpiece which shows the reality in the world which is an ongoing trend in today's era too. At the start of the play, Lear is a king and a father. He has land and position which give him economic and political power. Significantly he also has natural personal qualities: an authority which makes Kent loyal and respectful, and a warmth that inspires love in Cordelia and the fool. His personal attributes suggest that there is something of greatness and humanity in him. However, his foolish abdication and division of his land show how fragile his greatness is. Lear thinks he can give away his property and still retain authority and command affection. However, without his title and his land, he is nothing. Kent tries to make this clear when he tells Lear to 'reserve thy state' but Lear is full of pride and arrogance and, like Gloucester, he does not see how this world goes though he has eyes. As a result his tragic fall is inevitable and he suffers a catastrophic reversal of fortune. His suffering when he understands the true natures of his daughters, his subsequent descent into madness, seen in his wanderings during the 'tyranny of the open night' and his ultimate death, are hall marks of a tragic hero. He is also a tragic hero in his recognition of his errors and his learning that the world of man is only little. On the heath, when his mind is laid bare, he understands that kings, without their titles, are just ordinary men, and that rich men, stripped of their clothes, are no more than the unaccommodated naked wretches represented by Poor Tom. He learns too that as a king he took too little care of the poor of his kingdom and that a barking dog might be the true image of authority. His being bound upon the wheel of fire also helps him to understand the true value of love, that love cannot be measured and that Cordelia's 'nothing' meant everything.

2. The Pelican Daughters

King Lear's daughters (Goneril and Regan) are the villains, the pelican daughters, whose betrayal causes Lear's suffering, madness and ultimately his death. When he sees their duplicity, he calls them

'unnatural hags', and certainly their behaviour and vicious language do little to suggest they are otherwise: they flaunt the Old Testament edict to honour their father, Regan participates in and enjoys the blinding of Gloucester and Goneril's lust for Edmund and jealousy of her sister leads her to plot against the lives of Regan and her own husband. Such behaviour is of course sickening and marks them both as consummate villains. In this respect they are representations of life at its lowest. Albany suggests that if the gods do not intervene to curb their vile offences then humanity will inevitably prey on itself 'like monsters of the deep'. However, it is also possible to see Goneril and Regan as victims of a sort. Their father's violent temper and irrationality is something they say they have long known and long had to live with; they have also had to endure his obvious favouring of Cordelia. Some modern feminist critics reexamine their roles as villains and recast them as victims.

3. Sufferings of King Lear

Lear goes through extreme pain and suffering, through the loss of his power, status, money, and his most loyal daughter. Lear is "a man more sinned against than sinning", yet the play still ends in the tragedy of his death.

Lear suffered a lot with that one mistake in his life of announcement in his court and in return he wanted a peaceful death which was too not affordable for him according to his daughters. He became insane just after he saw the death of Cordelia in front of his eyes.

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4. Goneril and Regan as villains or victims?

Some feminist have done their researches that they both had done this planning as they were the victims of father's irrationality.

Their father's violent temper and irrationality is something they say they have long known and long had to live with, might be possibilities are there that they have done this from thier sufferings too, and in all these circumstances Cordelia was murdered as she didn't stood by her sister's throughout the plot against father.

5. Research Methods

The method of this research was a survey, list of questions aimed for extracting specific data from a particular group of people. Surveys may be conducted by phone, mail, via the internet, and also at street corners or in malls. Surveys are used to gather or gain knowledge in fields such as social research and demography. The method used to collect data in this research was the library.

6. Conclusions

In this paper the researcher has highlighted some of the key illustrations from the novel and discussed thoroughly about the happenings. Thus cocnclusions are many , possibilities could be anything but the end was tragic and it made an impact on people's lives that they should be more aware with their relations. Society should be prepared through ups and downs they may face if any. This novel has completely created an impact that since early times the plottings were planned against family, now onwards the things are on same platform even in advanced manner. Hence, one should be careful enough

in his own life.

Through all the suffering, there is still hope in the world. Shakespeare introduces a society in his play King Lear in which no one can emerge victorious. The fact that tragedy makes no distinction between good and evil is evinced at the end of the play as although King Lear's daughters are continuously contrasted, they are all lead to their deaths in the end. Suffering is a recurring concept in the play, symbolized by graphic violence to illustrate physical suffering and the declining mental condition of the protagonists. However, despite all these dramatic and cruel events, hope is still subtly present in the world of the play as it is portrayed through the development of characters.

7. References

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