Macbeth Act One: Quotation Test

DIRECTIONS

Use this test to display your understanding of the following concept: Each line of a Shakespearean play contains rich language and ideas.

Answer the following questions for each of the 7 quotations:

1. Who said it?
2. What is the quotation's significance?

NOTE

What do I mean by significance?
- Does it relate to a theme of the play?
- Does it relate to a pattern of imagery in the play?
- Does it reveal something about the personality of the speaker or the relationships of the characters?
- Does it show dramatic irony or paradox?
- Does it remind you of anything else we've seen or talked about in class?

1) *Fair is foul and foul is fair,/Hover through the fog and filthy air* (1.i.12-13).

2) *Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o'th'Tiger;/But in a sieve I'll thither sail./And, like a rat without a tail, I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do* (1.iii.8-11).

4) Stars, hide your fires;/Let not light see my black and deep desires (I.iv.57-58).

5) Come you spirits/That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,/And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty (I.v.47-50).
6) Give me your hand./Conduct me to mine host. We love him highly/And shall continue our graces towards him (l.vii.37-39).

7) Yet do I fear thy nature;/It is too full o’th’milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way. (l.v.16-18).
The following present thoughtful, thorough and specific answers to the Act One Quotation Test:

Quote 1: *Fair is foul and foul is fair,/Hover through the fog and filthy air.*
   1. The witches
   2. This quote is a paradox. This quote can signify Macbeth and his decisions in the play. It is saying that “good is bad and bad is good.” When Macbeth kills Duncan it is good, because he is going to become king, but also bad because has to kill the King.

Quote 2: *Stars, hide your fires;/Let not light see my black and deep desires.*
   1. Macbeth
   2. Macbeth is saying that he wants to hide his dark desires, which would be killing Duncan. The imagery is dark and light. Don’t let the people see the darkness that he has. This shows that Macbeth has a dark side and wants to kill the King.

Quote 3: *Look th’innocent/flower, But be the serpent under’t.*
   1. Lady Macbeth
   2. Once again we see the motif of foul things seeming fair. Lady Macbeth wants Macbeth to be two-faced and sinister at heart. In this speech we also see that she is that way as well.

Quote 4: *Yet do I fear thy nature;/It is too full o’th’milk of human kindness/To catch the nearest way.*
   1. Lady Macbeth
   2. This line is also about Macbeth. His wife fears he is too kind to kill the King. It also has a recurring theme from the play about gender roles. Milk is often associated with women. She is saying Macbeth is not manly enough to kill the King.

Quote 5: *Come, you spirits/That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,/And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full/Of direst cruelty.*
   1. Lady Macbeth
   2. This quote really shows how strong Lady Macbeth is. She wishes to be turned into a man so people will take her strength and toughness more seriously. She also wants to be filled with cruelty so that will make her seem even stronger. This really shows how intense Lady Macbeth is. In a way it could connect to the whole hiding what’s on the inside thing, because she has this really strong outside but who knows what’s on the inside.

Quote 6: *The raven himself is hoarse/The croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan/Under my battlements.*
   1. Lady Macbeth
2. This quote relates to the bird theme we’ve seen throughout the book. Ravens are black, and we think of them as bad or evil or mean. So by him hoarsely croaking at the arrival of Duncan at Macbeth’s house, it could be a bad sign. But Duncan doesn’t know it.

This quote also shows how Lady Macbeth seems to be in charge. In this scene, you’d think she’d say OUR battlements (house), because they are married, but she, yet again, is very strong and says HER battlements even though they are both hers and Macbeths.

**Quote 7: This castle hath a pleasant seat. The air/Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself/Unto our gentle senses.**
1. Duncan
2. This is said at the beginning of the 6th scene, the scene that is filled with dramatic irony. Duncan continuously compliments Macbeth’s house, oblivious of what is going to happen to him. Duncan is proven here as one who is very trusting of everyone.

**Quote 8: Give me your hand./Conduct me to mine host. We love him highly/And shall continue our graces towards him.**
1. Duncan
2. This is Duncan talking to Lady Macbeth. There are two great examples of dramatic irony in this. First, Duncan yet again praises Macbeth. The readers know that Duncan will die because of him. When Duncan says “host,” it has a double meaning. Duncan meant Macbeth, but it Christianity “host” refers to God in heaven. So when Duncan says “conduct me to mine host” one could interpret “take me to heaven.”

**Quote 9: He hath honored me of late, and I have brought/Golden opinions from all sorts of people,/Which would be worn now in their newest gloss, not aside so soon.**
1. Macbeth
2. Macbeth is talking to Lady Macbeth and is giving her his reasons not to kill Duncan when Duncan is at their house. There is the theme of clothes in this quote which has come up a few other times in the book.

**Quote 10: Was the hope drunk/Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?/And wakes it now to look so green and pale/At what it did so freely?/From this time/Such I account thy love.**
1. Lady Macbeth
2. This quote again shows the clothing imagery that keeps coming up. I think this is when she’s mad about Macbeth chickening out of killing Duncan. By saying “such I account thy love” she is talking about how if Macbeth can’t keep his word about killing the king, then she questions his love too. She said she would always keep her promises. This again shows how demanding she is of Macbeth, and how she seems to be the one in charge and the one who really wants to kill Duncan.