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What are two examples of dramatic irony in macbeth

?Q: Irony is a device used by playwrights to convey meanings by words whose literal meanings is the opposite. Bring to light the various incidents of irony in the play Macbeth. A: There are two main types of irony employed by Shakespeare in Macbeth. 1. dramatic irony: It is the device of giving the spectator an item of information that at least one of the characters in the narrative is unaware of (at least consciously), thus placing the spectator a step ahead of at least one of the characters. Dramatic Irony is a literary term that defines a situation in the play where the reader knows more than the character does. This is the one of the most common types of irony used by Shakespeare and there are many instances of it in Macbeth. E. g. "Fair is foul, and foul is fair" is the motto of the witches, something that Macbeth unknowingly echoes in his first line, "So fair and foul a day I have not seen". This indicates to the audience that Macbeth and witches are already connected in spirit before they have even met. Duncan says, referring to the Thane of Cawdor, that "There's no art/ To find the mind's construction in the face. / He was a gentleman on whom I built/ An absolute trust. " This is ironic because after Macbeth becomes the Thane of Cawdor, the same words may be applied to him and he becomes a "most disloyal traitor", just as the previous Thane of Cawdor was. When Duncan visits Inverness, he says that the castle has a "pleasant seat" and Banquo is quick to agree, saying that the "air is delicate", neither of them knowing that Macbeth is planning to murder Duncan in this castle. After the murder of Duncan, Macbeth says that his "hand will rather/ The multitudinous seas incarnadine" but Lady Macbeth scoffs at this and says, "A little water clears us of this deed. " The irony of this is only brought to light in Act 5, Scene 1 when Lady Macbeth, while sleepwalking, constantly washes her hands and says, "Here's the smell of blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. " In Act 2, Scene 3, or the "Porter's Scene", the porter imagines that he is a "porter of hell-gate", not knowing that the castle, due to the murder of King Duncan by one of his loyal subjects, have become a hell on earth.. Irony of Fate: It stems from the notion that the gods, or the Fates, are amusing themselves by toying with the minds of mortals with deliberate ironic intent. In Macbeth, it is the witches who toy with Macbeth to deliberately mislead him. E. g. When Macbeth meets the witches for the second time and they show him the apparitions, the words of the apparitions are deliberately designed to make Macbeth overconfident and think that he is invulnerable. Thus both types of irony are effectively used by Shakespeare in Macbeth to heighten the tension and add to the tragic effect of the play. JORDAN ALLEN] IRONY IN MACBETH There are many types of irony used in Macbeth.. Without the irony, the tragedy would not be quite so tragic. Verbal, dramatic, and situational irony was used in the story of Macbeth. One type of irony used in Macbeth is verbal irony. This is when a character says one thing and means the opposite. Examples of this are when Macbeth says to Banquo, "Tonight we hold a solemn supper, sir, And I'll request your presence" or when he says "Fail not our feast". Verbal irony makes the play more tragic because, if the reader understands the irony of what a character is saying, then the reader can see the true nature and intentions of the character. Another irony in Macbeth is dramatic irony. This type of irony is when there is a contradiction between what characters of the play do, and what the reader knows will happen. In Macbeth, an example is the pleasantry with which Duncan, the King, speaks of Inverness. This pleasantry is a front, because little does Duncan know, but the plot to murder him is being hatched and will be carried out at Inverness. An excellent example of dramatic irony is found when King Duncan comes to Macbeth's castle to stay for the night. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth treat Duncan with respect and affection, doing all that is within their power to make him comfortable under their roof. Duncan believes they are his dear friends and loyal subjects. He does not realize that he will not live through the night, but the audience knows that Macbeth and his wife will murder him in his sleep within a few hours. Situational irony is used during the play many times due to the predictions of the witches. The witches predict one thing, which happens to come true. However, Macbeth often misinterprets their fortunes and are put in situations of irony. A good example for situational irony is Macbeth's killing Duncan to gain the throne, thinking only of the power and wealth he will enjoy as the new King of Scotland. However, after murdering Duncan and being crowned, Macbeth cannot enjoy any part of his new position. Macbeth continues to murder in order to maintain power until he becomes a despised tyrant who is destroyed by his own people. Another good example of situational irony is when Lady Macbeth takes part in Duncan's murder with no hesitation or guilt. She berates Macbeth for being weak when his conscience bothers him about Duncan's murder. She is cold and calculating. However, at the end of the play it is Lady Macbeth who is overwhelmed with guilt and eventually kills herself. William Shakespeare's "Macbeth" consisted of multiple types of irony as you can see. Dramatic, verbal, and situational irony all consisted in Macbeth. This essay was to inform you on the irony in the story "Macbeth". Before discussing specific cases of dramatic irony through the play, there is one main irony that sets the basis of what the play is about: the more Macbeth believes he succeeds, the deeper in disintegration he