Act 1, Scene 1

Thunder and lightning. Enter three WITCHES

FIRST WITCH
When shall we three meet again?
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH
When the hurly-burly’s done,  
When the battle’s lost and won.

THIRD WITCH
That will be ere the set of sun.

FIRST WITCH
Where the place?

SECOND WITCH
Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH
There to meet with Macbeth.

The WITCHES hear the calls of their spirit friends or “familiars,” which look like animals—one is a cat and one is a toad.

FIRST WITCH
I come, Graymalkin!

SECOND WITCH
Paddock calls.

THIRD WITCH
Anon.

ALL
Fair is foul, and foul is fair
Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Exeunt

Act 1, Scene 2

Alarum within. Enter KING DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with attendants, meeting a bleeding CAPTAIN

DUNCAN
What bloody man is that? He can report,  
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt  
The newest state.

MALCOLM
This is the sergeant  
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought  
‘Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the broil  
As thou didst leave it.

CAPTAIN
Doubtful it stood,  
As two spent swimmers that do cling together

DUNCAN
Who is this bloody man? Judging from his appearance, I bet he can tell us the latest news about the revolt.

MALCOLM
This is the brave sergeant who fought to keep me from being captured. Hail, brave friend! Tell the king what was happening in the battle when you left it.

CAPTAIN
For a while you couldn’t tell who would win. The armies were like two exhausted swimmers
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald—

Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him—from the Western Isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied,
And fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
15 Showed like a rebel's whore. But all's too weak,
For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—
Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valor's minion carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseamed him from the nave to th' chops,
And fixed his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN
O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!

Act 1, Scene 2, Page 2

CAPTAIN
As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seemed to come
Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valor armed,
Compelled these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,
With furbished arms and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.

DUNCAN
Dismayed not this our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

CAPTAIN
Yes, as sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks,
So they doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe. Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize another Golgotha,
I cannot tell—
But I am faint, my gashes cry for help.

DUNCAN
So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honor both. Go get him surgeons.

Exit CAPTAIN with attendants
Enter ROSS and ANGUS

ROSS and ANGUS enter.

Who comes here?

MALCOLM
The worthy thane of Ross.

LENNOX

The CAPTAIN exits, helped by attendants.

Who is this?

MALCOLM
The worthy Thane of Ross.

LENNOX
Original Text

What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he look
That seems to speak things strange.

Modern Text

His eyes seem frantic! He looks like someone with a strange tale to tell.

Act 1, Scene 2, Page 3

ROSS
God save the king.

DUNCAN
Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

ROSS
From Fife, great king,
Where the Norweyian banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold.

DUNCAN
Great happiness!

ROSS
That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition.

DUNCAN
No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest: go pronounce his present death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

ROSS
I'll see it done.

DUNCAN
What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

ROSS
God save the king!

DUNCAN
Where have you come from, worthy thane?

ROSS
Great king, I've come from Fife, where the Norwegian flag flies, mocking our country and frightening our people. Leading an enormous army and assisted by that disloyal traitor, the thane of Cawdor, the king of Norway began a bloody battle. But outfitted in his battle-weathered armor, Macbeth met the Norwegian attacks shot for shot, as if he were the goddess of war's husband. Finally he broke the enemy's spirit, and we were victorious.

DUNCAN
Great happiness!

ROSS
So now Sweno, the Norwegian king, wants a treaty. We told him we wouldn't even let him bury his men until he retreated to Saint Colme's Inch and paid us ten thousand dollars.

DUNCAN
The thane of Cawdor will never again betray me. Go announce that he will be executed, and tell Macbeth that Cawdor's titles will be given to him.

ROSS
I'll get it done right away.

DUNCAN
The thane of Cawdor has lost what the noble Macbeth has won.

Exeunt

They all exit.

Act 1, Scene 3

Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES

FIRST WITCH
Where hast thou been, sister?

SECOND WITCH
Killing swine.

THIRD WITCH
Sister, where thou?

FIRST WITCH
A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
5 And munched, and munched, and munched. “Give me,”
quoth I.
“Aroint thee, witch!” the rump-fed runnion cries.
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.

SECOND WITCH
I’ll give thee a wind.

FIRST WITCH
Thou ‘rt kind.

THIRD WITCH
And I another.

FIRST WITCH
I myself have all the other,
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I’ th’ shipman’s card.
I’ll drain him dry as hay.
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his penthouse lid.
He shall live a man forbid.
Weary sev’nights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.

SECOND WITCH
I’ll give you some wind to sail there.

