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In Shakespeare, the book “Macbeth”, the protagonist uncontrolled leads to his downfall. His wife, Lady Macbeth’s manipulation towards him motivates him to commit regicide, which set off many tragic events. Scotland then gets thrown into the chaos, reflecting the devastating power of ambition. Macbeth’s own decision, driven by his desire to have power, sooner or later seals his fate. His vanquishing serves as a dominant warning about the danger of how bad ambition can be. Macbeth's downfall, which showed how dangerous ambition is when it is not controlled, is shown through the manipulation of Lady Macbeth, the tragic events in Scotland, and Macbeth's heinous decisions.

Macbeth’s tragic downfall was managed by his ambition, which was powered by the manipulation of the three witches, leading him to commit a series of terrible murders, which included King Duncan, that turned into a circle of paranoia and guilt. This isolated him from his colleagues and caused him to be perished under the hands of Macduff, as his implacable power of pursuing his desire to become king. His willingness to commit these acts to make sure to keep his power demonstrates how ambition can really destroy a person.

*“I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent, but
only vaulting ambition, which o’erleaps itself and
falls on the other” - Macbeth*

In the quote, Macbeth acknowledged that the only motivation he had to kill Duncan was his “vaulting ambition,” which he recognized as a dangerous force that can potentially lead to his

downfall. Throughout the play, you will realize that Macbeth was never truly satisfied with himself. He felt the need to keep on committing brutal crimes/ murders in order to keep what he mostly wanted, his supremacy (the Kingship). The harder Macbeth tried to change his fate, the more he tended to run into his fate, and his struggle for power and ambition was his tragic flaw. An example of the downfall of Macbeth would be in Act 5 scene 5 when he says:

*“Out, out brief candle! Life’s but a walking shadow, a
Poor player that struts and frets upon the stage and
then is heard no more.” - Macbeth*

Macbeth says this and it reflects his despair as he veins to face his inevitable downfall. At that point in the play, Macbeth lost everything he valued-his wife, his power, and determination. The metaphors “brief candle” and a “walking shadow” shows that he sees his life as meaningless and unpurposeful. Imagery is also used in the quote “poor player that struts and frets upon his hour upon the stage” reflects Macbeth’s realization on how his actions and ambition have taken a toll on him. This moment in the play of his reflection accentuates the consequences of his unlooked ambition and the blankness that followed his determination for power.

Lady Macbeth also played a big role in Macbeth. She manipulated him by questioning his maturity and courage, which affected him deeply. In Act 1 Scene 7 she says:

“When you do it, then you were a man.”- Lady Macbeth

She is implying that if he doesn't go through with the plan of killing King Duncan, he is cowardly. Moreover, by attacking his masculinity and ambition, she pushes his insecurities and wants him to prove that he is worthy of the power of the King. Before, she was assuring him that she would take care of it all and to “leave the rest to her.” Her manipulation is very prominent in convincing Macbeth to commit the brutal act, which set another level to his downfall.

The theme “good versus evil” is portrayed a lot through Macbeth’s actions and his consequences.

At this point, Macbeth has fully become a fearless and heartless murderer just for him to consume his power. The persistent pursuit of power illustrates the ultimate tool of good over evil, as Macbeth’s downfall became more inevitable. The ending to this play of Macbeth’s tragic death served as a powerful reminder that the destructive nature of unchecked ambition can really cause a moral unbalance.

“Fair is foul. And foul is fair.” - The Witches

When the witch says this, this is a good example of good versus evil in Act 1, scene 1. This line suggested that this blurs the good and evil, which meant that there was more chaos to come. The witches' words foreshadow the misleading nature of Macbeth’s rise to power and the confusion it gives the readers. It highlights that the idea of evil will be able to disguise itself as good, which leads Macbeth to make all of those tragic choices.

“O, I could play the woman with my eyes and braggart with my tongue!” - Macduff

In Act 4, scene 3 Macduff expressed his grief and anger toward Macbeth, showing the struggle between his good side (the desire for equality) and evil (Macbeth’s reign of terror). This quote just showed the difference of how good versus evil can really be a struggle to many people.

In conclusion, Macbeth’s dangerous acts and his unchecked ambition served as a powerful warning tale. His desperate quest for power led him down a journey of corruption, which resulted in the loss of his sanity and in the end his life. This play really showed how powerful ambition can really take on a person and how it can lead to destructive and violent behavior.

Through his downfall, Shakespeare showed us the dangers of exceeding ambition and the inescapable justice that follows it.

Works cited

Shakespeare William. "Macbeth." myShakespeare, 24 July 2019 <https://myshakespeare.com>

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