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Candidate session number

Candidate name

School number

School name

Examination session (May or November)

May

Year

2013

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered: English Literature.

(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)

Title of the extended essay: How do the writers present the nature of the relationships between powerful and submissive characters in 'The Glass Menagerie' and 'Rebecca'?

Candidate's declaration

This declaration must be signed by the candidate; otherwise a grade may not be issued.

The extended essay I am submitting is my own work (apart from guidance allowed by the International Baccalaureate).

I have acknowledged each use of the words, graphics or ideas of another person, whether written, oral or visual.

I am aware that the word limit for all extended essays is 4000 words and that examiners are not required to read beyond this limit.

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Please comment, as appropriate, on the candidate's performance, the context in which the candidate undertook the research for the extended essay, any difficulties encountered and how these were overcome (see page 13 of the extended essay guide). The concluding interview (viva voce) may provide useful information. These comments can help the examiner award a level for criterion K (holistic judgment). Do not comment on any adverse personal circumstances that may have affected the candidate. If the amount of time spent with the candidate was zero, you must explain this, in particular how it was then possible to authenticate the essay as the candidate's own work. You may attach an additional sheet if there is insufficient space here.

did not prove to be a student for whom the decision to write an Extended Essay on English literature might have been considered a natural choice. However, after discussion she selected a focus that allowed her to explore characterisation in both texts and make comparisons and contrasts between them.

came to the first interview with ideas about the texts that she was interested in and which would be appropriate for her to use. Whilst 'Rebecca' and 'The Glass Menagerie' may not be associated very readily, in fact her chosen topic did allow some extensive comparison. The scope of the Essay is safe rather than ambitious although ; does demonstrate that she understands genre, plot development and reader response as well as, of course, characterisation.

also demonstrates familiarity with the texts themselves and that which is significant and relevant to the Essay title. She also decided to identify three themes that could be seen to be relevant to both texts as a framework with which to continue the discussion. Whilst this process might have been more logically stated at the start of the Essay, in fact it does come to represent a useful organising device for the latter part of the Essay.

This declaration must be signed by the supervisor; otherwise a grade may not be issued.

I have read the final version of the extended essay that will be submitted to the examiner.

To the best of my knowledge, the extended essay is the authentic work of the candidate.

I spent hours with the candidate discussing the progress of the extended essay.

Supervisor's signature:

Date:

Assessment form (for examiner use only)

Achievement level

Criteria

	Examiner 1	maximum	Examiner 2	maximum	Examiner 3
A research question		2	<input type="text" value="2"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
B introduction		2	<input type="text" value="1"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
C investigation		4	<input type="text" value="3"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
D knowledge and understanding		4	<input type="text" value="3"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
E reasoned argument		4	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
F analysis and evaluation		4	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
G use of subject language		4	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
H conclusion		2	<input type="text" value="0"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
I formal presentation		4	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
J abstract		2	<input type="text" value="1"/>	2	<input type="text"/>
K holistic judgment		4	<input type="text" value="2"/>	4	<input type="text"/>
			<input type="text" value="20"/>		<input type="text"/>
		Total out of 36			

Extended Essay.

*How do the **writers** present the nature of the relationships between powerful and submissive characters in 'The Glass Menagerie' and 'Rebecca'?*

Name:

Candidate Number:

Subject: English Literature

Supervisor:

