Gradual Deterioration Through Character In 'Macbeth'

Macbeth should be called a Shakespearean tragedy, since William Shakespeare's play follows some of the most important conditions for such a tragedy. The plot goes from good to evil, when the tragic hero, Macbeth, displays weak points or moral flaws that contribute to his own demise in major ways. Various situations in the play demonstrate that he is a very unstable character, greedy of power and well aware of the death he caused to others.

Macbeth is focused on a tragic character, Macbeth. He's a heartbreaking figure in Macbeth because he seems to be neither a villain nor incredibly selfless all the time. Macbeth's states to himself “Well all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one red.” (Act 2, Scene 2, Lines 74 – 76)

Macbeth is overwhelmed by shame and regret after he murders Duncan, which shows that his character is not entirely bad. Macbeth's shame and sorrow surface at unlikely moments, such as Act 3, Scene 4, when Banquo's spirit appears, causing Macbeth to momentarily lose his composure, sanity and even continue talking to the spirits. “[sees the ghost] Avaunt, and quit out of my sight! Let the earth hide thee. Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is clod. Thou hast no speculation in those eyes. Which thou dost glare with!” (Act 3, Scene 4, Lines 110- 114). Yet as the play begins, the audience understands that Macbeth’s character has transformed and put aside his guilt, accepting that he has retained his place as King and is prepared to face the chance of becoming King.

Macbeth embodies greed in his constant desire to kill. He began showing his first hint of fear of the unknown when the Weird Sisters declared that he would be King of Cawdor as he started to speak to himself and says, “If ill, Why hath it given me earnest of success, Commencing in truth? I am thane of Cawdor. If good, why do I yield to that suggestion Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair And make my seated heart knock at my ribs. Against the use of nature” (Act 1, Scene 3, Lines 145 – 151). It may seem like Macbeth is merely interested, but Macbeth is more inclined to question and fear about his potential survival as King. Instead, Macbeth determines that becoming Thane of Cawdor is not enough for him, and starts a plan to guarantee the satisfaction of the prophecy of the Weird Sisters that he, Macbeth, should become ruler. Macbeth's greed took over, for not only destroying the King, but he also murders his best mate, Banquo, to prevent Banquo from revealing the rest of the universe that Macbeth murdered the King to become King himself. Macbeth acknowledges that he must also eliminate Malcolm from the frame, since he is the Prince of Cumberland. “[To himself] The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step On which I must fall down, or else o’erleap. For in my way it lies”. Through his delusional mind, Macbeth feels he wants to finish what he began, and if it requires to destroy Malcolm to be King, he'd be fully committed to doing that.

Macbeth's greed is to blame for his decision. While Lady Macbeth urges him to kill Ducan, she knows at the last second that Ducan looks so much like her father and will not commit such crime. Because Lady Macbeth did not commit the murder, he made the decision to hold the dagger, something that should not have been made if Macbeth's personal pride had not tainted his judgement. In truth, Macbeth was conscious of his ambition by saying, “I have no spur To

pick sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambitions, which o’erleaps itself And falls on th’other.” (Act 1, Scene 7, Lines 25 –28). Basically, he concluded that his own desires had led his descent to a tragedy that could have been prevented.

This play matches the definition of Shakespeare's tragedy by changing the plot from good to evil, portraying a tragic hero and his downfall, the tragic hero becoming very dysfunctional and greedy for power. Both these elements of the catastrophe are clear in Shakespeare's play MacBeth, which points to the inference that he is fully conscious of the suffering he caused to many.

Work Cited

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