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Queen Gertrude, the mother of Prince Hamlet in Shakespeare's (1564-1616) play "*Hamlet*," is a gentle and emotional woman. Many readers and critics argue about her character—some see her as guilty and weak, while others believe she is innocent and unaware of the evil around her. Her actions often come from love and confusion, not from wickedness.

Unaware of Claudius's Crime: Gertrude marries Claudius soon after King Hamlet's death. This shocks her son, but the play never shows that she knows Claudius killed the king. Her marriage seems foolish but not criminal. She might have married quickly because she wanted safety after losing her husband. When Hamlet accuses her in the closet scene, she looks truly shocked and says,

*"What have I done, that thou...
so rude against me?"*

Her surprise proves that she never realized the depth of Claudius's crime.

A Loving but Weak Mother: Gertrude's weakness lies in her dependence on men, not in her intentions. She loves Hamlet deeply and worries about his strange behavior. She knows her son is deeply troubled by his father's death. But she does not realize his true concern. She feels guilty but cannot fully understand his pain. During the fencing duel, when Hamlet fights Laertes, she unknowingly drinks from the poisoned wine cup to celebrate his son. This shows that she truly loves her son. It was Claudius who wanted to kill Hamlet with the poisoned wine, and Gertrude did not know his intention.

In fine, Gertrude is not an evil woman but a weak and innocent one. She acts without full knowledge of the truth. Her love for her son and her gentle nature make her a tragic and pitiable figure in the play.