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Abstract

The research question of this Extended Essay is to investigate “How do the writers present the nature of the relationships between powerful and submissive characters in ‘The Glass Menagerie’ and ‘Rebecca?’” The investigation was carried out by a close re-reading of both texts and considering how the writers use a wide range of techniques such as dialogue, developing themes, and describing or presenting characters’ behavior to present the nature of the relationships between the powerful and submissive characters in ‘The Glass Menagerie’ and ‘Rebecca’. As these texts are my favorite books that are widely regarded as being important and well written they seemed to be very suitable for this study. The question was a challenging prospect that caused a lot of problems at first but what sparked this research question is my interest in character analysis, especially negatively dominant ones like Mrs. Danvers and Amanda. The essay will start off with the introduction of the texts as well as what the argument is going to be. It will then lead to the essay itself and end with a conclusion, which will then restate the argument. The sources used for this essay will include the two texts and some outside historical reading related to the texts along with some study guides. In conclusion, the answer to the research question throughout this essay is that the writers use a wide range of techniques such as dialogue, themes, and characters’ behaviors to present the nature of the relationships between the powerful and submissive characters in ‘The Glass Menagerie’ and ‘Rebecca’. The clarity of the text also shows that authors takes care to develop complex characters like Rebecca and Amanda in both texts who are in difficult and very unusual circumstances which allows their personalities

to show through, making them emerge as a powerful or submissive characters. Although the nature of relationships changes, later on the text, the writers develop the characters smoothly in phase with the character's changing relationship and circumstances.

Introduction

This essay seeks to find the answer to “How do the writers present the nature of the relationships between powerful and submissive characters in ‘The Glass Menagerie’ and ‘Rebecca?’” The intention of this question is to focus on the way the writers are able to present and develop characters in texts in ways that give the readers a good insight into the character’s development in two very different genres. Like many story plots, there is always a hero and a villain. This in particular, is interesting as the idea of powerful and submissive characters in plots began to be appealing. In this essay, I try to explore the nature of relationships between those who are powerful and those who are submissive. Most literature’s story plots rely on character development to make them interesting for readers to see the characters as believable. Without the development of the character, the whole text would be a bland. As Gustave Flaubert once said, “You forget everything... you enter into characters, so that it seems as if it were your own heart beating beneath their costumes.”⁴ This indicates upon the significance of characters in a text. Hence, it is worth considering and comparing the ways in which the writers present the characters to make the particular piece of literature successful, interesting and effective to the audience or reader – according to the genre.

Essay

The dialogue in the opening scenes of *Rebecca* illustrates the characters' personalities and the extent to which they may be seen as powerful or submissive; when Mrs. De Winter angrily storms into the room disregarding the fears she had for Mrs. Danvers in the past. To begin with, Mrs. De Winter is seen as being powerful although this changes over time. The author uses dialogue to surprise the readers about the authority over the mistress, which Mrs. Danvers possesses. This shows when Mrs. Danvers speaks down to the protagonist like a child "you said you made him happy on his honeymoon...made him happy-you, a young ignorant girl, young enough to be his daughter." (Maurier 256). By emphasizing the age of Mrs. De Winter, Mrs. Danvers presents the mistress as a very submissive character. She further elaborates on how the mistress is not fit for the role of the current Mrs. De Winter by comparing her to the deceased Mrs. De Winter. Using her identity as a housekeeper along with her history in the house as an advantage she uses the knowledge she has about Rebecca to compare her to the new Mrs. De Winter, "You'll never get the better of her. She's still the mistress here even though she's dead. She's the real Mrs. De Winter, not you. It's you that's the shadow and the ghost." (Maurier 257). Her dominant traits outweigh the submissive protagonist.

Mrs. Danvers is able to see that the mistress is vulnerable and therefore uses it to her advantage and tries to encourage her to commit suicide by jumping out of

the window, "Look down there...It's easy, isn't it? Why don't you jump?" (Maurier 257). Acknowledging this power that Mrs. Danvers have, she is affected by what Mrs. Danvers says and later repeats that orders by that her death " would not be slow, like drowning. It would soon be over. And Maxim did not love me. Maxim wanted to be alone again, with Rebecca" (Maurier 258).

The submissive protagonist is gullible and condemns herself by believing Mrs. Danvers. This shows in her thoughts especially when she "was beginning to forget about being unhappy, about loving Maxim. ... Soon I would not have to think about Rebecca any more..." (Maurier 258). The fact that the mistress can not even prevent herself from being affected the words of Mrs. Danvers' shows how the author uses Mrs. Danvers' dialogue to demonstrate the power in her character and the control she has over the mistress even though she is the housekeeper herself.

