



# Macbeth

*Gareth Hinds , William Shakespeare*

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**Shakespeare's classic story of dark ambition, madness, and murder springs to life in a masterful new graphic novel by Gareth Hinds.**

Set against the moody backdrop of eleventh-century Scotland, Gareth Hinds's captivating, richly illustrated interpretation takes readers into the claustrophobic mind of a man driven mad by ambition. An evil seed takes root in the mind of Macbeth, a general in the king's army, when three witches tell him he will one day be king. At the urging of his wife, he resolves to take the throne by the most direct path: a dagger in the heart of King Duncan. But "*blood will have blood*," and when others grow suspicious of his sudden rise to power, is Macbeth prepared to commit more murders to keep the crown?

## Macbeth Details

Date : Published February 10th 2015 by Candlewick Press

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Author : Gareth Hinds , William Shakespeare

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# From Reader Review *Macbeth* for online ebook

## Beth says

Comics are real reading. End of story. If you're horrified by the idea of a student reading a graphic novel version of a Shakespeare play, would you rather they not understand it at all? The visual element adds much needed scaffolding to readers who don't have the background knowledge to fully immerse themselves in the text.

If I had been able to read this graphic novel adaptation of *Macbeth* when I was in high school, I might have actually somewhat understood and taken an interest the story. As it is, I'm 35 and am now finally starting to feel like I am grasping the things that English teachers love about Shakespeare. Yes, my dirty little secret as an English teacher is that I don't understand Shakespeare. It's my Achilles heel. But a text like this, not only with visual elements, but backmatter at the end that gives readers added background information (like the very important point that back in the time of 11th century Scotland, a king's heir-apparent was not his son, but rather someone that the nobles chose which would make better sense as to how *Macbeth* was able to become king) and explanation of the process of creating a graphic novel from such a revered, classic text can help people like me start to fully grasp a difficult text like this.

I hope more English teachers start embracing the idea of putting these kinds of graphic novels in their classroom libraries.

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## Gary Anderson says

The Gareth Hinds graphic novel version of *Macbeth* is extraordinary. The graphic novel format allows Hinds to absorb *Macbeth's* compressed time, hallucinatory (or are they?) visions, gory scenes, and blood-soaked imagery and present them in dramatic, colorful scenes.

Thankfully, Hinds also respects Shakespeare's language. Comic balloons do not always play well with iambic pentameter, and Hinds has abandoned Shakespeare's line breaks for the most part. Although some scenes and monologues retain Shakespeare's enjambment, the rhythmic power of the language is present throughout.

Gareth Hinds masterfully conveys subtlety and complexity in his characters. The facial expressions bring characters to life in startling ways, echoing the techniques actors use to engage audiences.

The valuable notes at the end of this edition are comparable to a director's notes in a theatrical program as Hinds explains how he used history, scholarship, and dramaturgy to inform the choices and compromises involved in adapting *Macbeth* to a comic form.

Regardless of how well you know *Macbeth*, this graphic novel version is likely to show you something new.

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## CD says

The classic Shakespeare-an tale. End notes that are more about the graphic novel in some cases than the story.

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## **David Sarkies says**

### **The Graphic Novel**

24 March 2017

I've just discovered this amazing new website. It's called Reddit. Okay, I'm sure many of you have already head of it, or are probably even users as well, it is just that while I had heard of it, and even visited it on occasion, I never really appreciated how useful it is until much more recently. In a way it is like Facebook, but your posts are not only anonymous, but you basically interact with everybody in the community you are posting, and you aren't bugging your friend's and family with posts that they are probably not interested in (and you can filter out the posts that you aren't interested it, such as those on Curling, unless you like Curling).

Anyway, the reason I raised this is because I posed a question to the Shakespeare subreddit (there is literally a subreddit on anything and everything, including Curling, not that I'm subscribed to it), and that was what was people's opinion on turning Shakespeare into a graphic novel, and whether it could be considered butchering a classic. Okay, the words I used were a bit stronger, namely heresy, but I'm sure you get what I mean. Well, the general response was that nobody had a problem with it, though a number of people did mention that they probably wouldn't read it.