FIRST WITCH
How nice of you!

THIRD WITCH
And I will give you some more.

FIRST WITCH
I already have control of all the other winds, along
with the ports from which they blow and every
direction on the sailor’s compass in which they
can go. I’ll drain the life out of him. He won’t catch
a wink of sleep, either at night or during the day.
He will live as a cursed man. For eighty-one
weeks he will waste away in agony.

Second Witches

SECOND WITCH
Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH
Here I have a pilot’s thumb,
Wrecked as homeward he did come.

THIRD WITCH
Here I have the thumb of a pilot who was
drowned while trying to return home.

Drum within

THIRD WITCH
A drum, a drum! Macbeth doth come.

ALL
(dancing together in a circle) The weird sisters, hand
in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about,
Thrice to thine and thrice to mine
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace! The charm’s wound up.

Enter MACBETH and BANQUO
MACBETH
So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

Although I can’t make his ship disappear, I can still make his journey miserable. Look what I have here.

SECOND WITCH
Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH
Here I have the thumb of a pilot who was
drowned while trying to return home.

A drum sounds offstage.

THIRD WITCH
A drum, a drum! Macbeth has come.

ALL
(dancing together in a circle) We weird sisters, hand in hand, swift travelers over the sea and land, dance around and around like so. Three times to yours, and three times to mine, and three times again, to add up to nine. Enough! The charm is ready.

Enter MACBETH and BANQUO
MACBETH
(to BANQUO) I have never seen a day that was so good and bad at the same time.
Original Text

BANQUO

How far is 't called to Forres?—What are these

So withered and so wild in their attire,

That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' Earth,

And yet are on 't?—Live you? Or are you aught

That man may question? You seem to understand

By each at once her choppy finger laying

Upon her skinny lips. You should be women,

And yet your beards forbid me to interpret

That you are so.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 3

MACBETH

Speak, if you can: what are you?

FIRST WITCH

All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

SECOND WITCH

All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

THIRD WITCH

All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

BANQUO

Good sir, why do you start and seem to fear

Things that do sound so fair? (to the WITCHES) I' th' name of truth,

Are ye fantastical, or that indeed

Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner

You greet with present grace and great prediction

Of noble having and of royal hope,

That he seems rapt withal. To me you speak not.

If you can look into the seeds of time

And say which grain will grow and which will not,

Speak, then, to me, who neither beg nor fear

Your favors nor your hate.

FIRST WITCH

Hail!

SECOND WITCH

Hail!

THIRD WITCH

Hail!

FIRST WITCH

Lesser than Macbeth and greater.

SECOND WITCH

Not so happy, yet much happier.

THIRD WITCH

Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none.

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

Modern Text

BANQUO

How far is it supposed to be to Forres? (he sees the WITCHES) What are these creatures?

They’re so withered-looking and crazily dressed.

They don’t look like they belong on this planet, but I see them standing here on Earth. (to the WITCHES) Are you alive? Can you answer questions? You seem to understand me, because each of you has put a gruesome finger to her skinny lips. You look like women, but your beards keep me from believing that you really are.

MACBETH

Speak, if you can. What kind of creatures are you?

FIRST WITCH

All hail, Macbeth! Hail to you, thane of Glamis!

SECOND WITCH

All hail, Macbeth! Hail to you, thane of Cawdor!

THIRD WITCH

All hail, Macbeth, the future king!

BANQUO

My dear Macbeth, why do you look so startled and afraid of these nice things they’re saying? (to the WITCHES) Tell me honestly, are you illusions, or are you really what you seem to be? You’ve greeted my noble friend with honors and talk of a future so glorious that you’ve made him speechless. But you don’t say anything to me. If you can see the future and say how things will turn out, tell me. I don’t want your favors and I’m not afraid of your hatred.

FIRST WITCH

Hail!

SECOND WITCH

Hail!

THIRD WITCH

Hail!

FIRST WITCH

You are lesser than Macbeth but also greater.

SECOND WITCH

You are not as happy as Macbeth, yet much happier.

THIRD WITCH

Your descendants will be kings, even though you will not be one. So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 4
FIRST WITCH
Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH
Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more. By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis. But how of Cawdor? The thane of Cawdor lives, A prosperous gentleman, and to be king

FIRST WITCH
Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH
Wait! You only told me part of what I want to know. Stay and tell me more. I already know I am the thane of Glamis because I inherited the position when my father, Sinel, died. But how can you call me the thane of Cawdor? The thane of Cawdor is alive, and he's a rich and powerful man. And for me to be the king is completely impossible, just as it's impossible for me to be thane of Cawdor. Tell me where you learned these strange things, and why you stop us at this desolate place with this prophetic greeting? Speak, I command you.