In 'The Glass Menagerie', the pivotal scene takes place on the day Tom, the only son and the financial provider in the family, goes out to watch a movie like any other day. However, what makes this scene so significant is that Amanda catches her son going out. When she forbids his action, he reacts in an extreme way. The scene begins when Amanda forbids Tom from reading a book he borrowed from the library. This infuriates Tom and he expresses his anger, "Look! - I've got no *thing*, no single thing- in my life here I can call my *own*!" (Williams 16). Though there's an attempt of asserting power in this scene, he may be considered a submissive character as the mother continues ignoring him and claims that, "I took

that horrible novel back tot the library...The hideous book by that insane Mr. Lawrence. I cannot control the output of diseased mind people who cater for them- *I wont allow such filth brought into my house!* No,no,no,no,no!"(Williams 16).

Even though Tom "makes a slave of himself "(Williams 16) working for the family, he receives no respect at all as the mother calls it "*my house!*" (Williams 16). Her role and Tom's role in the home is obvious enough as the mother did not even show any interest on her son's opinions and views. His interests are a threat which jeopardize the job and "Jeopardize the security"(Williams 17) which they currently have thanks to Tom's job.

Powerful and submissive characters show here as the author uses this scene to suggests to the audience that; even though it is Tom who earns the money and could be seen as the head of the household, he is being held back by his mother. The playwright further suggests this in the first scene where it is less significant. Even when they are not in arguments, the mother constantly pressures Tom to do what she wants him to do. When eating at the dinner table, Amanda uses her authority to demand her son to not "*push with your fingers.*" (Williams 4) when eating food. Again, treating him like a child without respect even though he could be seen as the head of the family. And even though he expresses his displeasure with his mother's attitude, "I haven't enjoyed one bite of this dinner because of your constant directions on how to eat it. It's you that makes me rush through meals with your hawk-like attention to every bite

I take." (Williams 4), Amanda ignores him disregarding his opinions when she goes on to say, "You smoke too much." (Williams 4).

This already gives the audience an impression that Tom has no significance in the family and is submissive in the relationship between him and his mother. The way the mother speaks to the son and daughter makes it obvious that she is indeed the powerful character in the family as the author features the mother dominance in the household for the rest of the play.

On the other hand, every scene between the mother and Laura presents Laura as the submissive character. Her shy, withdrawn, and frail character traits emphasize the way in which Amanda seeks to control her and live the life she never had through her daughter.

This is first suggested in Scene One when Amanda expects her daughter to have as many gentlemen callers as she had, but when she learns that Laura is "not expecting any gentlemen-callers." (Williams 5) she gets annoyed and tells her daughter about the callers she had when she was young. Laura, unlike Tom who groans when she starts talking about this part of her life and wants to avoid hearing the story again, is submissive and makes it clear that she did not mind hearing it all over again as she replies, "Yes. But let her tell it" - "She loves to tell it." (Williams 5), showing that she did not mind even though, by re-telling the story, Amanda is indirectly criticizing that Laura did not yet have a gentlemen caller. By

presenting Laura's mild-mannered character through such dialogue the playwright indicates that Laura is the submissive character in the relationship between her and her mother.

Three themes could be identified through which the texts demonstrate the relationships between powerful and submissive characters. The three themes the texts have in common are: the difficulty of accepting reality, the impossibility of true escape, and the unrelenting power of memory.