I actually found this version in an comic book store in Sydney that was closing down, so I ended up picking it up quite cheaply. My initial impression of it was that it was okay, and the artwork was reasonably good, and it was definitely much better than that Manga version of Julius Caesar I read quite some time ago. However, it is still Macbeth, and I'm really not a big fan of this particular play. I still remember when I had returned to school after a five year absence, and one of the first essays I had to write was on Macbeth, and I proceeded to describe Macbeth as 'a d\*ckh\*\*d'. Needless to say my English teacher, who was very prim and proper, wasn't at all impressed, and was informed that such language was not appropriate in a formal essay (at which point I then proved her wrong by quoting a 'line' out of another book).

I'm not sure if I really need to go into the themes in Macbeth here, particularly since I have done it in my previous post on the actual play, and also have written a blog post on a version that I saw at The Globe in London. However, there were a couple of interesting things picked up, namely that back when the events of the story that Shakespeare borrowed the idea from castles didn't exist in England (and Scotland), namely because they only appeared after William the Conqueror invaded. Also, the suggestion was that King James was a descendant of Banquo, however modern research proves that this is not quite the case. Anyway, this is Elizabethan theatre we are talking about, and much like modern Hollywood, historical accuracy is usually pushed to the side if it happens to get in the way of a good tale.

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## **Grace says**

Macbeth was so dark :o

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## Jeff Zell says

What a way to introduce a person to Macbeth! Hinds uses Shakespeare's language. He vividly depicts the characters and scenes. The witches are three different kinds. He visually captures the madness of Macbeth as he grows paranoid and has hallucinations. At the end of the book Hinds puts the story in the context of Scotland. Great read! Great images!

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## Melle says

A gorgeous, glorious graphic adaptation of one of William Shakespeare's best tragedies. Much of the play's dialog is kept but is played out in detailed, almost-fairytale-like illustrations. Would be a great introduction to the Bard or a great way to give visual learners another way to experience Macbeth.

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## David Schaafsma says

Gareth Hinds has made a name for himself in the world of comics adaptations of classic literature. I first read his Beowulf, which I liked very much, then moved on to his Romeo and Juliet and others. This may be the best of them that he has done thus far. I say this as a fan of Macbeth, protective of its legacy. Hinds researched the history of the play and the historic representation of Scotland and Scottish history in doing this ambitious work. His artwork and integrity stand out in a somewhat dubious area of literature, that of graphic adaptation, which could be seen as--and often is--severely compromising the quality of the original.

Hinds gets that. He's an artist and doesn't merely want to just illustrate Shakespeare's words. He knows that there are countless film versions that have sacrificed the original language for an equally powerful visual vocabulary, such as Kurosawa's Throne of Blood. Hinds wants to reach young people and have teachers use this book as a companion to, not replacement of, the original. He preserves much of the original language, especially in the most beloved scenes, which I was grateful for, though he admits he has severely cut much of the language and plot to get to what is for him the essence of the story, which we agree is worthy goal. You want struggling readers to know what is going on, and this is not a trivial issue. And he's a great artist. I appreciate his contributions to the appreciation of classic literature, even my beloved Macbeth. I liked this version quite a bit as a work of art in its own right.

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## Sud666 says

Shakespeare and comics don't usually tend to go together. Or do they? My preconceived notions have been demolished by this very nice graphic novel. Gareth Hinds freely admits that he did have to abridge the story for this format. He also uses normal prose instead of iambic pentameter. The rythm is maintained though, the author felt that removing the line breaks made for a smoother read. I can not disagree.

Is this for someone who wants to read the full play? No. Is this for someone who loves Macbeth and appreciates it in a graphic novel format with the entirety of the main story present. The illustrator is quite

talented and the panels with the three witches were excellent. In many ways you see Macbeth's steady mental decline. This is a welcome addition to my collection. Any Shakespeare fan will appreciate this, as long as their not too stodgy to appreciate that this is not unabridged. Hopefully books like this will inspire people to read the original brilliant works.

