

The masculinity of lady macbeth

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



Response: It is clear in following excerpt from the play that Lady Macbeth exhibits manipulative power over Macbeth by persuading him to follow through with their intentions for Duncan. “ Was the hope drunk/ wherein you dress’d yourself? Hath it slept since?/ and wakes it now, to look so green and pale/ At what it did so freely? From this time/such I account thy love” (I. Vii 35-58). Lady Macbeth’s manipulative power is evident through her goading of Macbeth; his masculine drive and his role as Thane, and leader.

She links these to his role in her life and her opinion of him as her husband.

Assertion: Manhood

Lady M is clearly mindful of the assumption that ambition is a male domain. However she over powers this stereotype as she calls the spirits to “ Unsex me here, and fill me from the crown to the toe top full of direst cruelty; make thick my blood.” (I. V 39-42) In doing this she makes particular reference to feminine characteristics that she fears will strip her of her power.

Assertion: Guilt/the effect of ambition on people. Lady M recognizes her husband as an ambitious man, however she also sees him as weak and volatile to emotions. Macbeth carries out the deed yet the guilt begins to reach his mind quicker than Lady Ms.“ Will great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood clean from my hands” (II ii 58-59). Macbeth is begging to realize the full extent of the crime he has committed.

The theme of guilt can also be interwoven with the effect ambition has on people. Ambition is the driving force in the play for both Lady Macbeth and Macbeth. Ambition is an emotion that has the power to drive even the strongest characters insane. “ Hers the smell of blood still: all the perfumes

of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh! Oh! Oh.” (V. I 42-44). The crimes she has committed finally got to Lady Ms head. With this she sleep walks and begins to spill her darkest secrets, leaving Macbeth to deal with the war that is to come.

Natural and unnatural: Is it natural for women to take on so many attributes and personality traits of a man? Lady M is the complete opposite of the olden day women. She is just as much man as Macbeth himself. This os evident within the expert “ I have given suck, and know how tender ‘ tis to love the babe that milks me: I would, while it was smiling in my face, have pluck’d my nipple from his boneless gums, and dash’d the brains out, had I so sworn as you have done to this. “(I VII 54-58). Or should this be something about the witches?