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English 2A

October 22, 2010

Macbeth Essay: Most Treacherous Character

Lady Macbeth is the most treacherous character in Macbeth. This is true because she was less likely to be expected to commit such acts due to the time’s attitudes towards women, she was the driving force behind Macbeth’s treachery, and she managed to avoid most of the blame.

One reason for Lady Macbeth being the most treacherous character is that she was a woman, and at that time women were considered delicate. This is demonstrated when the men were discussing Duncan’s murder shortly after the event and Macduff says: “O gentle lady, ‘tis not for you to hear what I can speak. The repetition in a woman’s ear would murder as it fell.” (Macbeth, page 67) If she couldn’t be expected to handle the news of a murder, she couldn’t be thought to be able to plot one.

Lady Macbeth is the most treacherous for another reason: she was the force behind Macbeth’s treachery. Granted, she didn’t exactly *force* Macbeth to commit the murders, but she convinced him to do it when he hadn’t planned on doing anything of the sort at first. She says: “…Look like th’ innocent flower, but be the serpent under ‘t. He that’s coming must be provided for; and you shall put this night’s great business to my dispatch, which shall to all our nights and days to come give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.” (Macbeth, page 35) In that quote, Lady Macbeth was talking to Macbeth about how King Duncan was coming, and so he would have to murder him so they could become the rulers of Scotland. And later, Macbeth is talking to himself, trying to decide if he wants to commit the murder (Macbeth, pages 39-41), which shows that he was reluctant to do it and hadn’t planned on doing before Lady Macbeth brought it to her attention.

Along with her previously mentioned ways of treachery, Lady Macbeth somehow managed to get out of much blame. There were people who seemed to know that she was guilty, but they didn’t really put much consideration towards her role in Macbeth’s treachery. When the doctor comes to see if he can help Lady Macbeth and hears her talking in her sleep, he realizes what she is guilty of (Macbeth, Act 5 Scene 1). However, he does nothing but pray for her. He did not really pin any particular blame on her, per se.

Lady Macbeth went against the trust instilled in her by the attitudes of her time, drove Macbeth to commit his murderous acts, and avoided blame. These facts show that Lady Macbeth is the most treacherous character in the play Macbeth.

# Works Cited

Shakespeare, W. (1992). *Macbeth.* New York, NY: Washington Square Press.