The main idea

Macduff connects national duty to personal feeling. His grief challenges the idea that masculinity depends on suppressing emotion.

Character development

Discovers regicide

Resists tyranny

Grieves for family

Confronts Macbeth

Feeling and courage

“I must also feel it as a man” — Macduff, 4.3

“Turn, hell-hound, turn!” — Macduff, 5.8

The first statement insists that feeling belongs within manhood; the later repeated imperative turns grief into confrontation. Action does not require him to erase love or sorrow.

From public horror to private loss

“O horror, horror, horror!” — Macduff, 2.3

“All my pretty ones?” — Macduff, 4.3

Repetition marks the enormity of Duncan’s murder. The later question and affectionate phrase individualise the cost of tyranny: national disorder now destroys his own household.

Develop the interpretation

Leaving his family makes his duty painful and debatable. Lady Macduff’s criticism should remain part of an account that also recognises his resistance to tyranny.

Recall question

How does Macduff challenge Lady Macbeth’s definition of being a man?

EXAM STASH • examstashhq.com