

Blood in the play "macbeth" by william shakespeare

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



What is blood? According to the definition from Google. com, it states that blood is “ the red liquid that circulates in the arteries and veins of humans and other vertebrate animals, carrying oxygen to and carbon dioxide from the tissues of the body.”

However, in the play “ Macbeth” written by William Shakespeare it’s more than just liquid that circulates the body. Blood is associated with violence and/or death, but blood also comes to symbolize guilt. Macbeth is one of Shakespeare’s bloodiest play and is made clear that it is undoubtedly a violent tale. The play contains several murders, deaths, and a lot of guilt. In the play, blood is used to reveal multiple dramatic functions, exemplifies symbolism and help the audience understand the character Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

On the cover of the book, blood is drawn dripping all over, it gives us the importance and significance of the blood motif but William Shakespeare also decides to start off his play with it. In Act 1, Scene 1, Line 2 he wrote: “ What bloody man is that?” The quote describes the part where King Duncan, sees a wounded person covered in blood due to the war. The motif of blood here represents more than the literal meaning of a man bleeding because of the wound he has. The choices of words chosen by Shakespeare makes the audience believe that after so many wounded people, the appearance of one more man that is indistinguishable gives Duncan aggravated thoughts about the number of people that they lost in the battle. The motif used in this line foreshadows the following events of the story. Not only is Duncan talking about the blood and the wounded but he is also the one that ends up getting

murdered by Macbeth. Throughout the play, blood is repeatedly used as a symbol of murder and guilt.

In Act 2, Scene 1, Lines 53-56 it states, " And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood, which was not so before. There's no such thing: it is the bloody business which informs thus to mine eyes." This quote was when Macbeth felt nervous about killing Duncan and starts to hallucinate a floating dagger guiding towards Duncan's room. Macbeth is unsure about the murder that it portrays a bloody dagger being a direct symbol of guilty murder.

In Act 2, Scene 2 Lady Macbeth and Macbeth are talking about Macbeth having done the deed, which caused him to have his hand covered in blood. Blood is mentioned quite often throughout Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's conversation of the deed. Also in Act 2, Scene 2, Lines 76-80 it states " What hands are here? Ha! They pluck out my eyes. Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather The multitudinous seas incarnadine, Making the green one red." Macbeth says that the sight of blood, the idea of the murder, is so awful that it metaphorically rips his eyes out. The blood on his hands is a clear symbol of the guilt that he now feels. He feels like he cannot wash the blood away reveals that he will never be able to get rid of the guilt, no matter what he does it forever stains his moral sense.

In Act 2, Scene 2, Line 120 it states, " Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;" The mention of the motif of blood here is mostly to develop the plot. In this quote, Lennox is telling Malcolm and Donalbain about the guards being caught with blood on their body, which was actually part of the plan

between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. The quote relates to the part where Lennox is talking about the guards having blood all over their bodies.

However, this can also be related to Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

Shakespeare could have also made this statement referring to how Macbeth and Lady Macbeth can be seen as flawed characters. After the murder, they are not considered as good human beings but rather people who have sinned and can be seen as guilty of it.

In Act 2, Scene 3, Line 150 it describes Duncan's death as " this most bloody piece of work," After discovering that the king was murdered, Banquo tells everyone to meet again later so they can discuss what really happened. I " The word " bloody" does give the scene an, exhausted and stressful feeling. In addition, it creates a heavy atmosphere towards the audience making it seem that everyone is suffering from the loss of the king and also from the big drama that is happening. Throughout the play, there were many references to characters when they spoke about blood but in this case, the motif of blood is used not on a character's dialogue or soliloquy but in a stage direction in Act 4, Scene 1 " Thunder. Second Apparition: A bloody Child." When the stage direction happens, the second apparatus is supposed to begin. It shows how Macbeth can't be killed by anyone born from a woman.

Blood is one aspect that has been present throughout the whole play, even though it is indirectly. The stage directions were supposed to be only read by the actors in the play, the blood in this context was supposed to be seen by the audience and not spoken about. The fact that Shakespeare chose a child

to be all bloody only intensifies Macbeth's childish naiveness that allowed him to be led into such ambitions and eventually his death. The last reason why blood has such a significant meaning throughout the play Macbeth is the motif of blood in Act 5, Scene 1. This scene is very important not only to the plot of the play but to the characterization of Lady Macbeth. In this scene, the doctor and the gentlewoman see Lady Macbeth sleepwalking through the palace. However, instead of having any dream, Lady Macbeth is thinking about Duncan's murder and, due to that, she reenacts the scene where she had to clean her hands from the king's blood. You can see that she dramatically shift from being full of confidence and being a savage, to where she is feeling guilty about all of it.

In Act 5, Scene 1, Lines 29-30 it states, " Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him." The word " blood" in this quote refers to the amount of blood that Duncan had when Macbeth killed him. The reason why she is saying such thing is because she was the one responsible for putting the daggers back which made her hands bloodied. Throughout the play, the motif of blood has represented guilt but in this quote, it emphasizes how important it actually is. This motif in this quote shows the guilt that has been affecting her mentally. The blood in this quote portrays that some actions can't be taken back and that, due to that, people have the face the consequences. Only this time, Lady Macbeth couldn't do it and ended up killing herself.

In conclusion, in Shakespeare's most violent tragedy, blood is a definite symbol of murder, but perhaps the most relevant and constant idea that

blood embodies in the play is guilt. This horrible guilt leads to the drastic shifts in the minds of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Macbeth suffers death by diving too deep and too far in the blood that continues to stain him, and Lady Macbeth is driven completely mad by a haunting red spot on her hand. By analyzing several instances of blood imagery, it is clear to see that, in Macbeth, it is an essential part of revealing characterization, symbolism, and other dramatic functions.