

MACBETH – ACT V SCENE 5 ANALYSIS

In the first part of the scene Macbeth reflects on himself and says how he has “forgotten the taste of fear”: he doesn't know what fear is anymore and he's not feeling anything at all. There was a time where he could feel them but since all the horrors that he witnessed, he can't feel anything.

In the first line he uses the expression “taste of fears”: using the language of sense impression leaves a more vivid impression on the readers, making them better understand how he feels. He says that in the past he would have reacted to a “night shriek” but now he can feel nothing, no feeling whatsoever to any horror that is happening around him.

The topic of this first soliloquy is how people can change overtime and how he feels like he has lost all of his humanity because the passing of time has eaten all his sorrows.

After this, Seyton re-enters and Macbeth asks what was that cry he hears and Seyton replies that the queen has died. Macbeth reacts saying that Lady Macbeth was bound to die eventually.

In the fourth line there is an alliteration: “petty pace”. In this last part, life is described through some metaphors. Shakespeare says that life is like a candle whose flame at some certain point will go out and, just like that, even life one day will end.

The other metaphor that he uses to describe life is the one of the “stage”. He says that life is simile to a “walking shadow” (personification) and a theatre stage where the actors act, meaning that we are all actors acting on a stage until the play (our life) ends. Here the reader can understand the view of life expressed by Macbeth. An important thing to notice is that even to a such drastic news, he doesn't show emotions because, like he previously told, he can't feel anything.

The last metaphor that we can see here is the one that describes life as a story told by a fool: life starts and ends, but it has no meaning.