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### **Dolly says**

This adaptation of William Shakespeare's popular play is terrific - atmospheric, dramatic, and yet not overly graphic in the violence displayed.

The pencil, ink wash and digital media illustrations are very nicely detailed and really help to convey the emotions and the meaning of the words, which can be very helpful for those who are not comfortable reading Mr. Shakespeare's words alone.

In addition, the maps, historical notes, and notes on the text and illustrations are very helpful to put the play into context and understand the inspiration for the way the book was produced.

Overall, it was a very entertaining read and I will certainly look for more Shakespeare adaptations by Mr. Hinds at our local library.

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### **Dan says**

An absolutely fabulous adaptation of Macbeth. Obviously (and Hinds even specifically states this in the afterword/notes segment), this plays second fiddle to the "authentic" Shakespearean tome, but as an addendum (and a fun quick revisitation of a text I have taught to senior English classes for years) or as a companion piece, really quite fun. The dynamics and complexity of Macbeth / Lady Macbeth's relationship (I wanted Lady Macbeth to appear a bit more convincingly maniacal, especially in the "unsex me" monologue panels) aren't quite captured here in a way that would permit someone to enjoy this graphic novel with no previous knowledge of the story, but again, Hinds points out the limitations of the genre/the challenges he faced in narrowing down the text for the sake of brevity. That all said, this stays remarkably true to the ethos of the original in 135 gorgeously illustrated pages. I loved Banquo's ghost's depiction in addition to the witches and the demons/dark masters channeled for the last three prophecies. Hind's books are great visualization tools for many of my students and they are just fun to read!

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### **Nicola Mansfield says**

This is my third classic graphic novel adaptation by Hinds and I adore his work. I've done a little research on him and can't find any indications that he's studied or is an expert in classic/ancient literature. However, this is his works' specialty in graphic novels and his introductions and back matter notes on historical references, notes on his adaptations and page by page annotations on his choices show both a scholarly familiarity with the work and an intense research of the subject. I've mentioned before that Macbeth is my favourite Shakespeare and this was a delight for me to read. Hinds keeps to Shakespearean language though he's often written it in prose to make it work better in his format. The art is fantastic as Hinds' work always is; he uses darkness and shadows effectively here. A beautiful piece of work, more "art" really. Would definitely

enhance a high school student's experience who was studying the play but more so a great addition to any Shakespearean aficionado's collection.

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### **Chrissy says**

Loved this - what a great way to experience Shakespeare! This adaptation isn't a complete version, but has all the plot, and all of the best lines that you should know from this play. Shakespeare should be seen on stage, but this is a next best thing - a visual to help you with who is talking and what is taking place, with the added benefit of being able to stop and reread! Some great pictures - the witches, the visions, the ghosts!

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### **American Mensa says**

The book, MacBeth by Gareth Hinds is a graphic novel adapted and illustrated from the play Macbeth by Shakespeare. The book is very entertaining and fun to read because it takes an old tale and turns it into a new, fun adventure. It lets you have a deep understanding of the characters and gives an image of everything that's happening. The pictures are very intricate and a lot of fun to look at. You can tell the illustrator/author put a lot of time and effort into making each character and scene the best it could possibly be.

My favorite part was the final battle which was very intense and thought provoking.

If you are 11-16 and a fan of graphic novels you will like this book, but keep in mind that it is a bit violent for younger readers.

Review by Mason H., Age 12, Denver Mensa

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### **Vicki Cline says**

This is a graphic novel version of Shakespeare's Macbeth. The artist has done a wonderful job of illustrating the various parts of the play. The three witches in particular are very good. Naturally, he's trimmed some of the dialog but all of the memorable lines are there. He's also included some endnotes on some of the panels which are very interesting. I'm looking forward to his other adaptations of classic literature.

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