steps. One of the aims of dramatic irony is to enhance the theme of appearance and reality. For instance, we see several situations in which Macbeth and his wife pretend to be welcoming, loyal people, and at the same time we know what their plans are (Act1 Scene 6, Act 2 Scene 3).We can also see how Macbeth hides from Banquo the fact that he does think of the witches, thus revealing his underlying ambition (Act 2 Scene 1). Dramatic irony deeply reinforces the sense of betrayal throughout the play. It is created through the characters' ignorance of the evil forces. Macbeth knows that what he does is wrong but he is at no time aware of the magnitude of his future suffering.We know more than he does because, unlike him, we presence a conversation between the witches where we acknowledge the martyrdom he will endure through the lack of sleep, the inexistence of peace during his meals and his relentless guilt (Act 1 Scene 3). As regards Lady Macbeth, this would apply too. In her case, though, we can remark the absence of consciousness at the time of summoning the evil spirits. She submits the goodness in her and her soul to them, turning into an instrument of evil and later on its victim. At first, she displays a considerable sense of pragmatism and practicality (Act 2 Scene 2).Later on, what she says in this state of rationality proves in retrospect ironic when we see her talking in madness. Her soul is disrupted by what at first gave her the power to do evil. We see how she becomes afraid of what she recognized as innocuous. When she expresses that "what is cone cannot be undone" (Act 5 Scene 1), we can see how at first it meant that the deed was finished, and now, this takes various connotations among which we can find that what is done cannot be undone as it will haunt them for the rest of their lives.Concerning the rest of the characters, we can point out the porter and Lady Macduff as examples. In Act 2 Scene 1, the porter sets a comic relief by imagining he is the porter of Hell's gate, thus proving a harsh dramatic irony, as we know that Macbeth's castle at that moment was figuratively hell since the King of Scotland was being murdered. Lady Macduff is oblivious of her husband's will to save the country. She accuses him of being a traitor when she ignores the fact that he fled to England for the sake of his country and of his own family.Act 4 Scene 2 introduces an ironic interlude, it is a moment of sad joking because the audience knows that they will soon b e ruled, thus kindling sympathy for Macduff's family. The equivocation the witches performed also corroborates the dramatic irony. Banquo anticipates the vileness in the witches' words, suggesting to the audience that no one should in fact trust them (Act 1 Scene 3, lines 120-125). Macbeth's blind ambition leads him to trust no one (not even his own conscience) but the witches, and it is this same blindness that stops him from interpreting the apparitions and prophecies in the right way.He always considers the convenient part of these half truths, but is never attentive of the inconvenient aspects they imply, depicting to the audience Macbeth's lack of consciousness and his path to disintegration. Through this, we go back to the firstly mentioned irony implying his "success" took Macbeth to defeat. Hence, dramatic irony influences the play in different aspects (such as the themes of appearance and reality and equivocation) and proves the characters' lack of awareness of the forces of evil that take such a substantial part in it. Essay Example on Why Does Shakespeare Use Dramatic Irony Macbeth, is a story of a man who's ambitions have brought him to commit treason and murder. Visions of power grew within his head until his thirst for power causes him to lose that very source of his ambition to the blade of Macduff's sword. It is the ironic and symbolic elements such as this in the play which contribute to much of the acceptance the work has enjoyed for centuries. Three forms of irony may be found in the play, Macbeth: Dramatic irony, being the difference between what the audience knows and what a character knows to be true; Verbal Irony, being a difference between what is said and what is meant; and Situational Irony, a difference between what happens and what is expected to happen. I will attempt to show examples of each of these forms of irony and explain their relevance to the characters and the plot. There are many examples of dramatic irony in the play which we might discuss. A major example is where Lennox asks Macbeth whether the king is to leave Macbeth's castle for home, Lennox: "Goes the king hence today?" Macbeth: "He does: he did appoint so." (II,iii,54-54) Obviously Macbeth is lying through his teeth, for the audience was fully aware that he planned to murder King Duncan that night. But if one takes Macbeth's reply literally, Duncan did "plan" to leave the castle the next day; there is no lie to be found in that. One can look back on the porter's hidden truths at the beginning of the scene, Porter: "Knock, knock! Who's there, i' the other devil's name! Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven. O! come in, equivocator." (II,iii,7-11) middle of paper Criticism on Shakespeare s Tragedies - A Course of Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature. London: AMS Press, Inc., 1965. Shakespeare, William. Tragedy of Macbeth. Ed. Barbara Mowat and Paul Warstone. New York: Washington Press, 1992. Stevens, George. Shakespeare, The Critical Heritage. Vol. 6. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981. T.W. Shakespeare, the Critical Heritage. Vol. 5. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979. Wills, Gary. Witches & Jesuits. