

Homework for 10.04.2017

Analysis of Macbeth's last monologue

This is the analysis of an extract that belongs to Act V, Scene V from William Shakespeare's drama, Macbeth. The extract is arranged into three parts: stage directions, a conversation between Macbeth and his servant Seyton and Macbeth's soliloquy.

The stage directions are meaningful for the reader to create the setting that refers to crying women.

The dialogue between them starts with a direct question by Macbeth that asks what is that noise to his servant Seyton. After Seyton's answer, the dialogue continues with a long speech by Macbeth who talks about his personal past. He seems to make a conscience examination about what he could do in the past and what he can do now. He knows what mistakes he had done and that he can't turn on and go back.

The intelligent reader understands that Macbeth is the result of his actions. He's the personification of greed. During his life he searched the power and to gain it he had used any means he supposed to be necessary. He got his hands dirty of slaughters. So, it's as if Macbeth is asking what could feel someone that have just seen and felt everything.

After that, Seyton re-enters the room and answers to Macbeth's question about the reason of the cry.

Seyton's answer is a solemn formal one that creates a dramatic effect. Macbeth says 'She should have died hereafter'. It sounds sarcastic since irony is not the natural reaction in front of the death of a beloved person. However, the intelligent reader expects an answer like this, without emotions and feelings because the first part of the extract introduces that kind of behavior by Macbeth.

Following, he uses an anaphora, repeating the word 'tomorrow' three times, suggesting in the reader the passing of time. And every time after the mentioned above word there was a run-on line that creates a suspense and a feeling of wait.

He continues using the verb 'to creep' that reminds some evil animals, so Macbeth personifies the time as an animal with bad habits that none wants to have around. 'Petty pace' is an alliteration and the following phrase 'day to day' reinforces the idea of time as something slow and unstoppable; the repetitive use of commas creates in the reader a sense of empty. Time go by up to everyone's death.

Macbeth goes on saying that 'all our yesterdays have lighted fool the way to dusty death'. It means that all what we have been doing in life has no sense as we will die anyway, but 'fools' would remind to something like a pessimist vision of the world by Macbeth where he thinks that none can learn from the mistakes of the past, so none can be remembered forever[...]

After that, Macbeth compare life to a candle, describing it like something that is destined to last for a little time and extinguish itself; he compares immediately after life to a 'poor player', someone that can be appreciated at first sight but that becomes boring after an hour for the audience.

Life's once more referred to something ephemeral as it is a tale, "told by an idiot, full of sound and fury" whose meaning does not exist. In conclusion, Shakespeare's intent is to communicate a specific view about life and the concept of time: he uses Macbeth's character to bring a message to all his readers: no matter who you are, no matter what you do in your life, death will come to you and you can't do nothing to stop it.