

Macbeth illness motif



PD: 3 Macbeth Motif: Illness Motif statement: Shakespeare utilizes the motif of illness to highlight how Macbeth's thirst for power has led Scotland into tyranny. Illness symbolizes the decay of Macbeth's morals along with the fall of Scotland. Quotations with explanations: 1. Scene 4 Act 3 Lines 169-181 Context: Malcolm and Macduff are speaking; the doctor enters and reports on the well-being of a cured patient. Macduff asks about the illness, Malcolm explains that the English King has healing powers. Explanation: This depiction of the king of England stands in an obvious contrast to descriptions of Macbeth.

The king is shown to be one of the best of men, illustrated by his healing. His "heavenly gift of prophecy" allows his country to prosper. However, Macbeth's foresight has led into a dark cave that it cannot escape from until Macbeth is dead. "Sundry blessings" hang around the English throne, while curses hang around the Scottish. 2. Scene 5 Act 4 Lines 62-64 Context: Just after Macbeth receives news of the soldiers marching against him, the doctor delivers a short but horrendous report of the condition of Macbeth's wife.

Macbeth compares the shambled state of his country to the unfortunate state of his wife. Explanation: In asking the doctor for a cure for Scotland, Macbeth displays that he finally notices the consequences of his actions. However, he is not admitting to his own actions being the cause of his country's "disease." This is said just after Macbeth has been told of the army marching toward the castle, and of the desertion of his nobles, which illuminates that the real illness in the country is him, Macbeth.

By asking the doctor to purge Scotland of her disease, Macbeth is really asking the doctor to cure Scotland by removing him. 3. Act 3 Scene 4 Lines

51-55 Context: Lennox and another character are speaking of the political terror in Scotland, and Lennox comments on the desire for Macduff to return soon and save Scotland from the tyranny of Macbeth. Explanation: Before Macbeth's thirst for power overcame his good nature, these two lords were close followers of Macbeth and obeyed his every command.

Now that Macbeth has been utterly corrupted, Lennox is praying that the English rescue Scotland from their tyrant of a leader. Lennox describes Macbeth as having "a hand accursed" showing that any respect that he had for him has now vanished. Macbeth has shed all of his supporters and has put the country that he once longed to rule in terrible suffering. Quotes with context only:

1. Act 5 Scene 1 Lines 75-77 Context: The doctor sees firsthand the sleepwalking, and talking, and crying that Lady Macbeth does while asleep and says why he thinks she is doing it. . Act 5 Scene 3 Lines 49-55

Context: The doctor announces to Macbeth that his wife is not physically ill, but that her minds troubles are preventing her from sleeping. Macbeth then asks the doctor why he does not just drug her so she could sleep. 3. Act 1 Scene 5 Lines 18-20 Context: After receiving the letter from Macbeth about the witches' prophecy, Lady Macbeth wonders whether Macbeth has the courage and brutality to kill Duncan to become king, as the witches said. 4.

Act 2 Scene 2 Lines 68-70 context: Macbeth returns from killing Duncan and is not able to put the knives back in the room. Lady Macbeth insults Macbeth by calling him weak and places the knives by the guards herself. 5. Act 2 Scene 3 Lines 25-26 context: Macbeth has just sent two murderers to kill Banquo and is now haunted by his past treasons. He dwells on how even

through the pain that he had run Duncan through with his dagger, at least Duncan is able to rest, unlike him.