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Why Macbeth is a Tragic Hero Example

A tragic hero is a person with a high social status, somebody who has a secret weakness that could eventually lead to a downfall, and when the character's life faces a downfall with courage and dignity. Generally, a tragic hero is a grievous legend that is seen as a respectable character. To go moreover, the character Macbeth happens to consist of these traits. With this in mind, I assert that Macbeth is, in fact, a tragic hero.

To begin with, Macbeth was born into a noble family. After all, he was King Duncan's cousin. But, more importantly he was a Scottish general that served under the king. In Act 1, scene 2, Macbeth led King Duncan's forces into battle. Macbeth had killed Macdonwald which led their troop into victory (Shakespeare). More into scene 2, his defeat stood out to King Duncan and he granted Macbeth nobility (Shakespeare). For Macbeth's loyalty to King Duncan, he was awarded to be Thane of Cawdor (Shakespeare). He was previously the Thane of Glamis; but, was practically promoted, causing his status to increase. To put into other words, Macbeth was already considered a valiant and worthy general and Duncan was astonished by his bravery, leadership, and successfulness in battle. So, King Duncan decided to ascend him into Thane of Cawdor; which, was a big deal since that position held a great amount of power.

Subsequently, Macbeth had his flaws. His biggest weakness that stood out was his strong ambition. Although, it may not seem like a weakness; but it unravels a dark side to Macbeth. In scene 3, one of the witches told Macbeth that he will soon become king (Shakespeare). Macbeth believed it since the witches had predicted that he would become a thane earlier on in the play. Anyways, Macbeth's aspiration and wanting to be top dog, is more essential to him than everything else is throughout his everyday life. He will surrender everything that he has throughout to have the opportunity to sit on the position of authority. For example, in Act 1, scene 7, Lady Macbeth is trying to convince Macbeth to kill Duncan, but he is very hesitant about it because he has no reason to do so (Shakespeare). Yet, this was the start to his strong desire of power. After he went through the murder of Duncan and was awarded King of Scotland (Shakespeare), he slowly regained his conscience after a rough patch and acknowledged his strength and power. Macbeth then became fearful of his position and would do anything to stay as king, so he started to kill any potential candidates that could take that power from him. Another example would be in Act 3, scene 3, Macbeth became worried that Banquo was a threat to the throne so, he ordered three people to murder Banquo to be safe (Shakespeare). Overall, Macbeth's heavy ambition caused him to kill for power and to soon feed off of fear in order to become more indomitable.

As a final point, Macbeth faced a large downfall with courage and dignity. Towards the end in Act 5, Malcolm starts a battle against Macbeth in Dunsinane (Shakespeare). This battle was the main decline of Macbeth's power. Although, Macbeth understands that he will die but he refuses to commit suicide (Shakespeare). He claims he would rather fight until the end. On the battlefield, he encounters Young Siward and faces off with him, eventually Macbeth kills Young Siward (Shakespeare), leading him to regain courage. Later on, Malcolm came across Macbeth determined to kill him. So, Malcolm and Macbeth commence to a match. Malcolm brutally kills Macbeth, ending the battle and Malcolm gaining the title of king. This is to say, he fought with dignity until his faith came to an end.

However, Macbeth does not draw any sympathy from the audience by claiming he doesn't have time to mourn over his wife, Lady Macbeth's death in Act 5, scene 5 (Shakespeare). Also, all the deaths like the servants he killed for his cover up, for the murder of Duncan. He insisted they were all just a part of his life. Yet, that sympathy

within Macbeth varies from time. For example, when Macbeth hesitated on killing Duncan because Duncan has done nothing wrong to him and that was his cousin. He felt as if it was wrong and he wouldn't deserve to be king after committing that crime.

To conclude, Macbeth is a tragic hero by being born into a royal family, having a tragic flaw that he didn't acknowledge was a problem, and he faced a downfall with courage. Overall, he fits the standards of being an unfortunate hero based on Aristotle's definition of a tragic hero. Even though all the obstacles he has come across, he held on to his sense of direction to reach the goal of being king.