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995. Epstein, Norrie, The Friendly Shakespeare, New York, Viking Publishing, 1993. Harbage, Alfred, Macbeth, Middlesex England, Penguin Publishing, 1956. Magill, Masterplots- Volume 6, New Jersey, Salem Press, 1949. Staunton, Howard, The Compleat Illustrated Shakespeare, New York, Park Lane Publishing, 1979. In the play Macbeth by William Shakespeare, while many literary devices are used, metaphors create clarity, whereas dramatic irony creates suspense, allowing the readers to be more engaged through the use of dramatic irony. Foremost, to keep the readers engaged, Shakespeare uses metaphor to show Macbeth's thoughts towards Duncan's announcement of Malcolm becoming the next king. When the news is announced, Macbeth moves aside and thinks whether he should "On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap" (I.V.49). The comparison reveals that Macbeth sees the prince as an obstacle, which must become. The metaphor creates clarity because the readers are able to visualize the literal meaning of the line and connect it back to the play to understand...show more content...This enables the readers to a clearer understanding of Lady Macbeth's view on Macbeth as a weak character. It engages the reader because through the use of metaphor, the readers gain a clear insight of Macbeth's character through the view of Lady Macbeth, leading the readers to want to know more about the character of Macbeth. The literary device of metaphor creates clarity within the play, however, the use of dramatic irony creates suspense, which makes the readers more engaged. On the other hand, Shakespeare uses dramatic irony when Duncan describes Macbeth's castle, which engages the reader. Duncan approaches Macbeth's castle and thinks it has "a pleasant seat; the air / Nimble and sweetly recommends itself / Unto our gentle senses" (I.V.I-3). The description of the castle which Duncan provides is completely opposite to what the audience know of the castle, which creates suspense as it causes the readers to question what will occur in the castle. Dramatic irony engages the readers because suspense allows the readers to want to find out what will happen to Duncan in the castle, which he is unaware Would you like to know more about Shakespeare's use of dramatic irony in Macbeth? If yes, you are in the right place. We search online for dramatic irony in Macbeth etc. So there is a request to read the post from beginning to end. What is dramatic irony, What is meant by dramatic irony, What is the best definition of dramatic irony? In its broadest scene, ' irony ' is the recognition of the incongruity or difference between reality and appearance. ' Dramatic irony ' means the audience understanding implications, but the characters do not. For example, Oedipus in Sophocles' "Oedipus Rex " does not realize his crime. Dramatic irony in Macbeth, Shakespeare's use of dramatic irony in Macbeth. Dramatic irony plays a very interesting and significant part in " Macbeth ". Firstly, the expression must not include ironical remarks as those of Lennox in the Seven Scene of Act - III. Secondly, the expression is also to be distinguished from the ' irony of fate or circumstances '. Thirdly, the expression, " dramatic irony " conveys the fact of the characters saying or doing things. The proper meaning of which, though not understood by themselves, is understood by the spectator - sometimes better understood. Fourthly, it must be taken to mean the speeches or actions, the meaning of which the spectators know but the speakers or characters do not know or understand at the time when they are said or done in the presence of the spectators. Fifthly, the very first expression of " Macbeth " - " So foul and fair a day, I have not seen " is an example of dramatic irony for startling the readers. Sixthly, referring to the varying chances of the day, Macbeth means the succession to the thorn by fair weather. Seventhly, our attention is directed to the words of the witches in the First Scene of First Act - " Fair is foul and foul is fair ". We see, in the verbal resemblance, an indication of the ' elective affinity ' between Macbeth and his tempters and the three witches. Eighthly, Duncan's comment on the treachery of Cawdor in Act - I, Scene - IV, is another example of dramatic irony. Duncan does not know but the audience does that his condemnation of the Thane of Cawdor is just as applicable to Macbeth who enters as he speaks. And the force of this is heightened by the friendly greeting, " Oh worthiest cousin ". Ninthly, the poetic lines of Banquo describing the castle of Macbeth in Act - I, Scene - VI may be taken also as an example of dramatic irony. The speaker and the king enjoy the peaceful innocence of the interior of the castle. But the heart of the audience feels the irony of fate or circumstances which awaits the king within it. Tenthly, Porter's speech in which he imagines himself to be the porter of the hell gate is another instance of dramatic irony. The audience knows how near he comes to the truth although the speaker does not. Eleventhly, Lady Macbeth's light words in Act - II, Scene - III, are the same dramatic irony. We realize that all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten away the smell of Duncan's blood from her hands. Lastly, the most striking instance of dramatic irony is Banquo's promise not to fail to attend the feast of Macbeth without knowing that his fate is already sealed. Read More - Lady Macbeth Character Analysis Conclusion To sum up, dramatic irony plays a very integral part in " Macbeth " from beginning to end. In dramatic irony, the audience understand implications, but the characters do not. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch remarks in his book, " Shakespeare's Workmanship " that " there is, to be sure, some of the traditional tragic irony in " Macbeth ". But its peculiar irony is retrospective rather than prophetic ". Hope, you liked the post a lot. If you liked the post, don't forget to share the post.

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