

"macbeth" tragedy by william shakespeare essay sample

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Macbeth is a tragedy written by William Shakespeare. It is a story of deception, where trusted comrades are betrayed in the story of a complex assassination. Two of the main characters, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, share commonalities and differences that combine to create the tension and ambitious greed needed to form the future sequence of the play.

There are many similarities between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Both are characterized as very ambitious. Even before the witches speak to Macbeth, he already is socially climbing in the King's court having just been promoted to Thane of Cawdor (Act 1). When they heard the witch's prophecy about Macbeth's becoming king, it was easy for them to believe since they wanted this to be true. You can see this in Macbeth's letter, " what greatness is promised thee," and with Lady Macbeth who also thought the prophecy was an inevitable promise, saying that Macbeth will become " what thou art promised" (Act 1, Scene V). This use of " promised," rather than predicted or foretold, shows that both characters want to believe this so badly that they have accepted it quickly without pessimism. This foreshadowing is evident. As the Thane of Cawdor had to die before Macbeth could take his place, so must the king die for Macbeth to take his crown.

Still, both characters show unique qualities that contribute to the murderous scheme. By foiling each other in method, these two characters provide each other with the motivation and greed needed to fulfill the witches prophecies. Lady Macbeth openly says within moments of reading the letter by Macbeth

that she will " chastise with the valour of my tongue / All that impedes thee from the golden round," meaning that she plans to convince Macbeth despite the initial reservations she thinks her husband will have. This is because she describes his nature as " full o' the milk of human kindness" who " wouldst not play false" (Act I, Scene V). So, where Lady Macbeth would do anything to be crowned queen, Macbeth's loyal, kind nature might not allow for this it happen. Ironically, though the reader would expect a great warrior like Macbeth to be the better murder, his wife thinks he is so full of kindness and loyalty that he won't be able to harm his king. This is how they foil each other, since both have ambition but only Lady Macbeth has the true heartlessness to follow through with murder.

Therefore, both characters are contributing to the future drama of the play. Together, they may possess the killing experience and sheer determination to murder the king. Though the witches were a catalyst to the plot, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth obviously provided a fertile ground to which the witches planted the idea of destiny's inevitable crowning.