

Power Vs Happiness

Claudius what are your motives for killing the king, marrying his wife and taking on the role of father to his young son?

Claudius is introduced in act I, ii. In this scene he has an important speech. In this speech he talks about the death of the king, his marriage to the queen and the foreign problems of the state. He utilizes many transitions and tends to emphasize the foreign affairs of the state. I don't know what to make of this, it could mean various things. It could mean that Claudius is making a grab for power shown in his concentration on the foreign policies trying to distract from his lust for power, along with his marriage to the queen giving the change in leadership a smoother and more acceptable feel. He also down plays the death of the former king so that he can redirect the people's attention to his plans and the problems of the state. But I could mean something else I'm not sure. Later on in this scene Claudius talks to Hamlet, Hamlet is very depressed, Claudius gives Hamlet some comforting and fatherly advice here trying to get him out of his deep depression. But what is his true motivation here is he trying to get Hamlet as a backer for his new reign, so he is just lying and manipulating Hamlet, or does he have true and deep feelings for Hamlet and is just trying to help Hamlet and has no self-interest in it. I feel right now that it's a bit of both I think he cares about Hamlet but would also like him to support his rise to power.

Next we come to act II, ii, Hamlet has made many strange comments and actions lately, many people think he is going, or has gone insane. Claudius finds two of Hamlet's good friends to spy on him and try to find out what's wrong with him. At this point we know that Hamlet knows that Claudius killed his father but we don't know whether Claudius knows that Hamlet knows or even if he suspects, this casts a strange light on this scene. First if Claudius suspects Hamlet knows that he killed his father then we might assume that Claudius is sending these spies to find out for sure if he knows, but if he does not suspect Hamlet then this might be another show of Claudius's affection towards Hamlet. So the same question keeps coming up does Claudius love Hamlet or is he just using him? At this point it's too hard to tell so we must delve deeper into the story and there is still the matter of the queen. Claudius is married to the queen but does he love her, and was there an affair before their marriage? In this scene there is an interesting couple

of lines that the queen says, "I doubt it is no other but the main His father's death and our o'erhasty marriage." in reference to the possible causes of Hamlet's strange attitude recently, but what caught my eye was that she admits that their marriage was over hasty, something in which Hamlet accused her of very early on, this gives me reason to believe that she was having an affair with Claudius before the death of the king, or at least that she was overly accepting of his advances. But this raises a different question, did she know of the killing maybe even help plan it? I don't know yet but I would like to think that she is a good wife and didn't help with the killing of her husband, but ...

After a couple more unsuccessful tries to figure out what Hamlet is thinking, also fairly unlighting, Claudius is caught in a clever trap set by Hamlet to prove to Hamlet that Claudius killed his father. This is bad news for Claudius but is good for my quest for knowledge. We see in this scene Claudius reacts very deeply when he is reminded of the deed that he committed, which is shown by the line "Give me some light. Away!" right in the middle of a play. Then admittedly he goes to the church to repent his sins and ask for forgiveness for his crimes with the passage "Thanks, dear my lord. Be soft as sinews of the newborn babe. All may be well." this brings a whole new light on to the question, it gives significance evidence that he is deeply remorseful about his crimes. At this point I think that he is not after power solely but maybe he was jealous of his brother's great success and let his emotions get out of control and in this fit he fulfill his fantasy to be his brother. It goes well with his desire to be a father to Hamlet, a husband to the queen, and the king. The queen must also be finding comfort in Claudius taking over, it probably help her cope with the pain of losing her husband

Now the table turns Claudius has wanted to love and be the father of Hamlet, but he sees that that is no longer possible with Hamlet's need for revenge Claudius must kill him so that he may continue to live at least part of his dream. In act IV, vii Claudius plots with Laertes to kill Hamlet. At this point it is as if Claudius has accepted what he must do and no longer shows any love or sympathy towards Hamlet and instead plan his treacherous death.

Last scene is also a very revealing scene two lines in particular "Gertrude, do not drink.", "[aside] it is poisoned cup; it is too late.". These reveal to me much about his character, they show that he was truly in love, or at least desired to be with, her. and by saying do not drink out loud

he was almost admitting his guilt to trying to kill Hamlet all to save the queen,
this is powerful and
says to me that he did have a heart and I would figure that he just lost control of
himself in the
pursuit of his dream which was to be all that his brother had been.