Appearance vs. Reality is Relevant in Catfish and Macbeth: Leah Hoffman.

The quote "There's no art/To find the mind's construction in the face:/He was a gentleman on whom I built/An absolute trust." connects to the theme appearance vs. reality in Macbeth in many ways, when he pretended to be a loyal soldier to King Duncan and killing him later in his sleep, to when he appeared to be Banquo's friend and behind his back sent murderers against him and his son. Why? Macbeth was a selfish man, only worrying about the outcome of himself, and not how those around him would see him as he was slowly driven insane. In the documentary Catfish by Henry Joost and Ariel Schluman, they film the build up of trust Yaniv Schulman had for the family of this so called 8 year old girl that loves to paint his photographs, until he realizes the reality isn't what it seems over Facebook.

It all started with the little girl. She made herself seem to be an innocent, young girl that loved to paint and had an interest in Yaniv's photographs specifically, because she actively searched for them and sent him paintings of them. Yaniv's whole job revolved around his photo's, so he was surprised and grateful. To add to her appearance, there was a Facebook profile for Abby where she had videos and pictures of her painting, and Yaniv was interested because they were really adept. This was where they sent messages back and forth, and Abby would always close with 'Peace and Love', and had also asked to call him 'Nev' as a short-form of his name, both adding to her youth of a little girl. She is also seen as very peaceful, like when she sent him the message about her snake dying and its food (a mouse) wasn't eaten, so she had a new pet. Nev adored the story, that the little girl could look past the death and at the good in it. It was very convincing, and was accompanied by a picture of a small girl and a mouse. So the little girl was in, and Yaniv caught the fish the older woman dangled in front of him.

After some time the mother, Angela, starts getting involved, appearing to be a concerning, involved parent of Abby for shipping information. She says things like "I don't know why my daughter wants to paint your pictures, only that she loves it", adding to Abby's appearance of a young ambitious painter. Nev has no reason to think Angela's lying, and thinks she 'sounds normal and sweet', and that 'she must be awesome because her kids are awesome', showing he is believing these profiles that have been set up for him. She tells him stories of her family, like when her son was plowing he hit a power line that fell into a tree, and they needed to cut down the 150 year old tree and also had no power for a while. And while on the phone, she tends to have children running around her, having a busy and full household. My thoughts were that she is using stories from her existent life and family, and implementing them into this fantasy she created with Yaniv to build the image of a big happy family, and ultimately gaining his trust.

Nev gets Facebook friend request from a lot of people connecting to this family like; Abby's father Vince, the mother Angela, their son Alex, and the half-sister Megan. He later in the movie gets 9 more people contributing to the schism, adding to the appearance of being real people by having acquaintances, and by interacting with each other on their walls, status's, and photo's. The father and sister both send thank you messages looking like appreciative adults. Megan's was even slightly flirtatious, using words like 'so kind' and 'sweetheart', and catching Nev's attention.

Megan was the catfishers big plan to get into Yaniv's heart. As soon as they started talking on Facebook, it was made clear she was available by updating her Facebook status to 'single'. She has lots of pictures up there too of modeling and playing the cello, adding to her image of a model, artist, and musician. But she also has pictures with the family and of Abby and Vince. Megan soon after makes aware she has a crush on Yaniv and is interested in him by sending him a painted picture of his profile picture, and commenting about how 'amazing you look' and how she wants to 'put my head on your chest and fall asleep'. This painting also makes it seem like she has an artistic talent like her younger sister, and that they are similar, but my thoughts were that the catfisher him/herself was indeed artistic, and that was an easy way for them to create a bond between family members. I had another thought that maybe this is their excuse to paint, and is used to escape from their own world.

