Analysis: Lit - Antigone. True Tragic Hero

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY:
This paper maintains appropriate distance. Present tense use is slightly problematic, but not egregious. Parallelism is rough but present. However, this paper is not nearly to the level of a variety of rhetorical devices and consistent verb tense, and has a fair amount of work before it can earn a five.

CRITERION 1: REGISTER
The paper uses third person and maintains an appropriate distance. There are few colloquialisms and no contractions. However, in several places the writer does not use present tense.

One example:

- “[Haemon’s] suffering leads him to die beside his bride, waiting till Creon was in sight before stabbing himself with his sword.” à note that “till” is a colloquialism.

CRITERION 2: CRAFT
Some parallelism is present. For example:

- “… because of his mistakes, his pride, his great downfall, and his suffering.”
- “Ismene’s great fall from nobility, her mistake of not helping her sister bury Polynices, and the great suffering she has to endure after having to watch her sister die are some…” (This is an awkward example, but still an attempt.)
Essay: Lit - Antigone. True Tragic Hero

Mr. Mendoza

English I

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The True Tragic Hero

At the soul of every classic tragic play is suffering and a tragic hero. Ordinary suffering can be caused mainly by death but also by mistakes a character makes, and other things the character loses like relationships and material items. All of the characters will usually feel some degree of sufferings but none are as great as the suffering of the tragic hero. The tragic hero faces not only the death of some of those close to him but mistakes he makes but a great downfall. The tragic hero is usually born as a noble but because of his mistakes suffers a great downfall and deaths of those close to him; he controls his fate. Usually this suffering leads to a suicide by the tragic hero or the tragic hero becomes secluded and usually ends up dying. The tragedy Antigone is no different; each character suffers but only one tragic hero falls from his place and suffers the most because of the choices he makes. Each of the three characters, Ismene, Haemon and Creon suffer greatly because of death and a set fate but only one is the tragic hero because he controls his fate, bringing on his own great fall and many mistakes that cause the sufferings of those around him along with himself.

Ismene, the sister of Antigone, suffers greatly because of the curse her father has placed upon the family by accidentally marrying his mother. This curse causes her entire family to die in various ways leaving Ismene with great suffering as the only remaining family member. After her two brothers kill each other she suffers greatly because her brother Polynices, “is not to be buried” (127). This disrespect and disregard for traditions and honor is what causes some of
Hamlet's suicide leaves his father's and brother's deaths and forced to bear his sister's suffering. When Ismene finds out that Antigone is sentenced to death for burying her brother, she tries to die along with Antigone, claiming, "I am as much to blame as she is" (46).
also is too prideful, "No other touchstone can test the heart of man, / the temper of his mind and
spirit, till he be tried / in the practice of authority and rule." (131). He considers himself higher
than all the others which could possibly be his biggest mistake. Sentencing Antigone to death is
also a mistake that leads to his downfall. This angers his son which causes Haemon to go to
dire measures to avenge his father. Creon finally realizes his mistake when the blind prophet,
Teiresias, shows it to him, "Pay to the dead his due. Wound not the fallen. / It is no glory to kill
and kill again." (153). Creon is finally able to see that Polynices deserves his respect, and
without it Creon is doomed. He immediately goes to bury Polynices but his fate is sealed and he
is forced to witness his son dying because of the mistakes Creon has made. When informing his
wife of the news she in turn kills herself. His own mistakes cause his own downfall along with
those around him. Creon’s great fall, pride, sorrow, and mainly his control over his fate are the
characteristics that fit with Aristotle’s view of the tragic hero.

Creon most closely fits with Aristotle’s definition of a tragic hero because of his
mistakes, his pride, his great downfall, and his suffering. He does realize his mistakes as he nears
the end but it is already too late to repair what he did. But according to Aristotle’s view on tragic
heroes it is not just those characteristics that make the hero; it is his control over his own destiny.
Creon controlled his own fate through his actions and pride and is therefore the tragic hero of
Antigone. A tragic hero does not suffer because of the mistakes of those around him or because
of destiny; he suffers because of himself.

On my honor, I have not violated the honor code in any way on this work. Catherine Foote