The Nature Of Power In Macbeth By William Shakespeare

Within the play Macbeth power is portrayed through Lady Macbeth and her drive for Macbeth to become king in act 1 scene 7.

Shakespeare envisages Lady Macbeth as a powerful woman through her use of emotional blackmail and guilt towards Macbeth. Within this scene Lady Macbeth performs her emotional blackmail through the line “such I account thy love. Art thou afeard to be the same in thine own act and valour as thou art in desire?”

Shakespeare's characterisation of Lady Macbeth creates a steady and seamless portrayal of her truly evil nature. The constant emotional blackmail by Lady Macbeth convinces Macbeth to kill King Duncan. This blackmail towards Macbeth portrays her as powerful within this scene and as a play as a whole.

Within act 2 scene 2 Shakespeare portrays lady Macbeth as a powerful woman though her decision making. Within this scene, Macbeth is experiencing a mental breakdown after killing King Duncan. Lady Macbeth's quick and put-together thought process saves their plan. The quote “imfirm of purpose! Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead are but as pictures...” displays Lady Macbeth's power and steady thought process though this scene and her perfectly executed plan.

Shakespeare portrays Macbeth as feeble and weak-minded after the murder, his loss of mental strength is made up through Lady Macbeth’s strength in mind and her longing to be like a man.

In act 3 scene 4 Shakespeare portrays power through his ideas of morality and Macbeth's decision making.

Within this scene, Macbeth’s morality is portrayed as fluid and is losing his power though his psychological problems that have evolved throughout the play. Shakespeare portrays Macbeth's insanity through his hallucinations of seeing his murdered friend Banquo. Though his hallucinations Macbeth’s Thanes become suspicious and lose respect for Macbeth.

Later in this scene, Macbeth displays evidence of his shift of morality through the quote “my strange and self-abuse is the initiate fear that wants hard use: but we are yet but young indeed”

This quote explains and proves Macbeth’s loss of morality as ge believes his hallucinations and loss of power are through his inexperience in murder. This shift in Macbeth’s moral compass and loss of control is clear through the behaviour and thought process Shakespeare incorporates within this scene.

Shakespeare portrays Lady Macbeth's loss of power through her guiltful sleepwalking in act 5 scene 1. Within this scene Lady Macbeth’s thoughts and guilt unravels though her extremely incriminating and guiltful way of washing her hands in her sleep.

The quote “Out damned spot; out I say...yet who would have thought the old man to have so

much blood in him” portrays Lady Macbeth's guilt and pure loss of the control she once had. The unravelling of Lady Macbeth’s mental state is the beginning of the end for her power.

Within act 5 scene 5 Shakespeare continues to use the psychological wellbeing of the Macbeths as a key aspect of this scene and their loss of power. Within this scene Macbeth is preparing the castle for battle against the Thanes that have turned against him and Lady Macbeth commits suicide from the guilt.

The quote “Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,

Signifying nothing.” This quote portrays Macbeth’s loss of emotion for his wife.

Lady Macbeth's suicide portrays her complete loss of power and her overwhelming guilt.

Shakespeare’s portrayal of Macbeth's cold and unemotional side from the death of his wife is the conclusion of how far he had fallen. Macbeth’s complete loss of control and respect from his Thanes caused him to have an army on its way to fight against him and the death of his friends from the guilt he had.

Shakespeare’s portrayal of power though Macbeth and Lady Macbeth was a steady but rapid downfall from what they were in the beginning of the play, compared to what they ended as: both dead from the loss of sanity, power and the overwhelming guilt from the people they killed.