WITCHES vanish

BANQUO
The earth hath bubbles, as the water has, And these are of them. Whither are they vanished?

MACBETH
Into the air, and what seemed corporal Melted, as breath into the wind. Would they had stayed.

BANQUO
Were such things here as we do speak about? Or have we eaten on the insane root That takes the reason prisoner?

MACBETH
Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO
You shall be king.

MACBETH
And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

BANQUO
To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?

ROSS and ANGUS enter.
And poured them down before him.

**ANGUS**

We are sent
To give thee from our royal master thanks,
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.

**ROSS**

And, for an earnest of a greater honor,
He bade me, from him, call thee thane of Cawdor:
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane,
For it is thine.

**BANQUO**

What, can the devil speak true?

**MACBETH**

The thane of Cawdor lives. Why do you dress me
In borrowed robes?

**ANGUS**

Who was the thane lives yet,
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was
combined
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
He labored in his country's wrack, I know not;
But treasons capital, confessed and proved,
Have overthrown him.

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 6**

**MACBETH**

(aside) Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!
The greatest is
behind. (to ROSS and ANGUS) Thanks for your
pains.
(aside to BANQUO) Do you not hope your children
shall be kings,
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them?

**BANQUO**

That, trusted home,
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange.
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
In deepest consequence.
(to ROSS and ANGUS) Cousins, a word, I pray you.

**MACBETH**

(aside) Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme. (to ROSS and ANGUS) I thank you, gentlemen.
(aside) This supernatural soliciting
Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor.
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings.

My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man
That function is smothered in surmise,
And nothing is but what is not.

BANQUO
Look how our partner's rapt.
MACBETH
(aside) If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me
Without my stir.
BANQUO
New honors come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mold
But with the aid of use.
MACBETH
(aside) Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.
BANQUO
Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

Give me your favor. My dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are registered where every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.
(aside to BANQUO) Think upon what hath chanced,
and, at more time,
The interim having weighed it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

BANQUO
Very gladly.
MACBETH
Till then, enough. (to ROSS and ANGUS) Come, friends.

My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man
That function is smothered in surmise,
And nothing is but what is not.

Even though it's just a fantasy so far, the mere thought of committing murder shakes me up so much that I hardly know who I am anymore. My ability to act is stifled by my thoughts and speculations, and the only things that matter to me are things that don't really exist.

BANQUO
Look at Macbeth—he's in a daze.
MACBETH
(to himself) If fate wants me to be king, perhaps fate will just make it happen and I won't have to do anything.

BANQUO
(to ROSS and ANGUS) Macbeth is not used to his new titles. They're like new clothes: they don't fit until you break them in over time.

MACBETH
(to himself) One way or another, what's going to happen is going to happen.

BANQUO
Good Macbeth, we're ready when you are.
MACBETH
I beg your pardon; I was distracted. Kind gentlemen, I won't forget the trouble you've taken for me whenever I think of this day. Let's go to the king. (speaking so that only BANQUO can hear) Think about what happened today, and when we've both had time to consider things, let's talk.

BANQUO
Absolutely.
MACBETH
Until then, we've said enough. (to ROSS and ANGUS) Let's go, my
**Original Text**

**Act 1, Scene 4**

*Flourish. Enter KING DUNCAN, LENNOX, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, and attendants*

**DUNCAN**
Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not Those in commission yet returned?

**MALCOLM**
My liege, They are not yet come back. But I have spoke With one that saw him die, who did report That very frankly he confessed his treasons, Implored your highness' pardon, and set forth A deep repentance. Nothing in his life Became him like the leaving it. He died As one that had been studied in his death To throw away the dearest thing he owed As 'twere a careless trifle.

**DUNCAN**
There's no art To find the mind's construction in the face. He was a gentleman on whom I built An absolute trust.

**Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS**

(to MACBETH) O worthiest cousin, The sin of my ingratitude even now Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before That swiftest wing of recompense is slow To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved, That the proportion both of thanks and payment Might have been mine! Only I have left to say, More is thy due than more than all can pay.

