Macbeth’s Character Essay, Research Paper

Macbeth’s Character

The character of Macbeth is not an easy one to understand. At the beginning of the play Macbeth is praised by many people as being a hero when he has defeated the Norwegians. The captain says: “Brave Macbeth “When Duncan hears the news he adds: “o valient cousin “and “Noble Macbeth “.

However Macbeth is becoming tied up with things that are not good. The three weird sisters said they would meet with him. When the three weird sisters do meet with Macbeth and Banquo: “All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee Thane of Glamis! “, ” All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee Thane of Cawdor! “, “All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee that shalt be king here after. “Macbeth knows he is the Thane of Glamis but how can he be the Thane of Cawdor, the Thane of Cawdor lives a prosperous life and becoming king is just unthinkable. This gets Macbeth thinking about what they mean.

At the start of the play the audience hail Macbeth as a hero but as he begins to think about murdering the king the audience feel he isn’t so heroic after all, and they begin to dislike him.

We learn from Lady Macbeth, the person who knows him best that he is too nice to be able to kill anyone especially the present king: “is too full o’ th’ milk of human kindness, “says Lady Macbeth. She then devises a plan to kill Duncan while he is staying with them.

Duncan has arrived and is having dinner. Macbeth leaves and decides not to murder Duncan. Lady Macbeth accuses him of being less than a man for not killing him. Macbeth is not a natural born killer, Lady Macbeth has to persuade him to murder the king; he is initially reluctant to do such a deed:

“We will proceed no further in this business: “Macbeth says this because he thinks he might become king without killing the present king, it might just be fate. But Lady Macbeth then begins to persuade him and soon a chink forms in Macbeth’s armour. Macbeth says: “If we should fail “which shows us that Macbeth has once more changed his mind this shows us that he is very unwilling to murder Duncan.

Once Duncan is asleep and Macbeth is on his own he sees a dagger before him. It is either a product of his imagination as he is afraid about what he is about to do or it has been put there by the witches. When he tries to grab it, his hand goes straight through it. This tells us that already even before the deed Macbeth is deep in thought about killing Duncan and he is not looking forward to killing him.

After Macbeth kills Duncan he immediately regrets what he has done. When he looks at his hands he says: “I am afraid to think what I have done. “, “What hands are here? “he says next: “will all great Neptunes oceans wash this blood clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather the multitudenous seas incarnadine “.

Macbeth thinks that if he washes his hands then all the water will turn red with the blood on his hands. This gives an indication of how guilty he feels after committing the deed. But it also tells us that he is not a natural killer and has a conscience like every one else.

Scotland ruled under Macbeth was not good first of all Macbeth killed the two guards this brought suspicion upon himself as he had just killed the only people who might know the truth.

Macbeth also killed Banquo and tried to kill fleance, Banquo was not a direct threat to the throne as the witches had said to him: “Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none: “but he was still there when the three witches told Macbeth he would become king and so could easily suspect Macbeth of killing Duncan and so Macbeth had more to fear of fleance.

Macbeth believed that Macduff knew to much and since he had fled to England Macbeth went down to his palace and killed his wife and children.

All this killing made Macbeth very disliked by the audience. He killed all these people so that he could stay on the throne. But towards the end of the play Macbeth was getting sick of his ways and he says: “I have liv’d long enough: my way of life has fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf; “this shows us that Macbeth is sorry for what he has done and is trying to restore trust with the audience.

I can conclude that the character of Macbeth was well liked at the start of the play but when he began to think about killing Duncan he was no longer the audiences favourite character. He stayed in the audiences dark side for most of the rest of the play but at the end he tried desperately to redeem himself and his actions.

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