
Literary Analysis of the Consequences of Macbeth's Decision on His Psychological Well-Being Depicted by William Shakespeare in the Dramatization of Macbeth

What you Sow you Will Reap

In William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, there is one character who changes drastically throughout the play. That character is Macbeth. In the beginning, Macbeth is an honest and loyal thane to King Duncan. However, he lets greed and evil desires drive him to an act of regicide. His guilt and fear slowly begin to overcome him as the play progresses, and his sanity begins to slip away. By the end of the play he has been rendered insane from the surmounting guilt over all those he has killed. In the end, all his killing and deception gets him killed. With this Shakespeare shows that people will reap what they sow.

Macbeth starts out as an honest man who is faithful and loving of King Duncan. Duncan trusts him too as he says: "No more that Thane of Cawdor shall receive / Our bosom interest. Go, pronounce his present death, / And with his former title greet Macbeth" (1.2.64). Duncan has given a new title to Macbeth, making him Thane over two regions. But after the Weird Sisters tell him that he will be King and Duncan appoints Malcolm as his heir, Macbeth's conscience is filled with greed and dark desires. After some convincing by Lady Macbeth, he takes power into his own hands with regicide, killing Duncan. This starts his downward descent into insanity.

In the middle of the play, Macbeth has started to grow paranoid about negative repercussions for his actions. In his fear, he deems that Banquo and Fleance cannot be allowed to live. He hires three murderers and tells them "Fleance, his son, that keeps him company, / Whose absence is no less material to me / Than is his father's, must embrace the fate of that dark hour." (3.1.140-143). His paranoia of Fleance somehow overthrowing him drives him to get rid of him and any of those who may get in his way. Later, at the grand feast that he throws for the Lords and himself, he begins to see the ghost of Banquo sitting in his chair and Macbeth is incredibly disturbed by it. He is wrought with fear and screams for the ghost to leave. He has become so filled with guilt and fear that he is seeing the reincarnate of people that he has killed.

At the end of the play, Macbeth has lost his mind, he has gone so crazy and self-obsessed that his paranoia is trumped by his sense of invulnerability. When the English army is advancing upon his castle, Macbeth says "Bring me no more reports. Let them fly all. / Till Birnam Wood remove to Dunsinane / I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?" (5.1.1-3). He believes that he cannot be defeated as everyone is woman born and the woods could never just suddenly move to his castle. He thinks that he can rule for the rest of his life because everything is in his favor. And that false sense of security, while overrun with insanity, is what led to his ultimate demise.

Macbeth's mental state throughout the play shows the negative repercussions he has received from all of his dark actions. The guilt of killing those who trusted and respected him is overwhelming, and he is unable to handle it all. He goes from being a loyal happy man to

breaking down in fear and guilt. Shakespeare uses this progression to show that even the most powerful people will reap what they sow.

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