

By the end of studying [Act 1, Scene 7](#), I need to know; Macbeth questions if murdering Duncan is the right move. Lady Macbeth is controlling and manipulative and persuades Macbeth to kill Duncan.

Plot: Macbeth weighs up the issue of the potential murder of Duncan but then has his mind changed by his controlling wife.

Vocabulary	<p>trammel up (3) obstruct, prevent surcease (4) death shoal (6) sandbank faculties (17) kingly powers taking-off (20) murder sightless couriers (23) invisible winds ornament of life (42) the crown adage (44) proverb fitness (53) appropriateness sticking-place (61) its limit wassail (65) entertainment receipt . . . limbeck (68) container for an alchemist's solution; here, Macbeth's plan mettle (74) courage corporal agent (81) physical part of myself</p>
Context	<p>Lady Macbeth represents a powerful, influential woman who allows her desire to see her husband gain the throne dictate her decisions. She's responsible for suggesting that Macbeth kill Duncan to become the king of Scotland. Lady Macbeth doesn't play a stereotypical female role and is more concerned with politics and power than with childrearing or maintaining her estate. Shakespeare uses Lady Macbeth to demonstrate the control that ambitious, manipulative, seductive women hold over their husbands.</p> <p>Clearly, gender is out of its traditional order. This disruption of gender roles is also presented through Lady Macbeth's usurpation of the dominant role in the Macbeth's marriage; on many occasions, she rules her husband and dictates his actions.</p> <p>Christianity plays a role here- Macbeth's references to Hell suggests his fears that, if he were to commit regicide, he would be condemning his soul to Hell for eternity.</p>
Themes	<p><u>Ambition, Violence, Manhood</u> Macbeth, alone, agonizes about whether to kill Duncan. He'd be willing to murder Duncan if he thought that would be the end of it. But he knows that "bloody instructions, being taught, return to plague the inventor". Also, Macbeth notes, Duncan is a guest, kinsmen, and good king. He decides ambition is not enough to justify the murder.</p> <p>Lady Macbeth and Macbeth debate about manhood and courage. She says it's taking what you want. He says it's the power to put responsibility before selfishness, the power to not take what you want</p> <p><u>Fate</u> Lady Macbeth's tragedy is that she doesn't realize that murdering Duncan will torment and ultimately destroy her. Macbeth's tragedy is more profound: he does realize it, and still gives in to his ambition.</p>

Reading:

Read to the punctuation. Ensure all stage directions are read.

Use the glossary for words you don't understand

Links across the play:

Act 1 Scene 5- Compare Lady Macbeth's depiction of events here with the reality of what happened in Act 1 Scene 5.

Act 4 Scene 3/ Act 5 Scene 8- Malcolm appears like he will be a king in Duncan's ilk (bearing his faculties 'meek'), his test of Macduff and also the fact he isn't going to shall not spend 'a large expense of time/ Before [he'll] reckon with your several loves'

<p>Deeper understanding</p>	<p>It is the thought of something after death that puzzles Macbeth. Throughout the speech, his words recall those of Shakespeare's earlier tragic hero, Hamlet. In paraphrase, Macbeth wonders whether the act of murder itself must, by necessity, carry consequences in "the life to come" or whether judgment will await him in this life.</p> <p>The words "receipt," "fume," and "limbeck" specifically refer to this process, whose purpose was to turn base metal (such as lead) into gold. It is heavily ironic that, in the Macbeths' experiment, that which is gold — the king himself — will become base and doubly ironic that Macbeth's golden reputation will be reduced to worthlessness.</p> <p>Lady Macbeth's manipulation- Throughout this scene, Lady Macbeth continues to manipulate Macbeth. Her control is evident through the way she distorts previous event- she asks Macbeth 'what beast was it then that made you break this enterprise to me?', yet set is the one in Act 1 Scene 5 who states 'never shall sun that morrow see' when Macbeth says Duncan will leave 'tomorrow, as he purposes'. The fact Lady Macbeth lies about events in order to control him further shows her manipulation; she also then uses this to accuse him of breaking promise with her- a promise that he never made [at the end of Act 1 Scene 5 he merely tells us 'we'll talk about this further'.</p> <p>A rightful king? The Divine Right of Kings was significant- it extolled the idea that God chose the king; central to this that only a king chosen by God would be a good and just king. Macbeth describes how Duncan 'hath borne his faculties so meek, been so clear in his great office' suggesting that Duncan has been an honest and a fair ruler. Despite his power, Duncan has been 'meek'- he hasn't abused it. This forms a stark contrast to the king Macbeth will become. Also, it compares with the king Malcolm will become- he tests Macduff's loyalty in Act 4 Scene 3 with depictions of himself as a king who would abuse his power; the fact this is a test suggests Malcolm intends to be more like Duncan than Macbeth.</p>
<p>Quotes</p>	<p>Macbeth Soliloquy</p> <p>"This even-handed Justice / Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice / To our own lips" Macbeth is simultaneously aware of the duplicity and imbalance of the proposed murder (he is Duncan's relative, subject, and host, yet he is to be his killer) and of the equality and balance of earthly and heavenly law</p> <p>"Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against the deep damnation of his taking off" This doom-laden vision, whose imagery reflects that of the biblical Day of Judgment, gives way in turn to Macbeth's nagging self-doubt about the decision to kill Duncan.</p> <p>"no spur / to prick the sides of my intent but only / Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself / And falls on the other [side]" He's lacking in motivation to kill Duncan. He knows he wants to be king but is worried about the consequences of his actions.</p> <p>Macbeth</p> <p>"We will process no further in this business" - Macbeth is assertive and makes the decision not to kill Duncan</p> <p>Lady Macbeth</p> <p>Lady Macbeth is angered by Macbeth's reluctance and tells Macbeth he is "green," "a coward," and that he resembles the proverbial "poor cat" who wanted the fish but would not get its paws wet. Lady Macbeth questions her husband's masculinity.</p> <p>"What beast was't then, That made you break this enterprise to me?" Lady Macbeth manipulates Macbeth by making his feel guilty.</p> <p>"I would, while it was smiling in my face, have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums and dashed the brains out, had I sworn as you have done to this." she tells him that her own lack of pity would extend to murdering her own child as it suckled at her breast. she confirms that "the milk of human kindness" is absent in her.</p> <p>Macbeth</p> <p>"False face must hide what the false heart doth know" Macbeth has been convinced. This has a certainty to it that completely overturns his earlier vacillation.</p>

Terminology

Soliloquy

Repetition of individual words — *if, were, done, be, but, and here* — each repeated two or three times within the first few lines - shows the workings of a mind still very much in confusion

Metaphor

Macbeth "This even-handed Justice / Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice / To our own lips"

Simile

Macbeth "Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against the deep damnation of his taking off"

Metaphor

Macbeth "no spur / to prick the sides of my intent but only / Vaulting ambition which o'erleaps itself / And falls on the other [side]"

Imperative

Macbeth "We will proceed no further in this business"

Interrogative

"What beast was't then, That made you break this enterprise to me?"