

# Macbeths downfall essay



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Macbeths Downfall In the beginning of the play Macbeth, Macbeth is a successful and noble Thane of Glamis. The witches tell Macbeth prophecies that guide him to his downfall, but in the end it was his own selfish decisions that caused his demise. The other person that is blamed for Macbeth's destruction was his wife Lady Macbeth because she was able to manipulate and control his self-esteem by playing with his courage and bravery. However, Macbeth was only guided by his wife; he chose to play out his own outcome. Overall, Macbeth's own ambitions, greed and self control were the main problems that caused his downfall.

In the play these factors have some influence on Macbeth; however he is still responsible for his own destiny. The influences of the witches prophecies, and Lady Macbeths desires play a small part towards Macbeth's demise; it is Macbeth's selfish ambitions that are the main reasons which lead to his downfall and destruction. In the play Macbeth, the three witches prophesized to Macbeth future events that lead him to make destructive decisions causing his downfall. The three witches reveal to Macbeth that they foresee him becoming Thane of Cawdor and then becoming King of Scotland. The second witch says to Macbeth " All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee Thane of Cawdor" (1, III, 49).

The third witch then says " All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king here after! " (1, III, 50). Macbeth has a hard time believing that he will receive these titles that the witches foresee. However once Macbeth becomes Thane of Cawdor he starts wondering about other predictions that the witches revealed to him and Banquo. The witches' prophecy leads Macbeth to decide his own outcome that causes his downfall. The witches disclose to Macbeth

prophecies that come true which leads him to think about killing the king, but Macbeth decides for himself whether or not he will kill him. Macbeth then says to himself " Two truths are told, as happy prologues to the swelling act of the imperial theme" (1, III, 128-130). Macbeth then said " If good, why do I yield to that suggestion whose horrid image doth unfix my hair and make my seated heart knock at my ribs, against the use of nature? Present fears are less than horrible imaginings" (1, III, 135-139). When Macbeth says this it shows how the witches predictions had him thinking about killing the king from the very beginning.

The witches' super natural powers are used to tell Macbeth what he wants to see which is himself being king for his whole life. The third apparition tells Macbeth " Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no more who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are. Macbeth shall never vanquished until great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill shall come against him" (4, I, 90-94). Macbeth then says " That will never be. Who can impress the forest, bid the tree unfix his earthbound root? Sweet bodements! Good! Rebellious dead, rise never till the wood Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath to time and mortal custom"(4, I, 95-103).

When Macbeth heard this prophecy he becomes even more arrogant, because he is not afraid of anything or anyone. This prophecy leads Macbeth to believe he has more power but really he doesn't since Macduff kills him in the end. Overall, the witches had shown Macbeth predictions about his future, but it was himself who had to decide how the outcome would prevail. In the play Macbeth, Lady Macbeth manipulates Macbeth into doing things he wouldn't have done by himself, but Macbeth chose to listen to Lady

Macbeth and go along with her plans. Lady Macbeth is talking to herself about how Macbeth isn't brave enough to take the crown for himself so she will have to get involved to persuade Macbeth. Lady Macbeth says to herself " Hie thee hither, that I may pour my spirits in thine ear and chastise with the valor of my tongue all that impedes thee from the golden round, which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem to have thee crowned withal" (1, V, 25-30). When Lady Macbeth gives the plan of killing the king to Macbeth at first he is afraid. Macbeth then decides for himself that he will kill the king by following his wife's plan which leads to his downfall.

Lady Macbeth is talking to Macbeth right after he has killed Duncan, when Macbeth forgot about planting the daggers so Lady Macbeth had to do it herself. Lady Macbeth says to Macbeth " Infirm of purpose! Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead are but as pictures. Tis the eye of childhood that fears a painted devil. If he do not bleed, I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal, For it must seem their guilt" (2, II, 56-60).

Even though Lady Macbeth helped Macbeth out in this situation, Macbeth is still at fault for the murder of Duncan which leads to his death. Lady Macbeth is talking to herself about how she needs to try to be more of a man because women aren't allowed to do the things she does, but if she doesn't help Macbeth, he won't become king. Lady Macbeth says to herself " Come, you spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here and fill me from the crown to the top-full of direst cruelty! (1, V, 40-43). Although Lady Macbeth made the plan to kill Duncan, it was Macbeth who chose for himself to go through with it and kill the king. In conclusion, Lady Macbeth easily controls Macbeth into doing her bidding, but in the end Macbeth chose his own

decisions causing his downfall. In the play Macbeth, Macbeth's extreme passion and ambition is what drove his desire to become king causing his own downfall. Macbeth is obsessed with becoming king and is blinded by his own ambition.

He doesn't want to wait for the witches' prophecy to pan out so he acts on his own. This is shown when he says to himself " Stars, hide your fires; let not light see my black and deep desires. The eye wink at the hand, yet let that be which the eye fears, when it is done, to see" (1, IV, 50-51). Macbeth reveals to us his plan to kill Duncan.

After Duncan announces that his son Malcolm will be Prince of Cumberland, which means he is next in line for king. When Macbeth hears this he is angry because he knows that he'll have to do something very risky that will cause his downfall. Macbeth hires peasants to kill Banquo and Fleance because Macbeth is afraid that Banquo will find out he killed the king. Macbeth doesn't want the witches' predictions to come true so he kills Banquo in order to make the witches predictions false. Macbeth says to himself " To be thus is nothing, but to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo stick deep, and in his royalty of nature reigns that which would be feared. ' Tis much he dares, and to that dauntless temper of his mind he hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor to act in safety. There is none but he whose being I do fear" (3, I, 49-56).

Macbeth shows how truly selfish he is because he is already king, but he doesn't want the descendents of Banquo to become kings so he hires someone to kill him. This causes Macbeths breakdown since he starts to see

Banquo's ghost. Macbeth's delusions are caused from guilt which is building from all the people he's killed causing him to go crazy. Macbeth is so paranoid about everything he goes to the witches for help because their last predictions were right, even though in the end he takes their prophecies to literal and thinks he is invincible. Macbeth says to the witches " Though you untie the winds and let them fight against the churches, though the yeasty waves confound and swallow navigation up, though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down, though castles topple on their warders' heads, though palaces and pyramids do slope their heads to their foundations, though the treasure of nature's germens tumble all together, even till destruction sicken, answer me to what I ask you" (4, 1, 52-61). This shows how self centered Macbeth is because he says he doesn't care what happens to anyone or anything as long as he gets what he wants. Macbeth wanting everything leads to his destruction since the witches imply in their prophecies that Macbeth won't die from someone born from a woman.

Macbeth believes this but in the end he is killed by a man. In summary, Macbeth caused his own downfall by being greedy and too ambitious in that he wanted too much for himself which ended up causing his down fall. In the end the influences of the witches' prophecies and Lady Macbeth's control over Macbeth played a part in his downfall. However, it was ultimately Macbeth himself who took action upon these ideas and ended up killing King Duncan in order to obtain the title of king and all that goes with it. It was Macbeth's own weakness that caused him to be lured by Lady's Macbeth's plan; if he was truly noble valiant man he would not have succumbed to her ploys and would not have killed. It was Macbeth's own blind ambition and

thirst for power which lead to his own death and destruction, by killing his best friend to secure his own lineage only proves how selfish he is. The killing of Banquo causes Macbeth to basically lose his own mind which further leads to his demise.

Macbeth is killed in the end because he is a selfish weak man, who only thought of himself and his own ambitions. Work Cited Shakespeare, William. Macbeth. Printed in the United States: Bantam Books. 1980.