

Example of essay on macbeth: under the mask of darkness

[Literature](#), [William Shakespeare](#)



Part 1: Question 1

“ What if”. Two words, six letters. Alone they mean nothing, combined and they form one of the heaviest phrases to start a sentence with. In this case however, starting the story with what if may have been better. Everyone who’s read the story of Macbeth knows exactly what happens; a good man is corrupted by the lust of power, armed with the knowledge of the future and urged by the whispers of his wife into rushing headlong into the unknown and ends up fulfilling all of his dreams, never realizing that nightmares are dreams too .

The tragedy of Macbeth can easily be seen as one that was a self-fulfilling prophecy. In a way, what happened to Macbeth was only possible because he knew it was about to happen and tried to fight his fate. Supposing that Macbeth was a patient man would have made all the difference. He probably wouldn’t have been king, even if he did divorce from his wife and made Duncan his friend. He might have made a good one, but he never would have become king because a patient man knows the value of contentment. A patient man also knows the value of happiness and understands that all that is gold does not glitter. Many claim that the future is not set in stone, some say otherwise. All have points, but none realize that it doesn’t matter. What people forget is that even if you are the lowliest peasant, or the highest king, you will still die. Thus Camus was right in a sense, life is absurd.

Using that same argument, it does not matter if the events turned out differently, in the end; it could not have as Macbeth was not a patient man. This, I think, is the very reason why Macbeth was portrayed to be a villain

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more than a hero. We always see heroes triumph over insurmountable odds, but rarely do we see, or accept that heroes can rise high, but they can also fall into depths that we don't want to accept is a possibility.

We always hear the stories of the hero's rise to honor, but we hardly see the villain's march to power. As the laws of morality puts it, no one considers themselves a villain, Macbeth was simply doing what he thinks would have lengthen his lifespan, and shorten those of his enemies.

Had he been a patient man, he probably would have realized that the goal is never about living longer than your enemies, it's about living past your hate and whether or not you can actually live with yourself till the end, to stand before something greater than yourself and say " I was a good man" or to be able to embrace the void saying the exact same thing.

This I think is the main reason why Macbeth was portrayed as a type of person that you would not wish to know. He was a man, not worth knowing. He was a man not worth caring about but most importantly, he was a man. Just as we all are.

We can all fall as deep as he did, or we can overcome our bestial nature and rise above what people expect of us and ourselves. That was the purpose of Macbeth being a villain, to know that this could happen to you. Maybe not the same situation, maybe not the same drama, but it can happen to you.

Part 2: Question 3

The problem with poems (and art in general) is the fact that they can be interpreted in a great number of ways. As such, the answers below are of what I understood of the poem itself.

- She demands that we stop deluding ourselves, or in this case, herself. The moment she said the word mask in the first stanza, I was reading it with a sense of hate. The fact that it came right after the words dances and wildness, the feeling of being free, they you hear that it was all just a mask. Nothing but a front for the world, not yourself.

Then to see the words again near the end, " No more mask! No more mythologies!" the fact that it was written with the exclamation point reinforced the feeling that the masks were not supposed to be there, but they are, and they should, and must be gone. This reinforces my belief that the sense of being under any ball and chain, and delusion is what the poet is telling us to take off.

- Because there's no point in living in a world where you're walled off by yourself. The problem with a mask is the fact that when you wear one for so long, you tend to forget who you were underneath. Even worse, you remember. You know who you are underneath the mask, but you can't remember a time when you weren't wearing it and you start to feel afraid of what might happen if you remove it.

In this sense, removing the mask is urgent as, like jumping into cold water for a much needed bath, it might feel painful for the first few seconds, but it needs to happen as delusions will not save a person from the truth.

- Yes it is. It is even possible to do this more than once. From the beginning of " When I wrote of god" to " in exile from myself." These two lines happen more than once to a person. You try to justify your existence in the world around you, yet you can't really find it. Then you end up in the situation of the last stanza, and you feel alive again.

Getting there is different for people, the feeling may be different but the results are all the same.

It is necessary every now and then, even when it seems or is impossible. A person needs time to reevaluate their life. To look in the mirror and wonder have they really changed? Was it for the better? It doesn't matter if you don't end with a concrete answer. The fact that you asked the question is good enough.

I think it is easier for poets to handle. You can't write about something you don't understand and knowing is half the battle. You may not always be able to do anything about it, but knowledge is always something that a person should look forward to.

As stated above, people need to get away from the world every now and then, to find out if the world is hindering them, or if their hindering themselves, this is exactly why taking off the mask is imperative for everyone.

- We bask in the sun for a few moments, try to remember the last time it felt this good to be alive. Realize that many people could not have done what you have just did and be proud of yourself for it.

Then you try again and again because sooner or later, the mask will have to come off and delaying it will only make you complacent. Complacency is not happiness, neither is it contentment .

References

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Complete Works of William Shakespeare: <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/macbeth/full.html>