Du Maurier is able to present 'the difficulty accepting reality' in 'Rebecca' as the new Mrs. De Winter enters the house. She comes in as the new mistress and should have the authority to manage the house as she pleases. However, when she first comes to live at Manderley, she not only cannot accept the fact that she is the new Mrs. De Winter; she also neglects her duties by handing over everything to Mrs. Danvers. When Mrs. Danvers asks what she wants to change in the house on the phone, the narrator answers that "I am afraid you have made a mistake... Mrs. de Winter has been dead for over a year." (Maurier 91), with that said she symbolically puts Rebecca in power even though she's the person who now has the authority as Mr. De Winter's wife. The author uses this theme to help emphasize that the protagonist cannot accept the reality that she is in power. This presents the relationship between Rebecca and the current De Winter as a relationship in which there is a powerful and a submissive character. The author also succeeds in presenting the narrator a more submissive character by presenting Rebecca's authority over her. After making the mistake of denying

her identity as Mrs. De Winter, she immediately gets embarrassed and talks to the housekeeper as if ashamed of herself. Even though she is the mistress, she lacks confidence like a child and begins apologizing, " 'I'm sorry, Mrs. Danvers,' I said, stammering, my words tumbling over one another; " (Maurier 91). Instead of having a more commanding voice of a mistress to a housekeeper, she stammers like a child when she realizes she made a mistake.

Another theme could be identified as: 'The impossibility of true escape'. This theme allows the author to demonstrate the nature of the relationships between the powerful and submissive characters in the text. In showing Rebecca's continuing influence in the relationship between Maxim and the narrator, the author focuses on the inability of Max to escape a murder he committed. After the discovery of Max's crime of murder, the author makes it obvious that Max feels that he has lost to Rebecca by stating " 'Rebecca has won,' " (Maurier 278). This ultimately shows her power as she is dead but still manages to force Maxim into a position where he has to defend himself on a charge of murder. The author uses this guilt that Max feels to show that he is actually compassionate and is a submissive character as well. He describes how " 'Something happened nearly a year ago that altered my whole life. I had to begin living all over again..' " (Maurier 282). This implies that he did not want to commit murder and still feels guilty about it. The readers see his vulnerability and insecure side as he confesses to his murders. Rebecca is presented as being powerful here as she makes Max nearly go " 'mad...Sitting down the desk there, answering those terrible letters of sympathy.' " (Maurier 282). This helps the author illustrate her

character as being powerful enough to drive a person mad even in her death. Max's difficulty of " 'Eating and drinking, trying to be normal, trying to be sane.' " (Maurier 282), suggests how much he is under the influence of Rebecca that he was not even able to lead an normal life when " 'knowing every word I uttered was a lie.' " (Maurier 283). The emphasis on Max's guilt brings out a side of him that the readers cannot imagine. It shows another darker side as lives under the burden of the guilt that he carries.

The authors also explore the theme of the unrelenting power of memory in both texts. The new Mrs. De Winter lives in the shadows of Rebecca. As a newcomer to Manderley, Mrs. De Winter is expected to match Maxim's former wife, Rebecca. The author uses this to make her character seem inferior in comparison to Rebecca. The memory of Rebecca continues to live on in the lives of not only the narrator but also everyone who knew Rebecca. As she meets friends of the De Winter, there is a lot of comparison between the first and second wife. And always, the first wife seems to be more approved of than the second. It's especially upsetting for the protagonist when she feels like she can't measure up to Max's first wife. However, it is not as if she can fight with the dead, so Rebecca is like a powerful figure and that no one can defeat. For example, when meeting with the friends, neighbors and people who have connections with the De Winters, people tend to compare her with comments such as, " 'My dear, what a dull girl.' " (Maurier 129) and that " 'She's so different from Rebecca.' " (Maurier 129) even questioning the protagonist and pressuring her by asking, " ' Will you be entertaining much at Manderley, Mrs. De Winter?' " (Maurier 129). Such questions will ultimately make the protagonist feel guilty if she feels like she

cannot provide what a Mrs. De Winter is expected to provide. Rebecca's legacy lives on especially when Mrs. De Winter feels that she cannot could not give what the people wanted from her causing them to say things like, "There used to be tremendous parties.' " (Maurier 129) in order to make her feel inferior.

