

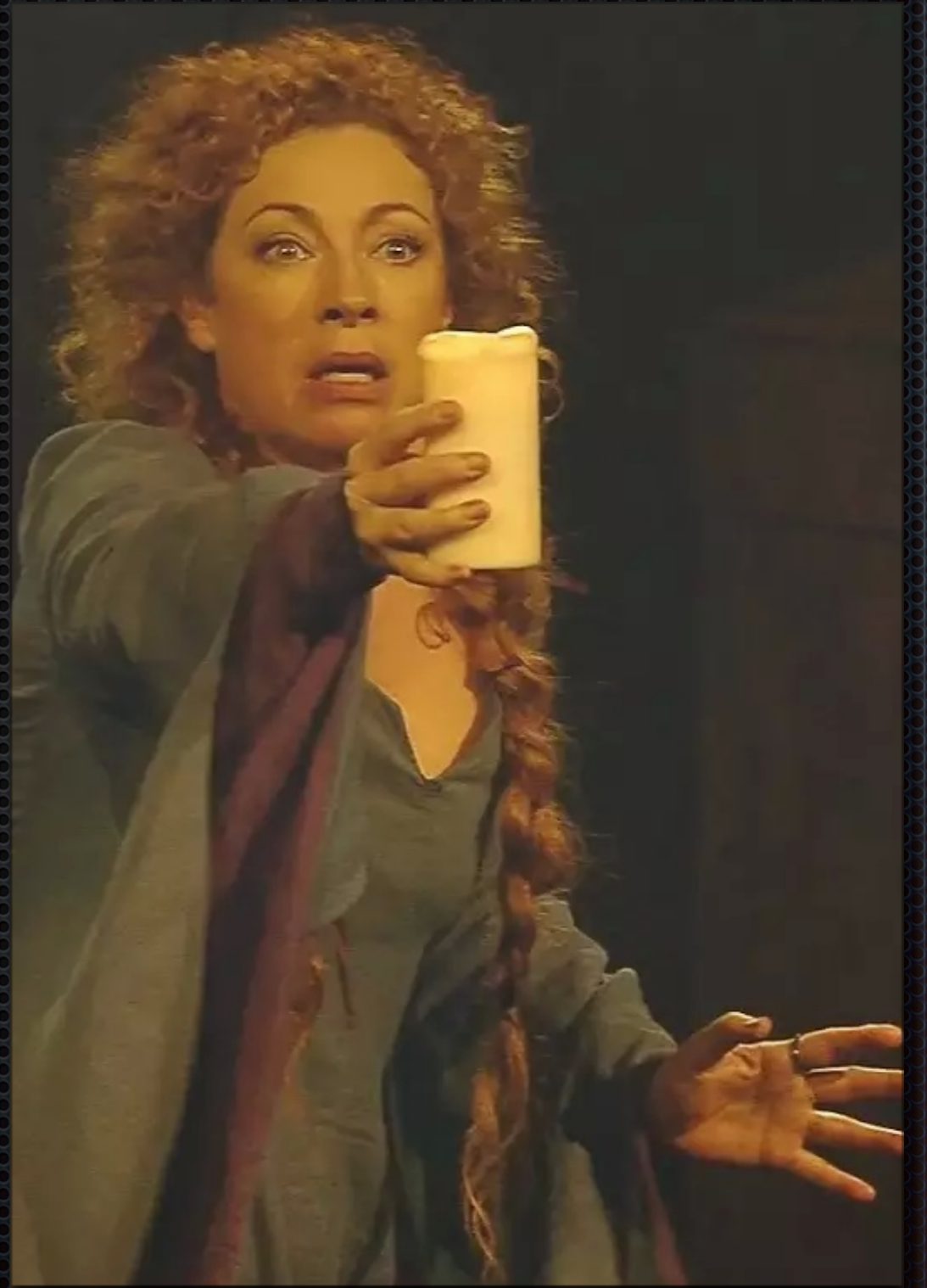
Character - Tragic Hero

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Character Studies

Checklist



Role

- ✦ Scenes
- ✦ Effect of actions/inaction
- ✦ Dramatic function
- ✦ Hero / heroine / villain
- ✦ Foil
- ✦ Fully-developed or one-dimensional

Dramatic Function

- ✦ Progression
- ✦ Structure
- ✦ Character elements: temptation / avoidance ...

Hero

- ✦ Courage
- ✦ Nobility
- ✦ Fortitude
- ✦ Exceptional qualities



Tragic Hero: Aristotle

- ✦ Noble birth
- ✦ Hamartia: tragic flaw
- ✦ Peripeteia: reversal of fortunes brought about by tragic flaw
- ✦ Actions lead to increase of self-knowledge
- ✦ Audience feels pity and fear

“A man cannot become a hero until he can see the
root of his own downfall.”

