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Macbeth

Shakespeare shows multiple experiences of ambition through the characters Lady Macbeth and Macbeth in *Macbeth*. They both have a strong desire for power and want to be successful. They try to accomplish their goals, but ambition gets the best of them which ultimately leads them to a drastic downfall. Shakespeare expresses how ambition can drastically change someone. Shakespeare expresses how Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's Ambition gives them the drive to do terrible acts, which will lead them to their downfall and how ambition can change a person for the worse.

Macbeth has always had a desire to be successful throughout his years, however the witches prophecy is what led his ambition to become stronger. The witches give him several prophecies about his future and Macbeth becoming king. Once he heard he became the Thane of Cawdor he became eager to know more and more. In the lines of *Macbeth* it says:

Two truths are told As happy prologues to the swelling act

Of the imperial theme, This supernatural soliciting

Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill Why hath it given me

earnest of success, / Commencing in a truth/ I am Thane of Cawdor. (shakespeare 1:3)

This shows the reader that Macbeth is starting to believe the witches. In addition, Lady Macbeth hears about the witches' prophecy and thinks if they kill Duncan it can help Macbeth become king faster. This pushes Macbeth to kill Duncan but he was also hesitant, however Lady Macbeth manipulates Macbeth into killing Duncan which triggers his ambition. In the lines of *Macbeth*, Macbeth says

“Wouldst thou have that/Which thou **esteem'st**
the ornament of life/And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting 'I dare not' **wait upon** 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i' the adage?” (Shakespeare 1:7:131-136)

This shows the reader that Lady Macbeth is trying to make him feel bad and telling him he is childish and being too scared.

Lady Macbeth and Macbeth's ambition caused them to do terrible acts. Macbeth killed Duncan in order to be king, however Lady Macbeth convinced him to kill Duncan. Macbeth also realizes he has to kill Banquo so his descendents can't become king, however Macbeth becomes paranoid and afraid of Banquo's ghost which causes him to go crazy. In the book *Macbeth* it says:

Approach thou/like the rugged Russian bear,
The armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble — or be alive again,
And dare me to **the desert** with thy sword
If trembling **I inhabit**/then **protest** me

The baby of a girl. **Hence** horrible **shadow**

Unreal mockery, hence. (Shakespeare 3::4)

This shows the reader that Macbeth was going crazy and starting to do things which causes him to go crazy. Macbeth went crazy, however so did Lady Macbeth. She becomes anxious after the first murder, which causes her to have nightmares. These nightmares caused to confess about her murdering and eventually killed herself from the guilt and horror of the murdering. In the play *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth states 'Here's the smell of the blood still/ All the/perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little/hand. Oh, oh, oh.' (5:145) This shows the reader she has nightmares from the murder with the blood on her hands, however she feels guilty and can't get away from the fact she killed someone in order for Macbeth to be king.

Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's ambition to kill to become king brings them to a drastic downfall in their life which ends friendships. Macbeth is paranoid that someone will take his throne which causes him to kill people so they will not overthrow him. Macbeth orders to kill Lady Macduff and her innocent children. In addition this is caused by his paranoia and made him become more violent. Macbeth becomes overconfident because the witches told him that no man that comes from a woman can kill him. He became careless because he thought he was invincible, however he underestimated his enemies which led him to his death. In the play *Macbeth*, Macbeth states "I will not be afraid of death and bane/Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane" (shakespeare 5:3 59) Macbeth was careless for the war; Lady Macbeth's ambition caused her to have her drastic downfall. Lady Macbeth becomes unstable and ends up isolating herself due to guilt. Lady Macbeth's downfall is caused by her ambition which she had a strong withhold to become successful, however she becomes unstable and loses her grip on reality. She

states, "Come, you spirits / That tend on mortal thoughts/unsex me here" (Shakespeare 1:5 38-45) This explains to the reader that she wants the dark spirits to take away her femininity so she can have her guilt go away.

In conclusion, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth's ambition is very strong and their desire to be successful. Their strong ambition causes them to shift their demeanor and have a drastic downfall and lose everything they hope for. They become so focused on their wants and become mentally unstable which causes them to become violent and do anything in their power to get what they want. Shakespeare expresses how unchecked ambition or striving for power can make someone become ruthless to get what they want, which can possibly lead to a horrible outcome instead of having a successful life, just like the play of Macbeth.

Works Cited

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