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Macbeth Greed Example

William Shakespeare's play Macbeth is a shakespearean tragedy in which a tragedy is something that portrays to the downfall of a heroic character. In Macbeth, Macbeth tends to do a lot of things for ruling over power showing that he has a strong greed towards power. Macbeth goes through different levels to show his greed for a lot of things.

Throughout the entirety of the play, Macbeth displays in various occasions as to how greed for power can harm one's sense of security. Macbeth, the central character, lets his excessive need for power consume him which leads him to a path that is filled with decisions that he may not have made if power was not his motive. King Duncan of Scotland makes Macbeth the Thane of Cawdor due to his courageousness and bravery while battling side by side with one another during war. This leads Macbeth to believe that the rest of the prophecy that he received might come true. He says to himself, 'I am thane of Cawdor. If good, why do I yield to the suggestion whose horrid image doth unfix my hair.' Macbeth's thoughts now turn to the idea that he can only become king if he kills King Duncan. At this point, the very thought frightens him, yet the idea of being king has grown on him. Macbeth is told to have a "false face [that] must hide what the false heart doth know"(1.7.92) which is seen as the

first incident where Macbeth is changed as a character. Macbeth is known as “[a] gentleman on whom [Duncan] built / An absolute trust.” (1.4.15-16), but the greed that ate away at Macbeth’s conscious finally took over as Macbeth later on kills Duncan. After having regrets of this act, Macbeth is told that “A deep repentance: nothing in his life / Became him like the leaving it; he died.” (1.4.8-9) This deep repentance refers to when Macbeth regrets killing Duncan. This act foreshadows the consequences that follow after Duncan is killed and it is with that murder that initiates the greed for power and the lost sense of security lead to Macbeth’s death in the final act. The influence that people possess often corrupts them and leads them to make decisions that they would not normally make and sometimes regret making.

When Macbeth encounters the three witches, where he is given the prophecy that he will become the King of Scotland, he says in awe, 'The Thane of Cawdor lives, a prosperous gentleman, and to be king stands not within the prospect of belief.' Macbeth finds the idea of assuming the throne improbable. He does not even believe that it would be possible to be the thane of Cawdor, a more powerful position than he currently holds. However, as the play develops we as readers see Macbeth build this newly found temptation and greed for power. This ultimately leads to his intentions to murdering King Duncan. As he is trying to talk himself out of murder, he says, 'I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but only vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself and falls on the other.' Macbeth realizes that greed and ambition are his only motivators, yet he continues to pursue the throne and this realization also makes him recall that the witches also said that Macbeth's friend Banquo's children, who are the heirs of the kingdom, are to follow after their father and rule over the kingdom. Macbeth concludes that if Banquo's children inherit the throne instead of his own, the murders will have all been committed for the “sake of the seed of Banquo”. 'Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown, and put a barren sceptre in my gripe.' Greedy for the throne, Macbeth murders his friend Banquo as well.

Macbeth then continues his murderous campaign, killing anyone he thinks is in his way. Due the harmful actions Macbeth takes that not only ends up affecting his relationships but it harms his mindset as well. Throughout the play physically, Macbeth exist but mentally there isn't a macbeth. In result to macbeth actings he begins to develop a weak mindset in which that was also created by Lady Macbeth who took control forcing Macbeth down

onto this self-destructive path in which now Macbeth becomes not only a harmful person to himself but to everyone around him. Towards the ending of the play, Macbeth has absolutely everything that he wanted and still is not 100% satisfied.

Thinking that he has everything that he could possibly have control over he ends up becoming a cold-hearted, selfish person as Scotland is suffering in which he could care less about. And not only did he become such a cold-hearted person to the people of Scotland but to a harmless family. Due to the prophecies that he was given he decided that he would kill Macduff. Not only did he want to kill Macduff, but he wanted to kill the whole family according to Macbeth he says "The very firstlings of my heart shall be the firstlings of my hand The castle of Macduff I will surprise; seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword his wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls that trace him in his line." (pp.177,161-167) Macbeth shows how the greed of wanting everything to himself is overruling his good senses. Shakespeare makes Macbeth's character show us how the greed and evilness can take control over a person and can end up causing pain to everyone around him.

The witches start Macbeth on his path of destruction and self destruction by giving him his prophecies in the beginning of the play. Next, the greed for power from Lady Macbeth coerces Macbeth into making these wrongful actions, this is essential because it pushes Macbeth even further into destruction. Greed for power is one main theme in the play Macbeth in which this theme had a very great impact on Macbeth's character.