

Questions about *Macbeth* - 2015

Why did Macbeth kill Macdonwald?

Macbeth kills Macdonwald in battle because he was a traitor to King Duncan (weird, huh?).

Who told the witches to “mess with” Macbeth?

No one told the witches to “mess with” Macbeth; in fact, Hecate (the head witch) was not pleased when she heard about the weird sisters’ activities. She says, “Have I not reason, beldams as you are?/Saucy and overbold, how did you dare/To trade and traffic with Macbeth/In riddles and affairs of death,/And I, the mistress of your charms,/The close contriver of all harms,/Was never called to bear my part,/Or show the glory of our art?/And, which is worse, all you have done/Hath been but for a wayward son,/Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,/Loves for his own ends, not for you./But make amends now. Get you gone,/And at the pit of Acheron/Meet me i’ th’ morning. Thither he/Will come to know his destiny./Your vessels and your spells provide,/Your charms and everything beside./I am for the air. This night I’ll spend/Unto a dismal and a fatal end./Great business must be wrought ere noon./Upon the corner of the moon/There hangs a vap’rous drop profound./I’ll catch it ere it come to ground./And that distilled by magic sleights/Shall raise such artificial sprites/As by the strength of their illusion/Shall draw him on to his confusion” (3.5.2-29). The No Fear Shakespeare translation is as follows: “Don’t I have a reason to be angry, you disobedient hags? How dare you give Macbeth riddles and prophecies about his future without telling me? I am your boss and the source of your powers. I am the one who secretly decides what evil things happen, but you never called me to join in and show off my own powers. And what’s worse, you’ve done all this for a man who behaves like a spoiled brat, angry and hateful. Like all spoiled sons, he chases after what he wants and doesn’t care about you. But you can make it up to me. Go away now and in the morning meet me in the pit by the river in hell. Macbeth will go there to learn his destiny. You bring your cauldrons, your spells, your charms, and everything else. I’m about to fly away. I’ll spend tonight working to make something horrible happen. I have a lot to do before noon. An important droplet is hanging from the corner of the moon. I’ll catch it before it falls to the ground. When I work it over with magic spells, the drop will produce magical spirits that will trick Macbeth with illusions” (No Fear Shakespeare).

Who is Malcom?/ Why doesn’t Macduff deserve the crown since he killed Macbeth (even though Malcom is Duncan’s son)?

Malcolm is the eldest son of Duncan (the other son is Donalbain). He is made heir to the throne in Act 1, Scene 4. When Duncan is killed, Malcolm and Donalbain flee because they are afraid that they are next in line to be killed. Malcolm flees to England. We later find out that while in England he is working with the English forces to march against Macbeth in Scotland. When Macduff comes to him for help, he tests Macduff’s loyalty by making himself out to be a bad person, when in reality he would make a great ruler. In the end, Malcolm, Macduff, and the English forces attack Macbeth in Scotland. Malcom is crowned king when Macduff defeats Macbeth because he is the rightful heir to the throne.

Why did Malcom become king? The original prophecies showed royalty in Banquo’s family.

For some reason, Shakespeare left this end untied in his play. I did some research of the Holinshed Chronicles (the source material for Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*) and found: “In Raphael’s ‘Chronicles’ Fleance flees to Wales in fear of Macbeth, there he marries a Welsh princess by name Nesta Verch Gruffydd. They beget a son Walter who makes his way back to Scotland where he becomes the Royal Steward. According to the legend he began the Stuart line of monarchs through whom Scotland and England were united. In 1722, the Scottish historian Richard Hay revealed that both Banquo and Fleance were only fictitious characters. Modern historical research has proved that Banquo and Fleance never existed. The plot of *Macbeth* ends with the death of Macbeth. Shakespeare does not continue the drama after that because if he had continued to

write about what happened to Fleance then the tragic intensity of his play would have been diluted” (enotes.com).

Where was Macbeth Killed?

Macbeth was killed outside of his castle, Dunsinane

Who is Menteith?

A minor character who was part of the army that marched against Macbeth. I used him in our review because he had an M name. ☺

Who was the gentlewoman?

She is a woman who served the King and the Queen. She was to take care of Lady Macbeth. This is why she is in charge of talking to the Doctor about Lady Macbeth's strange behavior and sleepwalking.

Why did Macbeth plan to meet with the witches for the 2nd time?

Macbeth wanted more answers. In Act 3, Scene 4 (after his outbursts at the banquet) he says to Lady Macbeth, “I will tomorrow—/ And betimes I will—to the weird sisters./More shall they speak, for now I am bent to know,/By the worst means, the worst: For mine own good,/All causes shall give way. I am in blood/Stepped in so far that, should I wade no more,/Returning were as tedious as go o'er./Strange things I have in head, that will to hand,/Which must be acted ere they may be scanned (138-147). He was only concerned with his safety and looked to witches to predict his future. Little did he know, they had something else up their sleeve.

Who was part of the English army that went against Macbeth?

Siward, Earl of Northumberland (and Duncan's brother), Malcom, Macduff, Young Siward, Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, Ross, and Soliders (at least 10,000 men). PLUS, some of Macbeth's men turned against him in the battle and started fighting with the rebels.

Who killed Macbeth's wife/ Why did Lady Macbeth die?

Lady Macbeth killed herself, or so we are led to believe. It is never stated directly in the text. In Act 5, Scene 1, we see the deterioration of her mental state: “Out, damned spot! Out, I say!—One, two. Why, then, 'tis time to do 't. Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! A soldier, and afraid? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him” (5.1.25-30). She continues to suffer from guilt when she says, “The thane of Fife had a wife. Where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean?—No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that. You mar all with this starting” while sleep walking (5.1.30-33). It was an effect from the guilt she felt for all of the Macbeths' wrongdoings. Her sensitivity led to her downfall when she actually had to deal with the decisions she made in the beginning of the play.

Did Macbeth have any children?

Not that we know of, there is talk among the literary community that they may have had a child who has died. Lady Macbeth says, “I have given suck, and know/ How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me” In her monologue to persuade Macbeth to kill Duncan, but there is no talk of children after (1. 7. 55-56). In Act 3, Scene 1, Macbeth has a soliloquy about the witches prophecies after Banquo leaves with Fleance where he mentions, “Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown/ And put a barren scepter in my grip,/ Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,/ No son of mine succeeding” (64-67). These are the only references to children.

Would you perceive Macbeth insane even from the start?

Just Ms. Aubrey's opinion, I would think no for two reasons. One, it wouldn't fit the mold of a Shakespearean Tragedy. He needs to have a fall from grace. Two, Macbeth is presented as a dignified warrior in the

beginning of the story. He is the cousin of the King and defeats the traitors. He also second guesses his decision to kill Duncan. I think he is a good man who made a huge mistake and didn't know how to get himself out of the hole he dug for himself. In fact, in the middle of the play, he says that it would be harder go back to the good person he was than to continue in his horrible, wrongful deeds. In the end, he feels nothing, as he has turned into a murdering machine.

Did Macbeth only marry some nutso because she's hot?

I have no words for this 😊

How many vocab questions are on the test?

Seven