There was also the appearance of the brother, Alex, being really close to the family. It is made known to Nev that he has a band, and has even gotten a band t-shirt in one of Abby's packages. Once Nev and Megan started connecting, Meg appears to write a song with Alex, her brother, for Nev. Alex posted it to Yaniv's wall with the message 'the girl you cannot take 2 minutes out of your busy schedule to call went to all the trouble to write & record a song for you', making her seem quite attached to Nev. They even use words like 'sexy' and 'babe', having longing conversations about each other. She admitted to being a virgin, making her seem that much more special and unique for wanting him 'so desperately', and said on Facebook she is' over tired and missing someone she's never even met'. After some time she asks for a request to record a song, and when she does they soon find the exact same sounding cover on YouTube. They start searching the songs she published as her own on Facebook and find the reality of her musical side is fake, and this is the start of the Faccio family's story coming to an end.

Abby's mother, Angela, talked to Yaniv about the auctions she was having for Abby's paintings, getting up to $1000 for one sometimes. She also mentioned that they were remodelling it themselves, but when Nev and his brother searched the address of the so called auction house and called the owner, he said it was still up for sale and has been open for 4 years! This proves that they were lying about selling Abby's paintings, and after their discovery Angela calls about a really productive auction, and that 'Abby's up at another gallery, talking about showing some paintings', which must also be a lie, because there is no gallery!

Yaniv and his 2 directors finally had enough of the lying and had to go see what was real and what was not, and went to the address of Megan's farm. He knew she had to be there because her horse was in labour, and every Sunday morning the whole family is suppose to get together and have breakfast. They arrive at the farm and find his post cards sent from a long time ago, and that they haven't been read. They don't find any horses, and Nev finally realizes it's all a sham, and gets very upset because he was genuine to this 'woman'. They drive around to where Abby's gallery is suppose to be and finds it empty like the website showed, guaranteeing that was all a lie. So, seeing enough, they decide to go find the truth at Abby's house.

At first sight Angela does not look like her Facebook picture, and neither does Vince. There is also no Abby around, only 2 handicapped twin boys that look very needing of care (living support). Some time passes and Angela finally gets Abby on the phone because she is at her friends. They drive to meet her, and Angela makes her last attempts at appearing to be the mother of a painter, pointing out different places that have her artwork showcased there. Once they arrive at the house, Abby's friend admits that 'her mom paints a lot, but Abby doesn't paint that much', and Abby answers Nev's question that she doesn't know what Megan looks like anymore, and that they never see each other, destroying the reality of there being a 'Megan'.

They go for a drive before dinner and come to the conclusion that the whole family has been set up by Angela, and that they all noticed she was the one in love with Nev, asking for them to 'come and hang out after dinner' and leaning up against the car, afraid they wouldn't come back. She was also giving very long hugs when saying good bye, not wanting them to go. Nev admits her voice is almost the exact same as Megan's, if she made it slightly quieter and softer, which is how she sounded, and that he saw when he texted Megan, that Angela wound soon look at her phone. He comes to the realization of his reality that 'I've been texting and having this weird affair with this strange 40 year old woman'. He talks to her gently and gets the truth out of her, that she is in fact the painter, all the people on Facebook, and that she has become so involved with the twin boys she gave up a lot of herself. She says the reason for the profiles were to escape and be someone she could control, and mentions that 'a lot of the personalities that came out were just fragments of myself, what I wanted to be, and never could be'. The appearance was an artistic, animal loving, sweet woman, and the reality was the same except with her own family, and with a different age and name.

Macbeth the soldier is very similar to Angela the catfisher, both because they were thriving to deceive them and gain the trust of those that could benefit them, and going behind their back for selfish reason. They showed the appearance of mature, sensible, motivated human beings that, in reality, were only doing it to be of use to themselves. Macbeth so he could be the king, keep his crown, and not be betrayed. And Angela so she could have someone to be whoever she wanted with, somewhere she could turn to after a rough day to be accepted and loved. All in all, they wanted it all for themselves and didn't care of the cost it came at. In one tragic story the outcome is many friends murders, in the other a broken and played with toy heart, all due to their appearance versus who they actually were.