

How the Witches Influence Macbeth in Act 1, Scene 3

In Act 1, Scene 3 of Macbeth, the witches have a big impact on Macbeth by using their words to spark his ambition and lead him into dark thoughts.

1. Encouraging Ambition

They greet Macbeth with exciting titles:

- "All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis! / Hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor! / Hail to thee, that shalt be king hereafter!"

- By calling him a future king, they make him think about power and how he might get it.

2. Using Confusing Statements

The witches confuse both Macbeth and Banquo with their strange sayings:

- "Lesser than Macbeth, and greater. / Not so happy, yet much happier."
- These puzzling statements create curiosity, making Macbeth feel like fate is guiding him, which influences his decisions.

3. Keeping Secrets

The witches don't tell Macbeth how he will become king:

- They don't clarify if it will happen naturally or through evil actions.
- This mystery makes Macbeth think and consider murder as a possibility.

Conclusion

The witches never directly tell Macbeth what to do, but by playing on his ambition, using riddles, and keeping information from him, they lead him toward his tragic end.

Significance of Macbeth's Thoughts in Act 1, Scene 4

Macbeth's aside shows his inner struggle and ambition:

1. "The Prince of Cumberland: that is a step / On which I must fall down, or else o'er-leap."

- Macbeth views Malcolm as a barrier to the throne. He feels he must either accept it or take extreme measures.

2. "Stars, hide your fires."

- He wants to hide his dark thoughts, even from himself.

3. "My black and deep desires."

- He realizes his ambition is wrong but still thinks about acting on it.

4. "The eye wink at the hand."

- He wishes to commit the crime without fully confronting it.

This moment is crucial—Macbeth starts to believe he might need to kill to fulfil his ambitions, setting the stage for his tragic downfall.

Hamartia

TASK TWO: TRANSFORM IT

Create a drawing that will help you remember this concept.

TASK THREE: DEBATE IT

Ambition and greed can be seen as hamartia when they cause a character to fail or meet a tragic end. In stories, this usually happens when a character's strong desire for power or riches makes them ignore what is right and wrong, leading them to make choices that result in their downfall. A great example is in Shakespeare's "Macbeth," where Macbeth's overwhelming ambition pushes him to kill King Duncan and commit other terrible acts, ultimately leading to his tragic fate. This change of ambition into a serious flaw shows what hamartia is all about.

TASK FOUR: USE IT

1. The main character's hamartia was not understanding the effects of his constant chase for power, which eventually caused his downfall.

TASK FIVE: LINK IT

The term 'hamartia' connects to 'Macbeth' through the character of Macbeth himself. His hamartia is his extreme ambition, which leads him to murder King Duncan to take the throne. This tragic flaw sets off a chain of disastrous events, including more murders, paranoia, and finally his death. Lady Macbeth also shows hamartia through her ambition and manipulation, which lead to her mental collapse and suicide. The idea of hamartia is key to the tragic nature of the play, showing how a character's personal flaws can lead to their unavoidable downfall.