**DUNCAN**
Welcome hither. I have begun to plant thee, and will labor To make thee full of growing. (to BANQUO) Noble Banquo, That hast no less deserved, nor must be known

**Modern Text**

**Exeunt**

**Act 1, Scene 4**

A trumpet fanfare sounds. *KING DUNCAN, LENNOX, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, and their attendants enter.*

**DUNCAN**
Has the former thane of Cawdor been executed yet? Haven't the people in charge of that come back?

**MALCOLM**
My king, they haven't come back yet. But I spoke with someone who saw Cawdor die, and he said that Cawdor openly confessed his treasons, begged your highness's forgiveness, and repented deeply. He never did anything in his whole life that looked as good as the way he died. He died like someone who had practiced how to toss away his most cherished possession as if it were a worthless piece of garbage.

**DUNCAN**
There's no way to read a man's mind by looking at his face. I trusted Cawdor completely.

**MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUSEnter.**

(to MACBETH) My worthiest kinsman! Just this moment I was feeling guilty for not having thanked you enough. You have done so much for me so fast that it has been impossible to reward you properly. If you deserved less, then perhaps my payment would have matched your deeds! All I can say is that I owe you more than I can ever repay.

**MACBETH**
The opportunity to serve you is its own reward. Your only duty, your highness, is to accept what we owe you. Our duty to you and your state is like the duty of children to their father or servants to their master. By doing everything we can to protect you, we're only doing what we should.

**DUNCAN**
You are welcome here. By making you thane of Cawdor, I have planted the seeds of a great career for you, and I will make sure they grow. (to BANQUO) Noble Banquo, you deserve no less than Macbeth, and everyone should know
Original Text

No less to have done so, let me infold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

BANQUO
There, if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

DUNCAN
My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fullness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
The prince of Cumberland; which honor must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers. (to MACBETH) From hence to
Inverness,
And bind us further to you.

MACBETH
The rest is labor which is not used for you:
I'll be myself the harbinger and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach.
So humbly take my leave.

DUNCAN
My worthy Cawdor!

Modern Text

it. Let me bring you close to me and give you the
benefit of my love and good will.

BANQUO
Then if I accomplish anything great, it will be a
credit to you.

DUNCAN
My joy is so overwhelming it brings tears to my
eyes. My sons, relatives, lords, and all those
closest to me, I want you to witness that I will
bestow my kingdom on my eldest son, Malcolm.
Today I name him the prince of Cumberland. But
Malcolm isn’t going to be alone in receiving
honors—titles of nobility will shine like stars on all
of you who deserve them. (to MACBETH) And
now, let’s go to your castle at Inverness, where I
will become even more obliged to you because of
your hospitality.

MACBETH
I’m not happy unless I can be working for you. I
will go ahead and bring my wife the good news
that you are coming. With that, I’ll be off.

DUNCAN
My worthy Cawdor!

Act 1, Scene 4, Page 3

MACBETH
(aside) The prince of Cumberland! That is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o’erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires.
The eye wink at the hand, yet let that be
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

DUNCAN
True, worthy Banquo. He is full so valiant,
And in his commendations I am fed;
It is a banquet to me.—Let’s after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:
It is a peerless kinsman.

MACBETH
(to himself) Malcolm is now the prince of
Cumberland! To become king myself, I’m either
going to have to step over him or give up,
because he’s in my way. Stars, hide your light so
no one can see the terrible desires within me. I
won’t let my eye look at what my hand is doing,
but in the end I’m still going to do that thing I’d be
horrified to see.

Exit

MACBETH exits.

DUNCAN
(to BANQUO, in the middle of a conversation we
haven’t heard) You’re right, Banquo. Macbeth is
every bit as valiant as you say, and I am satisfied
with these praises of him. Let’s follow after him,
now that he has gone ahead to prepare our
welcome. He is a man without equal.

Flourish. Exeunt

Act 1, Scene 5

Enter LADY MACBETH, alone, with a letter

LADY MACBETH
(reading) “They met me in the day of success, and I
have learned by the perfectest report they have more
in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. While I stood rapt in the wonder of it came missives from the king, who all-hailed me 'Thane of Cawdor,' by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time with 'Hail, king that shall be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou might'st not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature; It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great, Art not without ambition, but without The illness should attend it. What thou wouldst highly, That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false, And yet wouldst wrongly win. Thou'dst have, great Glamis, That which cries, "Thus thou must do," if thou have it, And that which rather thou dost fear to do, Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither, That I may pour my spirits in thine ear And chastise with the valor of my tongue All that impedes thee from the golden round, Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem To have thee crowned withal.

Enter SERVANT A SERVANT enters. 

What is your tidings? 

SERVANT The king comes here tonight. 

LADY MACBETH Thou 'rt mad to say it. 