In 'The Glass Menagerie', the playwright uses another theme to explore submissive and powerful characters and the way that they have difficulty accepting reality. The Wingfield family is poor. Amanda, who lives in the past, is constantly comparing her old life to the current one. She is obviously not satisfied and cannot come to terms in accepting the fact that she's not as well-off as she used to be. She enforces her needs and desires upon her children. This can be seen as demonstrating that she cannot accept reality when she makes her children miserable by enforcing her ideas on them. She wants Tom to have more ambition and continue working in an occupation that he clearly has no interest in.

Laura, on the other hand, is forced to either pick a typing career path or marry a man who can also help provide for the family. Each member of the family has different ways to escape reality. Tom turns to his movies, scripts, and literature; whereas Laura devotes herself to her old records and the glass menagerie collection she keeps.

Amanda can be seen as a powerful character as she pressures Laura to marry even though she is crippled. By not accepting the fact that her daughter is crippled, she is showing a powerful side in her need to be in control. The

playwright further shows Laura as disregarded by having her ignored by her mother when she states that, “ ‘I’m-crippled!’ ”(Williams 13). Ignoring the statement, the mother continues to probe the idea of marriage and leaves Laura no choice when she replies “ ‘Why, you’re not crippled, you just have a little defect-hardly noticeable, even!’ ”(Williams 13).

By using the theme that the mother cannot accept the reality that her daughter is crippled, the playwright has, in a way, shown the audience that Amanda is in a way defying nature by denying her daughter’s condition and pressuring her to marriage. Amanda can’t accept the reality that she’ll be poor forever and that her daughter will not marry a man who will help them financially so she takes action herself instead of accepting the reality that her daughter can’t find a gentlemen caller. She clings on to fantasy that one gentleman will come.

The author portrays her actions when Tom recalls that “Late that winter and in the early spring-realizing that extra money would be needed to properly feather the nest and plume the bird-she conducted a vigorous campaign on the telephone.” (Williams 14). Using such time and effort to get her daughter to marriage even though it requires the extra money she can hardly afford suggests that she is someone who cannot give up the fantasy and come to terms with reality. This further shows when Amanda expects a gentlemen caller in scene one but she finds “not one gentlemen-caller? It can’t be true!” (Williams 7). She finds it hard to believe that there are no gentlemen callers even when Laura claims “I’m just not popular like you in blue mountain...” (Williams 7), and simply just rejects the reality of the situation.

In "The Glass Menagerie", the author uses the abandonment by the father to show that the Wingfield characters are submissive under the influence of the powerful but absent father. Even though he is absent, the thought of the father haunts their daily lives. He is powerful character because he has such a influence on the family. This is seen when Tom states that, "There is a fifth character in the play who doesn't appear except in this larger-than-life-size photograph" (Williams 3).

Another way in which the author presents the father as a powerful character is by presenting Amanda, the one whom married the father, regretting why she chose the wrong man in the first place. This is suggested when she mentions to her children that of all the gentlemen callers she picked their father " But- I picked your *father!*" (Williams 6). By mentioning this to her children she hints at her regrets and frustrations.

However, Amanda is not the only one affected by the actions of the father. The memory of him abandoning the family still lives on in the children's minds as Tom is shown to be submissive in respect to his mother when he said "if self is what I thought of, Mother, I'd be where he is-*Gone!* (Pointing to father's picture) (Williams 18). This suggests that he is trying to change and not leave like his father did in the past. The memories of his father leaving seem to have an impact on him as he states he will not act like his father. His fear of doing so presents him as a submissive character who is under the control of the mother and the absent father. Even though he answers his mother back and may seem powerful,

when threatened he is nonetheless, a submissive character under the influence of the parents. The other child, Laura too is influenced and dominated under her father's shadow. Amanda expects her to be charming like her father since she states that, "One thing your father had *plenty* of-was *charm!*" (Williams 13). This kind of expectation is a kind of pressure on Laura as she is clearly not as confident and charming as her father, making her feel like a lesser being as she feels inferior for not being able to measure up to her father.

