

# Is lady macbeth a fiend-like queen

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Macbeth is a play set in the 12th century, which focuses on the trials and tribulations of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Lady Macbeth plays a huge part in a plan to kill the current King, Duncan. She plans to kill him so her and her husband can be King and Queen. The term "fiend-like queen" comes from Malcolm, one of King Duncan's sons. At this time, women were in a very poor position. Her plan is very ambitious because men were seen as mentally and physically stronger than women. Furthermore, if a Monarch (King or Queen), was killed, it was seen as a terrible sin.

A Shakespearean audience would have been horrified at the plot. They would have seen it as a crime against God. However, Lady Macbeth isn't completely "fiend-like" as we see later in the play, when the time to murder the King arrives. When we deeply examine Lady Macbeth in Act 1, Scene 5, it is very clear Lady Macbeth is definitely "fiend-like." Firstly, she speaks about the character and nature of her husband, Macbeth, in her soliloquy. She says he isn't strong enough to take the throne. He is too full of inner goodness: "too full o' th' milk of human kindness.

She will ensure Macbeth will become King. She will assist him in doing so: "what thou wouldst highly, that wouldst thou holily." Lady Macbeth knows her husband will take the throne reasonably rather than with force. She is really saying that she will take charge of the murder of Duncan. Next, we see how Lady Macbeth calls on evil spirits to invade will serve murderous thoughts. Lady Macbeth wants to be more masculine and less feminine: "unsex me."

She wants her blood thickened so emotion and pity can't flow through her veins: "make thick my blood. This is so she can commit the murder without

looking back. During the Shakespearean era, it was believed that witches were in existence and had many powers. In Scotland, between 1590 and 1680, about 4400 women who were believed to be witches, were executed. At this point, the audience would have been horrified at the character of Lady Macbeth. Also, they would have seen her as utterly evil, sinful and malignant. Lady Macbeth wants the spirits to cover them in the "dunest smoke of hell." In this scene, her role as a strong, feminine figure may have made her a figure of hatred and repugnance.

Macbeth arrives and tells of the King Duncan's visit. Lady Macbeth says the sun will not shine for Duncan on that day: "O never shall sun that morrow see." She makes her intentions very clear. Lady Macbeth says Macbeth could be read like a book: "your face ..... is a book where men may read strange matters." Macbeth will have to deceive the world. For this, he will have to wear a suitable expression: "to beguile the time, you have to look like the time." Lady Macbeth tells him to "bear welcome in your eye." She tells him to be welcoming.

He has to be like a flower on the outside, but a serpent on the inside: "look like th' innocent flower, but be the serpent under't." She mentions "Which shall to all our nights and days to come give solely sovereign sway and masterdom." This means that tonight ensures our royal future and this is the most important night of our lives. Lady Macbeth creates many dark images in the play. Her language is dark and sinister. This clearly reflects the "fiend-like" nature of Lady Macbeth: "murdering ministers", "dunest smoke of

hell" and " come, thick night. This language is extremely dark and " fiend-like. "

When we examine Act 1, Scenes 6 and 7, we again see Lady Macbeth as a " fiend-like queen. " In Scene 6, Duncan has arrived for his visit. On arrival, King Duncan comments on the beauty of the surroundings and how Lady Macbeth is " our honoured hostess. " Duncan doesn't yet know about his fate. This is dramatic irony. The King is warmly welcomed by her. At this point, Lady Macbeth is very nice, sweet and polite, but she is being false and two faced: " your Majesty loads our house. " This means she is honoured to be the host for Duncan's visit.

This is more proof that she is a " fiend-like queen. " The audience would have been disgusted and gob-smacked at Lady Macbeth being so nice to the person she is planning to kill. In Act 1, Scene 7, Macbeth himself is weighing up the pros and cons of killing Duncan. He has his doubts about the plan: " return to plague th' inventor. " This means that the deed would rebound on the person who started it. The punishment in his mind would be inevitable. Also, Macbeth says Duncan has been good to him. Lady Macbeth enters. Macbeth is a little on edge: " Hath he asked for me? he thinks Duncan is getting suspicious.

