

Ambition in the play macbeth

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



Ambition fills a man with eagerness. Once it is discovered in one's mind, it demands to be acted upon. Shakespeare's Macbeth is a tale of fight between men's instinct and their love for hierarchical order. The play portrays various levels and dimensions of ambition through its major characters. Shakespeare loves social stability. In this play we notice the consequences of sheltering uncontrolled ambition.

The realisations of Macbeth teach us the role of ambition in life. The witches plant the driving force of the plot in the mind of Macbeth. The ambition which gets into him is actually a discovery of his self-knowledge. Here we can see, how the same lure set by the witches start different kinds of thoughts in different characters. While Macbeth divides himself between his conscience and his much darker side, Lady Macbeth sets herself on the path to break into a world of men without knowing how to do it. When an obsessively ambitious person is busy in progress, he remains less dangerous. Every time the progress of ambition is prevented in the play, violence happens. In a political climate, we get to see minds revealing themselves at the mercy of ambition. Lady Macbeth and the witches are only the dim reminder to Macbeth, it is his own obsession with power which drives his downfall.

Macbeth used to be a loyal person, fighting for his own country. Duncan, King of Scotland, appointed him as the Thane of Cawdor. Macbeth's life could have been an example of honour and royalty sanctioned by society but he is a deeply ambitious person with a relentless pursuit of power. He realises what is right but he is a slave to his darker side. His darker side is constantly fuelled by Lady Macbeth and the witches. Ambition set against the time-

honoured principles takes away any hint of hope from this tragic text. Lady Macbeth's ambition to become a queen makes her to wish for crossing all boundaries. She detests her feminine qualities which stops her from stepping upon a path normally allowed to a man in such a society. Her ambition channels through the actions of Macbeth. Here we see, how ambition spreads its branches across individuals. Ambition makes her ruthless. With acute clarity, she brings Macbeth out of moral dilemma and conspires him into darker deeds. She is caught in a conflict of "unsex" ing herself. Somehow unconsciously, her ambition is also to break away from the domination of any man. In the play, we also see instances of stabilising ambition inspired by a sense of revenge in Macduff and Malcolm. They aim for re-establishing the earlier order.

The role of ambition in this play secretly shows us a society where old norms are being broken apart. It is best summed in this dialogue of the character called Ross, "gainst Nature still! Thriftless ambition still ravin up thine own lives' means! Then tis' most like the Sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth." (Act 2, Scene 4)