Fatal Flaws In Macbeth Essay, Research Paper

﻿Macbeth and its Fatal Flaws

Anyone who is not a god, is not perfect. Everyone has a

weakness or a flaw. Some flaws are more deadly than others.

Some are addicted to heroin while others are unable to remember

where they put their keys. Every major flaw in this story

though, comes back to haunt them. The reason why anybody fails

in this story is because of their ?flaw?. Not everyone dies

though, that is because their flaw is not fatal. Following will

be an explanation of how the major flaws of the characters lead

to their downfall.

Macbeth will be the first one discussed, since he was the

main character. The play?s problems start when he kills Duncan.

This is done because he has a flaw; he is too determined. He

doesn?t let anything in his way of the goal, to be king, proven

here:

The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step On

which I must fall down, or else o?erleap, For

in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;

Let not light see my black and deep desires:

The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be

2

which the eye fears, when it is done, to

see.(Act I, Scene vii, lines 1-28)

If he had not been so determined to be king, then Duncan would

never have had to die. Consequently, if Macbeth had not killed

Duncan, this story would not have any murders in it at all.

Macbeth is driven by greed and violence proven by William

Hazlitt:

Macbeth himself appears driven along by

the violence of his fate like a vessel

drifting before a storm: he reels to and fro

like a drunken man; he staggers under the

weight of his own purposes and the

suggestions of others; he stands at bay with

his situation; and from the superstitious awe

and breathless suspense into which the

communications of the Weird Sisters throw

him, is hurried on with daring impatience to

verify their predictions, and with impious

and bloody hand to tear aside the veil which

hides the uncertainty of the future.

(Hazlitt, pg. 28)

3

Macbeth?s fate was more deserving than any others since he killed

so many people; Duncan, Banquo, and MacDuff?s family. Macbeth

never did feel sorry for what he did until his deeds came back to

haunt him. If Macbeth would have been patient and had waited,

then he probably would have become king and enjoyed it.

Lady Macbeth had a very prominent flaw that was her undoing.

She was partners with Macbeth in the killing of Duncan. She was

willing to convince Macbeth to kill Duncan but she could not do

it herself. Proven by Samuel Taylor:

Lady Macbeth merely endeavours to reconcile

his and her own sinkings of heart by

anticipations of the worst and an affected

bravado in confronting them. (Taylor, pg. 32)

This is the reason she was not as strong as she portrayed. This

was why she could not take it and Macbeth could. In the end, it

finally got to her so badly that she committed suicide. She

could not take the pressure and went insane. Here is an example

from the play:

Out, damned spot! Out, I say! One: two: why,

then ?tis time to do?t. Hell is murky. Fie,

my lord, fie! A soldier, and afeard? What

4

need we fear who knows it, when none can

call our pow?r to accompt? Yet who would have

thought the old man to have had so

much blood in him? (V, i, 34-39)

She probably deserved her fate, for she contributed to the

bloodshed.

Banquo, who at one time was Macbeth?s best friend, was

killed by Macbeth. Being Macbeth?s friend was not his fatal

flaw, but it led to it. His fatal flaw was knowing about the

murder of Duncan. He could not have done anything about it. If

he had told anyone about it, no one would have believed him; and

Macbeth still would have killed him. Obviously, if he did what

he did (be still), he would have been killed. He really did not

deserve this death, he was probably most deserving of staying

alive.

Duncan, who was King of England, was killed by Macbeth

because he stood in the way of the throne. This was not his

fatal flaw, but because he was so naive he did not realize that

anyone would want to overthrow him as king. For example, he

stayed at Macbeth?s castle. If he had been smarter, then he

would not have been so vulnerable and would not have stayed where

5

someone could kill him. Duncan?s fatal flaw was not deserving of

death, though, he probably should have lost his throne.

The Thane of Cawdor was killed by Macbeth for trying to lead

a revolt against England. His fatal flaw was that he was a

traitor. The Thane was greedy and wanted the throne for himself,

just like Macbeth. Also, just like Macbeth, his fate was

deserved for he led many people to their death, just for his

profit.

Everyone who died in this play had a reason for dying,

although not all were deserving of their fate. Macbeth was

determined to gain the throne. Lady Macbeth was greedy. Banquo

knew about the murder of Duncan. Duncan was naive and finally,

the Thane of Cawdor was a traitor. Duncan should not have died.

If he had only been more aware, and if Banquo had not been

friends with Macbeth. If Macbeth had not been so determined to

have the throne, none of this would have happened in the first

place.