

# The love and devotion of lady macbeth



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Power, and the pursuit of it, can make the strongest person weak. An ironic twist because power is supposed to be the opposite of weakness, but they can be one and the same.

The primal thirst for power can lead to people committing atrocities whether in real life or those who are portrayed in fiction. In Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, Macbeth is susceptible to be corrupted by the yearning for power and Lady Macbeth does horrible deeds out of love for her husband. Although she appears evil, she loves her husband so much that she is willing to be unsexed, give her sanity and plot treason for her husband's ambitions. Lady Macbeth is a woman, and as a woman she is automatically and unjustly associated with being a soft and warm-hearted person. As she vehemently pleads here, "...Come you spirits/ That tend on mortal thoughts! Unsex me here/... come to my woman's breasts/ And take my milk for gall", (Shakespeare, Act I, Scene V, L 40-47) she desires to lose these qualities to do what is necessary of her.

This is one of the most powerful things that can be done for another. The mere fact that Lady Macbeth is willing to call on evil spirits for this unwieldy process shows that she has the utmost love and devotion for her husband. One cannot overlook the irony of Lady Macbeth calling on the very same evil spirits that predicted her husband to be to king, to help herself have the power to make Macbeth the leader of Scotland. Also that is she had truly gotten her wish, then she would have lost one of woman's greatest gifts, the ability to have children or an heir to the throne. Later in the play, as a result of Lady Macbeth's hardened actions, she is beginning to lose her sanity. In all states of consciousness, Macbeth's well-being still plagues her mind.

As she is sleep walking, she is trying to assure Macbeth and sooth him into relaxing sleep, portrayed here, "...I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; / He cannot come out on's grave". Act I, Scene V, L 60-61) As one can see here, one of her innermost desires is for Macbeth to be happy, but they suffer from the same illness, their conscience, which constantly reminds them of the mayhem they have created. This leads her to lose her most treasured possession, her mind, because of her actions out of love for Macbeth. Eventually it drives her to complete madness and leads her to take her life, a martyr for Macbeth's path to kingship.

The binding guilt that tormented Lady Macbeth's mind was not unfounded. Although her hands did not commit the murder of King Duncan, she is directly responsible. She was the driving force behind Macbeth and pushed him into the murder, even when he had his doubts about the worth of becoming king. Lady Macbeth's sheer devotion and love for Macbeth did what was necessary, not what was nice, for Macbeth's aspirations. As one can see, "... look like the innocent flower/ But be the serpent under't... you shall put/ This night's great business into my dispatch;" (Act I, Scene V, 64-67), Lady Macbeth set out a foolproof plan to ease the burden of stress that is weighing on Macbeth. The plot and acts of treason and regicide are tokens of Lady Macbeth's devotion because royalty in medieval times were said to be chosen by the divine.

In order for lady Macbeth to hazard her life and potentially her afterlife for Macbeth's temporal desires is just another of the many signs of love and devotion. As one can now see, Lady Macbeth is not an evil character but an extremely realistic one who gave all of her strength for her husband's

weakness. She is somebody who out of love and devotion is willing to give her femininity, her sanity and plot treason for her husband. Lady Macbeth gives everything she possibly can for the happiness of another, the true definition of love. All of this is done because of Macbeth's weakness when he saw the potential for power.

One can only wonder how far he would have gotten if he did not have the love and devotion of Lady Macbeth to aid him on his journey. Shakespeare, William. *Macbeth*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.