Macbeth By William Shakespeare And Neighbors By Raymond Carver: Comparative Essay

A strong and recurring theme between the texts “Macbeth” by William Shakespeare and “Neighbors” by Raymond Carver is entrapment and fate. Macbeth is a story of a young couple who are bored of their “low” life they relive every day when they take matters into their own hands and decide to kill their King, King Duncan, so they can live with the luxury they believe they have forever deserved. This story line also plays out in the short story Neighbors as young couple, Bill and Arlene Miller, live across from rich couple, Jim and Harriet Stone who take off on vacation and ask the Millers’ to housesit while they are gone. As the days go by, they find themselves pretending to be a rich couple which is one of their main life goals, but this only leads to their madness.

Entrapment: Macbeth

Throughout the play of Macbeth, there are constant scenes where the main characters are burdened by a sense of guilt or madness that they constantly cycle through in their daily activities. In Act 3 Scene 4 of William Shakespeare’s novel, we find Macbeth going mad over “Banquo’s Ghost” who he sees during a dinner he is hosting in his castle. Another scene of entrapment and madness is present in Act 5 Scene 1 where we find Lady Macbeth slowly going mad over an invisible drop of King Duncan’s blood to which she finds on her hand and can’t clean off. These scenes show that although there were good things happened for this couple, it only lasted a short period. This is also present in

Entrapment: Neighbors

In the short story of Neighbors, the main characters find themselves trapped in a fantasy they believe to be reality. This can be seen throughout the text when Bill first steps into the apartment to feed the cat but then gets distracted and begins looking through the Stones’ belongings. He goes through their medicine cabinet first and retrieves Harriet Stones’ prescribed medicine then moves to kitchen to take a swig of liquor straight from the bottle. The next time Bill goes over there, he is said to be there for almost an hour. He is said to take food from the refrigerator, lay on the Stones’ enormous bed and steal a half-empty packet of cigars. This goes to show how used to and excited the Millers’ became of their so called “new life” as at the end of the story they find themselves locked outside the Stones’ apartment and Arlene breaks down as she comes to the realization that they now have to retreat back to their ordinary lives as a bookkeeper and secretary.

All Good Things Come To An End

Throughout the two novels, the main characters find themselves in lives they had always wanted for themselves and each other. In Shakespeare’s’ novel, Lady Macbeth wishes for Macbeth to murder King Duncan so they can have a life full of luxurious and expensive things as well as the title of “King and Queen”. In Carvers’ short story, the Millers’ find themselves in a repetitive life of boring secretarial and bookkeeping chores but find a way to escape when the

Stones’ leave their apartment for a vacation. In both these stories, the main protagonists find their hearts deepest desires and wishes granted and become so attached to their new lives they are lost when they return to reality.