

The macbeths

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



The Macbeths Macbeth is a play full of darkness, evil, and tragedy. It is the story of a man who goes against his conscience and commits a horrible deed which leads to his destruction and loss of everything he has around him. This includes the relationship he has with his wife, Lady Macbeth. In the end, he can blame no one but himself.

At the beginning of the play, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have a very strong relationship and this deteriorates later. Act 1 Scene 5 is a key scene which shows just how close Macbeth and Lady Macbeth were at the beginning of the play; it shows their original relationship. Macbeth has written a letter to Lady Macbeth telling her of everything and in this letter states also that she helped him to get everything for him. The following speech where Lady Macbeth doubts that he can get to the title of King " he is too full of the milk of human kindness" shows just how close they were.

It establishes the fact that she knew him so well, she knew what he was like and it emphasises the closeness of their relationship. She speaks of how he has enough ambition but not enough courage. His " overriding ambition" is not enough. When Macbeth and Lady Macbeth speak, they speak to each other with such closeness and bond; he calls her his " dearest chuck", his " partner of greatness". She knows that he is too weak to do anything and states her position in the murder " leave the rest to me". In Act 1, Scene 7 establishes the force and power that Lady Macbeth possesses over her husband. Upon hearing of Macbeth's decision not to kill Duncan, she is outraged and starts to work her force and power upon him. She knows where he is most vulnerable and attacks him at his weak spot. She strikes him at his manhood and courage. This of course works on Macbeth and she knows

that it will. No one calls Macbeth a coward. She says that he is a coward and attacks his manliness. "to be more than what you are, you would be so much more the man". She challenges his love for her and says that she would rather "dash the brains out" of her own child than break such a promise as Macbeth has to her. Whether she was bluffing, the imagery that Macbeth would have had in his mind at this point would have been frightening. To have the brains "dashed out" of his own child. Macbeth is so awed by this woman who is his wife, who has so much power that he cannot believe it. At this point in the play, Shakespeare re-confirms just how close the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is and that she has the power and he listens to whatever she has to say. Lady Macbeth is a major influence on Macbeth, but this of course changes later. After the murder, Macbeth is still carrying the daggers and he seems to be quiet and uneasy. Lady Macbeth has to clean up what he has done wrong and has to return the daggers herself. Lady Macbeth is still very much in control. Here, Shakespeare defines both Lady Macbeth and Macbeth's strong and weak characters. Lady Macbeth being the strong one yet as a duo, he tones them down to be nothing but two whispering, frightened villains. Later on, when Macduff discovers the body of Duncan, Macbeth acts suspiciously and draws attention to himself. It is then that Lady Macbeth has to help him out and draw the attention away from him and to her by fainting. She does this later too, during the banquet scene. Lady Macbeth is always there to clean up after Macbeth and it shows that she is very concerned with him and he must not reveal himself. She tells him not to let himself be revealed. In Act 3 Scene 2, the further deterioration of Macbeth and in particular, his

relationship with Lady Macbeth is emphasised. Here, Lady Macbeth's character is shown to be a lonely woman who once knew everything that was going on in her life with Macbeth; she played a part in everything. She longs once again to have the relationship that she had with her husband, having a strong influence on him. She wants to know what is going on. He does not specifically tell her what is to be done but just hints that a "deed is to be done". This scene clearly shows what has become of their relationship. It is on a decline. They are no longer partners as Macbeth once said; his "dearest partner". They have swapped positions. She has lost the power that she once had and Macbeth has gained a power which he never had. The banquet scene, apart from showing the guilt that Macbeth carries with him presents once again that Lady Macbeth is very alert and knows how to draw attention away from Macbeth, who fears the ghost of Banquo. She tells them to leave and she has once again saved himself from revealing himself, she has protected him again and this presents us with the fact that she still loves him and cares for him and wants to protect him. Something that Macbeth cannot give to her in return. The sleepwalking scene in which Lady Macbeth sleepwalks and reveals her guilt and terror of what she has done is a contrast to what her character was like before. She was powerful and now she is so guilt ridden that she is at the state of sleepwalking. It presents us with an irony. In Act 2, where they have murdered Duncan she states that "a little bit of water shall clear us of this deed" and yet during her sleepwalking she says "out damn spot, out" and tries so hard to remove the blood. It proves the point that everything is not as easy as it seems. This woman who was once so powerful is now nothing more than a scared villain

and although Lady Macbeth knew this about Macbeth, he doesn't seem to realise it about her. The major scene in which the changes in Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's relationship is shown is in Act 5 where he is told of Lady Macbeth's death. This scene shows just what the relationship has resulted to and the grief that he feels. The quote " she should have died hereafter" tells us that Macbeth is grieving and that he has lost all that he has. His wife, his " dearest chuck" and " dearest partner in greatness" has just died and he feels nothing. In contrast to Macduff's reaction to hearing of his wife's death, Macbeth is mild. His following speech " tomorrow, tomorrow, and tomorrow" shows his weariness and his realisation that he has no future and that he has lost everything he ever had. He uses two metaphors about life. One of a " flickering candle" and the other " that life is just a series of phases". Shakespeare uses these to show what Macbeth's life has become. Macbeth is a play that shows just what can happen when evil and strong ambition get involved. You deteriorate and in the process, can lose everything you have, including the relationship with that of your dearest wife.