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The Tragedy of Macbeth Example

Arguably one of Shakespeare's best plays The Tragedy of Macbeth filled with prophecies, murder, and nightmarish visions is timeless. Once a proud noble warrior the title character Macbeth finds himself captivated by the prophecies of 3 evil witches that change his life forever they give him a chance for power a chance to be king. With the help of his wife they set a course of murder lies and betrayal to keep themselves in power but in the end this leads to both of there dooms. The play has been adapted many times but the same endless cycles of guilt, ambition ,and deception are always present. Throughout the play the overarching themes of corruption, guilt, and ambition play a key role and seal the fate of Macbeth who questions his fate constantly we are sympathetic for him even when he himself realizes there is nothing left he can do to save himself.“I am in blood stepped in so far that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as going over” -Macbeth. The play begins with the evil witches immediately setting the tone of the dark play they make plans to meet with Macbeth they encounter him and his trusted friend Banquo on there journey back to Macbeth's castle. They predicts the pairs future telling Macbeth that he will become the Thane of Cawdor and soon after king of Scotland and that Banquo's descendants will in fact be kings themselves before either can ask any questions the witches disappear.

Macbeth begins to ponder the idea of being king what he must do to gain the designation, he is shocked when he eventually becomes Thane of Cawdor after the former title barrer was found out to be a spy and when King Duncan announces he will be a guest for the night at Macbeth's own castle he realizes everything is falling in line with the witches prophecies. In a letter he writes to his wife telling her everything that has transpired she immediately sees that King Duncan's vacancy in their castle as the perfect opportunity to kill him and she convinces a very reluctant Macbeth to commit the deed. But Macbeth cant do it he has always been loyal to Duncan who is a good king he tells Lady Macbeth he wont commit the deed she then calls his manhood into question saying “When you dared to do it. That’s when you were a man. And to be more than what you were you would be so much more the man.” Macbeth who wants his wife's approval and to prove himself murders Duncan Lady Macbeth using her power against her own husband to gain even more power as queen. Lucky for Macbeth the kings 2 sons flee the country in fear of there own lives themselves leaving macbeth as the king he finally has the crown he sought this leaves Banquo suspicious having him think back to the witches prophecies Macbeth is now king just as they said but also he would spawn kings as well.

This part of the prophecy deeply troubles Macbeth who now sees his former best friend as a threat to his reign paranoia gets the best of him he decides to hire 2 murderers to kill Banquo and his son on the night of his banquet. Unfortunately the plan goes awry Banquo is assassinated but his son escapes Macbeth decides Fleance will have to wait because he must attend his own banquet but at the banquet with fellow lords and wife all attending he Macbeth sees Banquo's ghost at the table yet no one else can see him this frightens Macbeth who yells at the apparition because of this his guests are startled and the party gets broken up. After the banquet he remarks “We have scorched the snake, not killed it.She’ll close and be herself whilst our poor malice Remains in danger of her former tooth. But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer, Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep In the affliction of these terrible dreams That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead, Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace, Than on the torture of the mind to lie In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave. After life’s fitful fever he sleeps well. Treason has done his worst; nor steel nor poison, Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing Can touch him further.” This reveals that Macbeth has had trouble sleeping that he lives in fear of being caught and that Duncan is lucky to be in his grave dead he is at peace while he himself has problems

of his own his guilt is the only thing he thinks about ever now so much so he can't enjoy being king.

Banquo and Duncan are now dead all the strange deaths make Lennox suspicious who thinks Macbeth had a hand in there demise many Scottish people now see there king as a tyrant and they want something to be done about it Macduff goes to the English courts where Malcolm has been accepted to raise a army against Macbeth this is the beginning of the end. To ease his mind Macbeth seeks guidance from the witches again who show him even more prophecies in the form of visions which tell Macbeth to beware of Macduff he wants to head there warnings so when he hears that Macduff is in England he uses this opportunity to ambush his castle and slaughter Macduff's wife and kids eventually Macduff will hear about this and he vows to kill Macbeth for the murder of his family he takes Malcom back to Scotland with an army to dethrone Macbeth. Throughout the entire play Lady Macbeth always scolded her husband for his guilt in killing King Duncan dismissing her own as well but in act 5 her repressed guilt is revealed when she sleepwalks her bizarre behavior has caught the attention of one of her servants who calls a doctor for some help they watch as she reenacts her part in the murder of king Duncan with washing the blood off her hands, yelling at Macbeth, planting the daggers, etc she says many things but one quote that stands out is “What's done cannot be undone.”

Once she persuade Macbeth to kill Duncan once she planted the daggers and framed Duncan's guards for the murder they set themselves on this dark path there was no turning back the ambitions they once had now drive them insane Macbeth has now become a tyrant and Lady Macbeth kills herself over her guilt. In the final act Macbeth has lost so much he feels like he has nothing left now he decides he will go out in one last blaze of glory at this point Malcolm and his army have arrived at the castle. Malcolm confronts Macbeth killing and beheading him reclaiming the throne of Scotland and bringing an end to Macbeth's tyrannical reign. Unchecked ambition and the lust for power turned Macbeth into his own worst enemy. His ambition to kill King Duncan gave him new power as king a power he didn't deserve which he abused and the guilt he once set aside for his crimes could no longer be ignored they drove him mad to the very end all 3 factors leading into the tragedy of Macbeth. But who is really to blame is it fate, Macbeth, or the witches themselves was Macbeth a killer all along or did the witches implant the idea into his head? These questions echoed in our our own ears throughout the play but ultimately

Shakespeare leaves us up to decide who is guilty and who is not after all.