To further emphasize the relationship between the powerful and submissive characters, both writers use the way in which particular characters act like children to present the nature of powerful and submissive characters. In Rebecca, there are several characters who treat the protagonist like a little child. The new Mrs. De Winter acts like a child towards others presenting her as the submissive one in the relationship with other characters. Between Mrs. Danvers and the servants and Mrs. De Winter, there are powerful and submissive relationships. For instance, when Mrs. De Winter breaks an expensive ornament, instead of informing the maids and butlers, she is scared of them and hides the ornament like a little child would when she breaks something. She did not admit that she broke the ornament because she "was afraid he would think me a fool" (Maurier 148). When she confessed her deed she found that the maids and butlers "all looked at me. It was like being a child again. I was still aware of my guilty flush." (Maurier 149). Even she acknowledges the fact that she acts like a child. This makes her submissive, as it seems that the maids and butlers have more power over her, the mistress of the house. Mrs. De Winter especially shows her childish side when she describes her reactions towards Mrs. Danvers. In

some ways, Mrs. Danvers plays a mother-like role since Mrs. De Winter “dreaded even the sound of her voice down the house telephone” (Maurier 206). Another moment which shows that Mrs. De Winter acts like a child is when she states her admiration when Mrs. Danvers “came towards me, and I held out my hand, envying her for her dignity and her composure;” (Maurier 72). By pointing out and noticing Mrs. Danvers posture and confidence Mrs. De Winter subconsciously makes her own role in the house less significant.

Further child treatment is hinted at the two lovers, Mrs. De Winter and Maxim. The author uses their relationship to demonstrate a sort of child-parent relationship instead of a man woman relationship to demonstrate the characters' powerful and submissive natures. Here, it shows Maxim as a powerful character and a very father-like figure, whereas it shows Mrs. De Winter as a very child-like and submissive character. For instance, when Mrs. De Winter is mad at Maxim for not coming with her, she expects an apology or a good reason as to why Maxim wouldn't come with her. Maxim's response however, is not of a husband but more father-like “My good child, what am I supposed to excuse myself about?” (Maurier 122). When he says “my good child”, it's like a nickname and very child-like as it seems as if he's speaking to a child, which goes to show that between the two Maxim is the one in power while Mrs. De Winter is the one who's submissive and treated like a child. Even the protagonist herself thinks that she's “too young for Maxim” (Maurier 243). By admitting this she sees the relationship herself as a father and child relationship more than lovers. This indicates that she feels the relationship is not working out, as it is a relationship between the powerful and submissive rather than a relationship of equals.

In 'The Glass Menagerie', the Mother is still treating Tom like a child though he is an adult. The playwright suggests a submissive and powerful relationship throughout the play, as Tom is consistently nagged by the Mother who treats him like a child. When Amanda is mad at Tom, he reveals a submissive side as he stammers an apology. Instead of saying it in a firm voice, he stammers, 'I- I apologize. Mother.' " (Williams 23). Usually a grown man can apologize with confidence, however, Tom couldn't gather up the confidence to even give a simple apology because he's scared of Amanda like a child. This suggests the power and authority Amanda has in this relationship over Tom. Amanda further treats her son like a child by giving instructions like, " 'You're not excused from the table.' " (Williams 4) during dinner. The author uses the Mother's demands in the dinner table to suggest to the audience that Amanda is powerful that even Tom needs her permission to be excused from the table.

Conclusion

Both writers are able to present submissive and powerful nature of characters in both texts using character's behavior, dialogue, and themes. Including very powerful and very submissive characters in extraordinary circumstances described in the texts allowed writers to develop the plots and make the texts more powerful. Writers present the nature of the relationships between powerful and submissive characters by illustrating the characters reactions and responses to the situations they find themselves with other characters.

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