

# Macbeth

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'Great Expectations' and 'Macbeth' include many relationships between many characters whether it is friendship or a marital relationship. One of the main relationships that are portrayed in both stories is marital relationship. In 'Macbeth', Macbeth is married to Lady Macbeth and in 'Great Expectations', Joe is married to Mrs Joe. These relationships are very important to the plot as we determine whether they support each other.

In 'Macbeth' we first know of the matrimonial relationship of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth when Macbeth is talking to Duncan and accepts to be the harbinger and writes a letter to inform his wife of the King's visit to Macbeth's castle, Inverness. Macbeth then writes a letter to Lady Macbeth, to whom he refers her as his 'dearest partner of greatness'. Macbeth also calls his wife 'dearest chuck.' This shows that Macbeth loves his wife and thinks of her as a good person. This is ironic as later on in the scene, we find out that Lady Macbeth is not a good lady but she is evil and wants to become more evil. In the same letter, Macbeth tells his wife of the 3 prophecies he was told and how happy he was and could not wait to tell his wife his success of being the new Thane of Cawdor and the future prospect of king. This is evident that Macbeth shares everything with his wife and loves sharing his happiness with her.

However in 'Great Expectations' we find out that Joe and Mrs Joe were married when Pip was being questioned by Magwitch. Magwitch asked Pip who he lives with and Pip replied back by timidly explaining "My sister sir- Mrs Joe Gargery-wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir." This signals that the relationship is quite weak because Pip says it timidly and thoughtfully; whereas, the Macbeths' relationship is quite strong and blossoming.

In *Great Expectations*, again we find out more about Joe and Mrs Joe's relationship from Pip. We learn that Mrs Joe has 'a hard and heavy hand which has the habit of laying it upon her husband.' This signifies that Mrs Joe is the more powerful person in the relationship and wants her husband to follow her and agree with her. This would shock a Victorian reader because they would expect a lower class wife to be subservient to her husband and not hit him. Also when Joe, Mrs Joe and Pip walk to town Mrs Joe leads the way. This is a metaphor for Mrs Joe leading her relationship with Joe.

Similarly, Lady Macbeth also shows she has a powerful influence over her husband when she persuades Macbeth to kill King Duncan. Lady Macbeth does this by questioning Macbeth's manliness this is seen in the words 'Be so much more than a man' and 'when you durst do it, then you were a man.' She believes that if Macbeth does not follow his desire he will prove to be a coward.. As an audience we feel sorry for Macbeth because of the pressure his wife is putting on him. Lady Macbeth speaks using imperative verbs and sentences; this is exemplified in Lady Macbeth's soliloquy 'Come to my woman's breast and 'Come, you spirits. ' This would shock the Shakespearean audience because a high status woman would be evil and controlling. It is apparent to the audience that Lady Macbeth wants to become a man when she declares to the spirits to 'unsex me here.' The audience experiences catharsis at this because her passion and belief is so strong. This also contributes to the Shakespeare's theme of ambition because it is Lady Macbeth's ambition to become Queen as it was at the top of the hierarchy and she is more ambitious than her husband.

In 'Great Expectations' Mrs Joe is not happy with her marriage to Joe because she says while cleaning the house for Christmas that she may have been able to hear the carols if 'I wasn't a blacksmith's wife. She also talks about how she is 'a slave with her apron never off.' The reader assumes that she is very busy and never gets time to rest. In the Victorian era we would expect that for a low class woman because women then were expected to manage the house and look after the children.

In both stories we learn that neither couple has a child. However in Macbeth, we assume that the Macbeths had a child when Lady Macbeth brings up the topic of their dead child to emotionally persuade Macbeth to kill Duncan. This is highlighted in the words 'I have given suck and know/How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me.' This shows that Lady Macbeth has a soft and vulnerable side to her. She knows how it feels like to have a child and love them. In 'Great Expectations' Joe and Mrs Joe do not have a child but they have adopted Mrs Joe's brother Pip, the protagonist of 'Great Expectations.' Joe sees Pip like a son because they were both 'brought up by hand,' by Mrs Joe. In the Victorian era it was seen as a curse if you didn't have a child and the couple who were unable to produce any offspring should adopt a child.

