

# Macbeth

Literature



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Macbeth-Night versus Day In our daily lives, night and day symbolize evil and good respectively. This idea of night and day has been used by Shakespeare in his book Macbeth to symbolize evil and good as well. The entire story revolves around the consequences of actions committed by day time night time. Macbeth is a tragic story, revolving around a couple that is bound to covering each other's deeds. At the beginning of the story are three witches who give Macbeth news of him becoming a king. This happens at night when there are lightning and thunders, evidence that natural darkness and evil is present. In the beginning, Macbeth does not have any evil motives. However, when King Duncan announces that his older son will succeed him, he starts to plan evil against the king. To accomplish his mission, Macbeth asks for darkness to come and hid his evil thoughts that were crossing his mind (Shakespeare, 5-19). His plans are backed up by his wife Lady Macbeth after she finds out the witches predictions. Like her husband, she asks for night to come and cover her actions so that she can pursue the crown through evil means.

The murder of King Duncan is accomplished at night where nobody is aware apart from Macbeth and his wife. After the killing, paranoia sets into Macbeth, and he asks himself, " But wherefore could not I pronounce Amen?" (Shakespeare, 25-32). This is an indication that even though he accomplished his mission, his heart was not at peace. Similarly, he looks at his hands and realizes that goodness is starting to drift away as the only thing he sees is guilt in his blood filled hands. After Duncan's death, Macbeth hires some mercenaries to kill Banquo and Fleance. This is also bound to happen at night. Before he is murdered, Banquo tells Macbeth that, " I have dreamed last night of three weird sisters. To you they have showed me some

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truth.” (Shakespeare, 21-44). This was a prediction of his death which he gave to Macbeth during the day. Also, it is an indication that the truth had some place during the day. After the killers bring the news of Banquo’s death and Fleance escapade, he starts to see Banquo’s ghost in his seat. This happens in the presence of his guest at a party he had prepared. Notably, the whole place had been well lit to make the party enjoyable. When Lady Macbeth is asked to explain the reason for her husband strange behavior, she lies that he does have such behavior since he was young. This is meant to cover up for his evil actions.

In act five scene one, we find that Lady Macbeth cannot control the tricks of her mind anymore. The guilt of King’s murder haunts her to an extent she becomes seemingly sick. Her doctor knows that nothing can be done to cure her. She sleepwalks holding the light as she is afraid of living in darkness. Astonished at what he saw, the doctor comments, “ Unnatural deeds do breed unnatural troubles.” (Shakespeare, 48-58). This can be considered as an understanding of what the doctor believes is ailing the lady. The doctor then asks how the lady got the light and one gentleman replies, “ Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually, tis her command.” This means that the lady had the light lit all night and could not get away from it. The lady knows that she has done something wrong, and that is the reason she has sleepless nights. Similarly, she knows that she has been living in darkness and, therefore, tries to use the false light as a way of keeping her guilt away.

The story is based on actions committed during the night all of which are evil in nature. The little acts done in the day are done during the time of King Duncan. However, after his death, everything changes to being

accomplished at night. This is an indication of how evil is prevalent in the entire story, until the death of Macbeth, where things get back to normal.

#### Works Cited

Shakespeare, William. *The tragedy of Macbeth*. Vol. 2. Classic Books Company, 2001. Print.