
Tartuffe: Reading Journal

Reading Journal weeks 1-6

Week one: Moliere: Tartuffe, Act I

Madame Pernelle is dissatisfied with the lack of attention she receives when she is visiting her son Orgon's house. While at Orgon's house what she thinks of good advice, others in the house seem to think her advice is more along the lines of critical and hostile. She states that her grandson, Damis is an idiot and a fool. States that her granddaughter who Madame Pernelle says on the outside is innocent and shy, but that it is just a mask, that on the inside she is quite the opposite. She claims that Elmire, her daughter-in-law is careless with money and dresses up far too much for her being a housewife. Blames Elmire's brother, Cleante for being far too worldly. As for Tartuffe, Madame Pernelle has nothing but praiseful things to say. She calls Tartuffe the definition of perfection. Dorine, the maid, and Orgon's son Damis both say that Tartuffe is a hypocrite. He states that he is a holy man but does not practice what he preaches. Madame Pernelle is convinced that the only reason the family is critical of Tartuffe is that he is such a good and holy man it reminds the family of their sins and struggles.

Week two: Moliere: Tartuffe, Acts II and III

Damis, Orgon's son is ranting because he had become aware of Orgon's plan to have Mariane marry Tartuffe. He explains to Dorine that he is adamant about revealing Tartuffe as a hypocrite. Dorine is asking of Damis to not lose his temper as she is having Elmire, Orgon's wife to speak with Tartuffe as he is quite taken by her. Damis, is not fully convinced and insists he hears the conversation to truly believe it. When they hear Tartuffe arrive, Dorine hides Damis in the closet so he can eavesdrop. Tartuffe enters, uttering religious statements and when he looks over at Dorine he insists that she needs to cover herself as he would have trouble resisting temptations. Dorine states that her being "ill-dressed" is no excuse to have dirty thoughts, she states that she wouldn't if the roles were reversed. Dorine then says that Elmire is coming and she leaves the room.

Week three: From English Romantic Poetry: Coleridge: "Christabel"

Christabel is a beautiful, innocent young woman who goes out at midnight into the woods to pray. When praying, another young woman named Geraldine appears. Geraldine says she was abducted and abandoned under the tree by her attackers for an unknown reason. Even though there were multiple blind areas in Geraldine's story, Christabel offers Geraldine shelter for the night, guaranteeing that Sir Leoline, her father, can take care of the attackers and keep Geraldine away from harm. Because of how late in the night it is, and no one else is awake to help get Geraldine settled, Christabel invites Geraldine to share her bed with her. Once settled in Christabel's bedroom, she finds out that Geraldine is not only stunning but also some kind of witch who had put a spell on Christabel so that she is unable to speak about their night together. So, what happened that night is something only Geraldine and Christabel know. Something we do know is that what happened that night was sexual and intimate. The next morning, Christabel has a feeling that something wrong happened last night though she cannot

remember anything. Christabel introduces Geraldine to her father, Sir Leoline. Geraldine happens to be the daughter of Sir Leoline's best friend from a while back. He decides that because of this happy coincidence that it is a sign that he should fix their relationship. During all this talk, Christabel is having visions of who Geraldine really is. Others are noticing this and asking what's happening but because of the spell, she can't speak of the issue. Christabel is asking that her father kick Geraldine out. All the while Geraldine uses her witchy influence to persuade and convince Sir Leoline that she is just a victim in all this. Another close to Sir Leoline has said that he feels something bad is going to happen to his daughter, Christabel. Sir Leoline doesn't want to hear all this negativity regarding their guest.

Week four: from English Romantic Poetry: Coleridge, "Kubla Khan"

The author who is unnamed, talks about Kubla Khan, a man who ventured to Xanadu. While in Xanadu, he finds an interesting pleasure dome that was considered a miracle because of the dome was made out of ice and caves but surrounded by the sun. As there are gardens flourishing with fragrant trees and "sunny spots of greenery," throughout the "deep romantic chasm" in Xanadu there are "caverns measureless to man." Among this unwelcoming environment of Nature, Kubla Khan hears "ancestral voices prophesying war." Kubla Khan gets relief from this chaotic environment by his finding of the incredible pleasure dome made of ice yet surrounded by the warmth of the sun.

Week five: Edgar Allan Poe, "Annabel Lee"

Annabel Lee, who lived in a "kingdom near the sea", was in love with the narrator of this poem. They were both children but had and knew love so powerful that even angels envied them. A wind froze and took the life of Annabel, but their love didn't die when she did. The narrator is reminded of Annabel by just about everything. This including the moon and the stars, and to be close to her, he goes to the sea to sit where she is buried.

Week six: Pushkin, "The Bronze Horseman"

November of 1824, severe rains and dark clouds start to bombard St. Petersburg and all that live there. A worker named Yevgeny is in his home, alone, envisioning his dreams of a nicer life/future with Parasha, his fiancé. Due to the brutal storm, Yevgeny is nervous that he and his fiancé will be separated. All the rain from the storm turns into an enormous flood that destroys a good portion of the city, as well as killing thousands of its inhabitants. Yevgeny wakes up to find himself sitting on the marble statues of a pair of guard lions. He isn't able to move as he is encircled by the waters of the Neva. When the waters calm, Yevgeny gets on a ferry throughout the river to his fiancé's home. When he arrives, he finds her house destroyed with no sign of her or her family. He is terrified that they are in danger, or worse, dead. Because of the lack of information on their whereabouts, Yevgeny doesn't know what to do and goes crazy. He ends up roaming the streets, terrorizing the Bronze Horseman statue and then leaves as he is scared while imagining the statue coming for revenge.