After the murder of King Duncan, the Macbeths' relationship begins to fall and become weaker. They begin to hide thoughts and their actions from each other. An example of this is when Macbeth hides his thoughts of murdering Banquo and tells his wife to 'present him eminence.' Macbeth also tells his wife that they have to make their 'faces vizards their hearts,' this is very ironic as Macbeth is hiding valuable pieces of information and he is not telling Lady Macbeth everything in his heart and he is being very loving to

his wife but he is not letting her on everything he is doing. At this moment Macbeth still loves his wife as he calls her 'dearest chuck' and 'dear wife,'

This is not the case in 'Great Expectation' as Joe begins to stop falling in love with Mrs Joe and starts to take an interest in Biddy as she is young and able to read and write. After the death of Mrs Joe, Joe marries Biddy because they love each other even though the age gap is over ten years. This was common in the Victorian era however this is now frowned upon in this contemporary society.

In Great Expectations, Mrs Joe expects Joe to protect her and be there for security and fight for if anyone says anything to her. However, Joe does not. This is exemplified when Orlick verbally abuses her in front of Joe and Joe does not do anything other than tell Orlick to 'let her alone.' Mrs Joe is was horrified when Jo does not and shouts out in protest 'with my husband standing by!' As a modern audience we would expect our husbands to protect us and defend us no matter what the situation is.

However, in Macbeth Lady Macbeth is able to cover and hide Macbeth from everyone however Macbeth is unable to do this. This is evident when Macbeth and Lady Macbeth hold a banquet as King and Queen for the first time. At the banquet, Banquo's ghost comes back to haunt Macbeth because Macbeth hired three assassins to murder Banquo and Fleance. After seeing the ghost Macbeth panics and he is unable to control himself. Lady Macbeth controls Macbeth by again, she questions his manliness and rebukes Macbeth for his display of fear this is seen in the rhetorical question 'Are you a man?' Macbeth is expected to collect himself and behave like a King in front of his subjects and noble men.

Likewise, in 'Great Expectation' Mrs Joe also tells Joe off for giving a half-holiday to all of his workers. When telling Joe off Mrs Joe uses insulting language this is highlighted in the words 'you fool' and 'the dunder-headed king of the noodles.' This would shock a Victorian reader because a Victorian wife was never expected to insult her husband and she was to be grateful to him as he provided the income. Joe having the power over his wife could have hit her but he didn't, this was because he did not want to treat his wife like his father had treated his mother. Therefore Joe acts in conciliatory manner when anyone is angry.

In the end of Macbeth the attitudes of Lady Macbeth and Macbeth reverse and change. This is all related to the amount of murders both of them have committed. Lady Macbeth has nightmares and starts sleep walking and imaging blood on her hand. This is ironic because earlier on in the book the Lady Macbeth tells Macbeth to go to asleep. Lady Macbeth's illness cannot be cured because a psychiatrist is needed to help the mentally ill and in the eleventh century psychiatrists did not exist. Macbeth becomes more powerful and determined to kill his opposition and he has no fear at all. Macbeth stills loves his wife and cannot live without her and pleads the doctors to cure her using any kind of medicine. This is evident in the words, 'Cure her,' the audience experiences pathos because Macbeth is losing his partner whom he loved and cared for. Similarly in 'Great Expectations,' Joe and Mrs Joe's relationship becomes weaker. This is triggered by the mysterious attack on Mrs Joe which left her with many disabilities. Bidly, a local school teacher comes and looks after the household and Mrs Joe. Joe stills loves his wife, this is as apparent in, 'Such a fine figure of a woman as

she once were.' This shows that Joe loved and still loves his wife. Dickens uses alliteration to stress how good Joe thought Mrs Joe was.

Macbeth's and Lady Macbeth's comes to an end when Lady Macbeth dies; it is assumed that she committed suicide because of the amount of guilt for killing the numerous amounts of people she and her husband killed. Macbeth takes the news of his wife death with sadness and regret this is as seen in the words, ' She should have died hereafter, /There would have been a time for such a word.' This suggests that Macbeth wished that his wife died another time so he was able to mourn for her properly. At this point, Macbeth has lost all hope and his wife was his hope and strength of life.

This is also seen in Great Expectations, as Mrs Joe dies. Joe is saddened by the death of his wife and he is unable to finish his sentences that he speaks this is shown in the words, ' you knowed her when she were a fine figure of a -.... and said no more.' At this point Joe is talking to Pip and is unable to complete his sentence due to the remorse in in his heart. This also shows how incomplete Joe is without his wife as she used to pull him together.

Both writers present their relationships in very similar ways as both relationships begin strong but as time passes they begin to weaken with the relationship between the Macbeth's completely destroyed due to their own actions. Also, both writers present the female characters in a very controlling and possessive way as they wear the ' trousers' in their relationships. This would have been shocking to both audiences as women were seen as very low in society and in the eyes of men.