Death of salesman

Initial post

In Arthur Miller's play "Death of the Salesman" the author has attempted to portray humanity as a tragic hero. I see Willy Loman as a tragic hero because he is entrapped in a situation that brings his demise and fall. His misery is apparent in his role as a father and husband. His troubled relationship with his wife and son represents his darker life. His decisions and flaws transform him from a loving father to a delusional person. He is unable to tackle the situations appropriately that results in his downfall. He stands against his son's decision of becoming a football player. I think that Willy attempts to use his personal experiences for defining his son's life. This builds a wall between father and son. there are many events highlighted in the story that reflects the weaknesses of Willy. The son finds his father's affair with a white woman that creates distance between two of them. The overall analysis of Willy's character depicts that his troubled life made him harsh and delusional.

I think the character of Willy can be compared with tragic heroes like Macbeth and Oedipus. There are many similarities between the kings and Willy. I agree with Miller's views in the article that tragedy is not only limited to the lives of kinds. Common people are equally likely to witness the tragedy. Willy presents the perfect model of a human character who suffers tragedy due to fate and personal decisions. one thing similar between Oedipus and Willy is that they are least willing to change their thoughts or approach towards the world. This remains one of the significant flaws in their personalities. The tragedy faced by the characters seems to be relevant because represent the same mental processes. The emotional situations encountered by the characters are similar irrespective of different settings. Although different things lead them to a state of emotional degradation but no one suffers less from the other. The central reason behind the miserable lives of three characters are tragic flaws. They witness different circumstances where tragedy becomes apparent. Another similarity depicts that escaping from tragedy is difficult and even impossible. Some differences can be drawn between the characters because the tragedy of Macbeth and Oedipus were predicted earlier so fate plays a major role in their stories. While in the case of Willy he made many decisions that resulted in his downfall. He was not informed about his tragedy.

I agree with Miller that the possibility of victory is there with the tragedy. I think that Willy's victory would be to help his son in achieving his dream. But he failed to understand his role as a father. Irrespective of his circumstances if he would have fulfilled his duty as a father he would be a victor. Similarly, Oedipus would have been a victor too if he had accepted his errors of judgment and accepted the suggestions. Still, I believe that victory was easier in case of Willy because fate was less evident in his case.

In the play, victory means change for the betterment. I think that victory in "Death of the Salesman" was to overcome miseries of the past and take a role that was required for bringing change. In Willy's case change meant to support his son by showing him the positive side of the world. But he continues to challenge Billy's dream by making him feel bad. Willy thus failed to attain victory in the play that results in his self-destruction and demise.

Replies

I agree with the post of Erinma Anya because she presents Willy Loman as a tragic hero. He failed to play the game of life appropriately that resulted in his downfall. Anya has provided deep insights into the character of Loman who became the victim of his own choices. Another important point made by her is the fact that Loman never learned from his mistakes. This is because he continues to commit errors and take wrong decisions that bring his demise. I also agree that the character has significant relevance with the historical figures of Oedipus and Macbeth. Some of his actions have a clear resemblance with Oedipus because they both justified their wrong actions. I agree that Loman and Oedipus are both tragic heroes who were victims of their own decisions. I also agree with Anya that today we don't have such tragic heroes because humans pose better rights.

I like the post of Riane T Abaya who identifies the characteristics of Willy Loman in the play. She provides a deeper analysis of the central character and the impact of his decisions. I agree with her viewpoints regarding Miller who stated that tragedy is not only linked to the lives of kings or royals. Common people also encounter misery in their lives. I like her viewpoint that Loman provides a perfect example of common people who experience tragedy and misery. I agree that "the consequence of a man's total compulsion to evaluate himself justly”. The link established between Loman and Oedipus is adequate for uncovering the implications of wrong decisions. I agree that the king and Loman are both victims of their wrong decisions. One apparent weakness common between the two characters is that they never learn from their mistakes. Willy's judgment has influenced his ability to take the right decision.