

## Aristotelian Tragedy

Adapted from Aristotle's *The Poetics*

### Aristotle's Definition of Tragedy

Tragedy depicts the \_\_\_\_\_ of a basically \_\_\_\_\_ person through some fatal \_\_\_\_\_ or misjudgment, producing suffering and \_\_\_\_\_ on the part of the \_\_\_\_\_ and arousing \_\_\_\_\_ and fear on the part of the \_\_\_\_\_.

**A \_\_\_\_\_ tragedy should evoke pity and \_\_\_\_\_ on the part of the audience.** Pity and fear are the \_\_\_\_\_ human \_\_\_\_\_ to spectacles of pain and \_\_\_\_\_ – especially to the sort of pain and suffering that can strike anyone at any time. The effect is that we feel \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ through catharsis, and are \_\_\_\_\_ of these feelings.

**The tragic \_\_\_\_\_ must be essentially \_\_\_\_\_ and good.** The fall of a scoundrel or \_\_\_\_\_ evokes \_\_\_\_\_ rather than pity. Audiences \_\_\_\_\_ when the \_\_\_\_\_ guy goes down. We feel \_\_\_\_\_ for someone we \_\_\_\_\_ when that character is in a \_\_\_\_\_ situation. The \_\_\_\_\_ and more admirable the person is, the greater our \_\_\_\_\_ or grief at his or her \_\_\_\_\_.

**In a true tragedy, the hero's \_\_\_\_\_ must come as a result of some personal \_\_\_\_\_ or decision.** There is no such thing as an innocent victim in tragedy, nor can a genuinely tragic downfall ever be purely a matter of blind accident or bad luck. The tragic hero must always bear at least some responsibility for his own doom.

### Terms to Know

#### ANAGNORISIS

##### ***Tragic recognition or insight***

A moment of \_\_\_\_\_ insight or understanding in the mind of the tragic \_\_\_\_\_ as he suddenly comprehends the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in which he is entangled.

#### HAMARTIA - *Tragic error*

A \_\_\_\_\_ error or \_\_\_\_\_ mistake on the part of the \_\_\_\_\_ that eventually leads to the final \_\_\_\_\_. A \_\_\_\_\_ from archery, hamartia literally refers to a shot that \_\_\_\_\_ the bullseye.

#### HUBRIS - *Violent transgression*

Hubris is the sort of insolent \_\_\_\_\_ that gets a person in deep \_\_\_\_\_. Sometimes translated as 'false \_\_\_\_\_', hubris is a daring overstepping of cultural \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ boundaries.

#### NEMESIS - *Retribution*

The inevitable \_\_\_\_\_ or cosmic \_\_\_\_\_ for acts of \_\_\_\_\_.

#### PERIPATEIA - *Plot reversal*

A \_\_\_\_\_ or crucial \_\_\_\_\_ on the part of the \_\_\_\_\_ that changes the situation from seemingly secure to \_\_\_\_\_.

#### CATHARSIS - *Transformation through transaction*

A feeling of emotional \_\_\_\_\_ on the part of the \_\_\_\_\_ during a tragedy. The audience feels pity and fear at first, only to feel \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ at the end through catharsis.