Aristotle

Tragic Hero: Shakespeare

- ✦ Hubris
- ✦ Doomed from the start
- ✦ Not responsible for his flaw but *is* responsible for his actions
- ✦ Leader of men - his fate affects the nation
- ✦ Greatness to nothing: contrast
- ✦ Suffering must have meaning

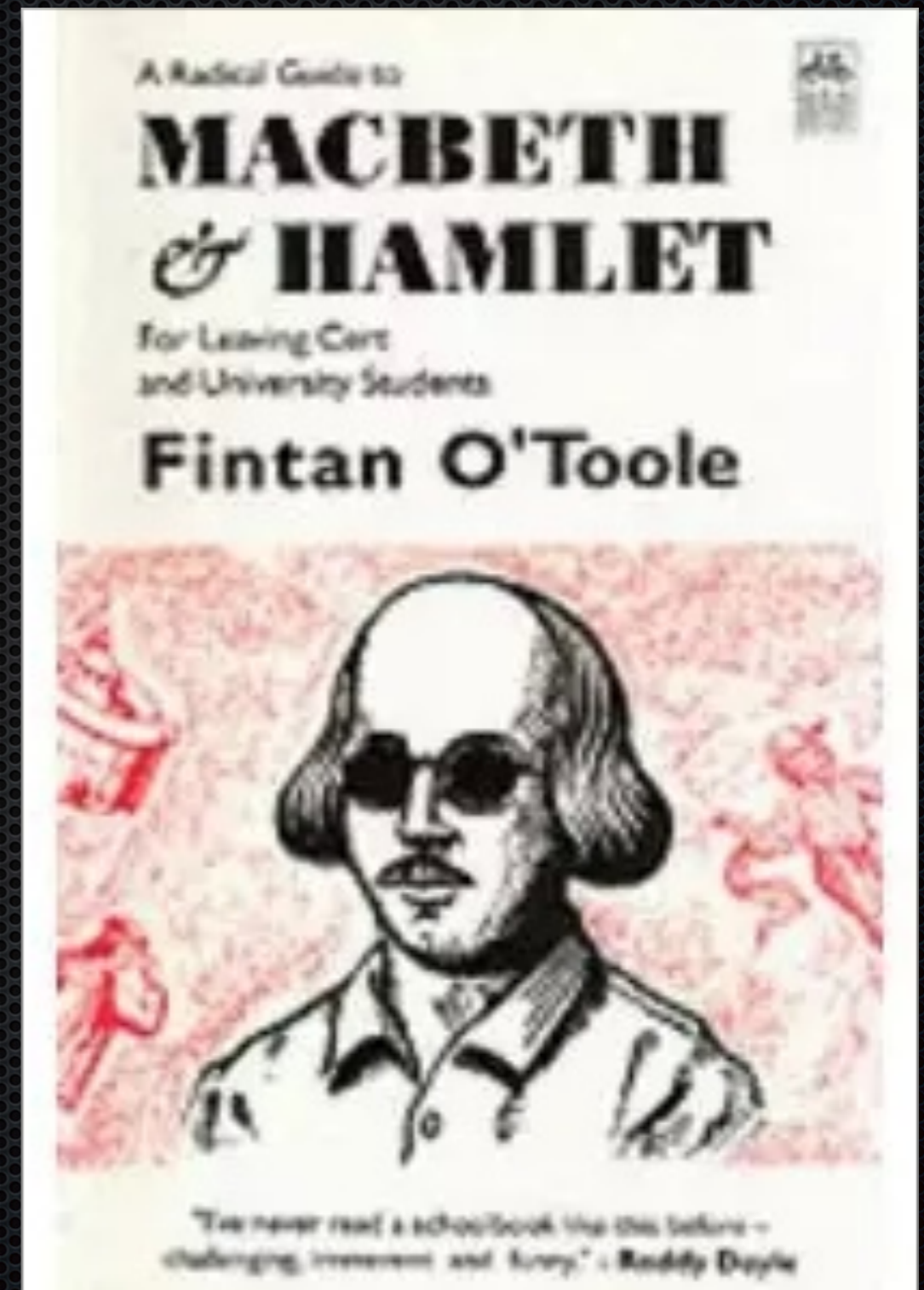
Macbeth as a Tragic Hero

- ✦ How does Macbeth fit into these categories?
- ✦ Why does he murder the king?
- ✦ Is he a victim of evil influences?
- ✦ Remember, Macbeth knows the consequences of his actions yet he chooses to carry them out
- ✦ Propels himself beyond redemption

- Part of what makes Macbeth a tragic hero is that he never loses sight of what he is doing. He knows he has become evil and yet becomes ever more determined to act in defiance of his conscience

Another View

Fintan O'Toole



“Shakespeare's tragic heroes remain enigmatic right to the end. If they didn't, we would lose interest in them. They are interesting precisely because they have no fixed characters.”

Fintan O'Toole