Macbeth then reveals he isn't going to proceed with the murderous deed: " We will proceed no further in this business. " She erupts in anger at Macbeth saying: " Was the hope drunk wherein you dressed yourself? " She asks if Macbeth was drunk when he gave his permission to go along with the plan. She then teases Macbeth: " and live a coward. " This, in her mind, was

supposed to change his mind. Also, she questions his masculinity: " be so much more of a man. " He would be manlier if he committed the murder. Then, the possibility of failing arises.

Lady Macbeth erupts at the thought: " we fail? " Then the plan comes out. She came up with the whole thing. Macbeth is full of admiration because of her planning and confidence at this point. The two must " mock the time" which means they need to deceive the world. Lady Macbeth has succeeded in changing the wavering mind of Macbeth. The audience would have seen her as a completely " fiend-like queen. " They would have been disgusted with her at this point. When we examine Act 2, Scenes 2 and 3, we can see her as " fiend-like" but during these scenes, we see that Lady Macbeth isn't all fiendish.

In scene 2, we see that Lady Macbeth has been drinking: " That which hath them drunk, hath made me bold. " When she hears a sudden noise, she is on edge and jumpy. Is she regretting anything now? Macbeth then speaks to her. She tells that she couldn't commit the murder: " Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had done't. " we can see some emotion and pity flowing through her veins.

Macbeth also seems a little on edge as well: " Didst thou hear a noise? " He makes sure that he wasn't seen or heard from any other rooms: " who lies I' th' second chamber? she then gets her " fiend-like" qualities back when she says Macbeth is foolish when he said that their bloody hands were a " sorry sight. " In my opinion, she is back to her old tricks again. She thought Macbeth was reading too much into the deed. Lady Macbeth is then furious

when Macbeth brings back the daggers which were to be planted on the guards. Her response to the blood is: " A little water clears us of this deed. " The two hear a knocking at the south entrance. " Get on your nightgown. " They must look as if they are innocent and were in bed the whole time.

By the end of the scene, Macbeth wishes the knocking would wake Duncan. Macbeth is definitely regretting what he has just done. In Scene 3, a porter who has been drinking responds to the knocking. He is angry at his rest being disturbed. It is Macduff and Lennox. They have come to wake Duncan as planned. Macduff is the one to find the body and raises the alarm. The Macbeths have to act shocked at the discovery. Lady Macbeth enters. She acts as if she knows nothing of this deed: " what's the business.....? " Eventually, all the characters at the castle feature. They are revolted, shocked and horror-struck.

All the visitors are suspicious. As part of the plan, she faints to take the emphasis off the subject: " Help me hence, ho! " Banquo then takes charge. All present swear an oath to right. However, Malcolm and Donalbain the sons of Duncan, flee to England and Ireland for fear they too will be murdered. In Act 5, Scene 1, Lady Macbeth is having trouble sleeping. A gentlewoman calls a Doctor to see what is wrong. On the night the Doctor is there, she enters, carrying a candle. We find out that she now has to have a light with her as she sleeps: "'tis her command. " She begins speaking: " out damned spot, out I say! she is washing her hands and thinks she sees a spot of Duncan's blood on her hand.

She goes on to speak of the murders of Duncan, Lady Macduff, and unknown to him, the death of Banquo. The Doctor is unsure what she is talking about. Finally, the Doctor says she needs a priest rather than a Doctor: " The disease is beyond my practice. " The Gentlewoman is told to keep an eye on Lady Macbeth and the Doctor leaves. The audience would have seen her as completely changed. She now has nightmares about the murderous deed committed. To conclude, I thought at the beginning of the play that she was a " fiend-like queen".

But as I read on, I saw her change momentarily and then go back to her old ways. But by the end, she was having nightmares and finally at the end of the play throws herself off the top of the castle. She couldn't live with the guilt and killed herself. Macbeth was in mid-battle at this point and was eventually killed by Macduff, There is no happy ending for the Macbeths. I think that she was completely and utterly " fiend-like" because of the plan and the constant taunting of Macbeth. Also, she was very two-faced and fraudulent. That is my decision. She was a " fiend-like queen. "