20 Is not thy master with him, who, were 't so, Would have informed for preparation? 

SERVANT So please you, it is true: our thane is coming. One of my fellows had the speed of him, Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more Than would make up his message. 

LADY MACBETH Give him tending. He brings great news. 

Exit SERVANT 

The raven himself is hoarse That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan supernatural knowledge. When I tried desperately to question them further, they vanished into thin air. While I stood spellbound, messengers from the king arrived and greeted me as the thane of Cawdor, which is precisely how the weird sisters had saluted me before calling me 'the future king!' I thought I should tell you this news, my dearest partner in greatness, so that you could rejoice along with me about the greatness that is promised to us. Keep it secret, and farewell."

( she looks up from the letter) You are thane of Glamis and Cawdor, and you're going to be king, just like you were promised. But I worry about whether or not you have what it takes to seize the crown. You are too full of the milk of human kindness to strike aggressively at your first opportunity. You want to be powerful, and you don't lack ambition, but you don't have the mean streak that these things call for. The things you want to do, you want to do like a good man. You don't want to cheat, yet you want what doesn't belong to you. There's something you want, but you're afraid to do what you need to do to get it. You want it to be done for you. Hurry home so I can persuade you and talk you out of whatever's keeping you from going after the crown. After all, fate and witchcraft both seem to want you to be king.

Act 1, Scene 5, Page 2 

What news do you bring? 

SERVANT The king is coming here tonight. 

LADY MACBETH You must be crazy to say that! Isn't Macbeth with the king, and wouldn't Macbeth have told me in advance so I could prepare, if the king were really coming? 

SERVANT I'm sorry, but it's the truth. Macbeth is coming. He sent a messenger ahead of him who arrived here so out of breath that he could barely speak his message. 

LADY MACBETH Take good care of him. He brings great news. 

Exit SERVANT 

So the messenger is short of breath, like a hoarse raven, as he announces Duncan's entrance into
Original Text

30 Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe topt-full
Of direst cruelty. Make thick my blood.
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry "Hold, hold!"

35 That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murd'reing ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief. Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry "Hold, hold!"

40 You wait on nature's mischief. Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunness of smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry "Hold, hold!"

Act 1, Scene 5, Page 3

Enter MACBETH

Great Glamis, worthy Cawdor,
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter,
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.

MACBETH
My dearest love,

50 Duncan comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH
And when goes hence?

MACBETH
Tomorrow, as he purposes.

LADY MACBETH
O, never
Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,

55 Look like the time. Bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue. Look like th' innocent flower,
But be the serpent under 't. He that's coming
Must be provided for; and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch,
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

MACBETH
We will speak further.

LADY MACBETH
Only look up clear.
To alter favor ever is to fear.

60 Leave all the rest to me.
Act 1, Scene 6

**Original Text**

hautboys and torches. Enter KING
DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and attendants

**Modern Text**

The stage is lit by torches. Hautboys play. DUNCAN enters, together with MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and their attendants.

DUNCAN
This castle hath a pleasant seat. The air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO
This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here. No jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendant bed and procreant cradle.
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,
1 The air is delicate.

**Enter LADY MACBETH**

DUNCAN
See, see, our honored hostess!
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

LADY MACBETH
All our service,
In every point twice done and then done double,
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honors deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house. For those of old,
And the late dignities heaped up to them,
We rest your hermits.

DUNCAN
Where's the thane of Cawdor?
We coursed him at the heels and had a purpose
To be his purveyor; but he rides well,
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
We are your guest tonight.

LADY MACBETH
Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs in compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.

DUNCAN
Where is Macbeth, the thane of Cawdor? We
followed closely after him. I hoped to arrive here
before him, but he rides swiftly. And his great
love, which is as sharp as his spur, helped him
beat us here. Fair and noble hostess, we are your
guests tonight.

LADY MACBETH
We are your servants, your highness, and as
always our house and everything in it is at your
disposal, for after all, we keep it in your trust and
we're glad to give you back what's yours.

DUNCAN
**Original Text**

Give me your hand.  
Conduct me to mine host. We love him highly  
And shall continue our graces towards him.  
By your leave, hostess.

**Modern Text**

Give me your hand. Bring me to my host,  
Macbeth. I love him dearly, and I shall continue to  
favor him. Whenever you’re ready, hostess.

Exeunt  
They all exit.

**Act 1, Scene 7**

Hautboys. Torches. Enter a sewer and divers   
servants with dishes and service over the stage.   
Then enter MACBETH

MACBETH  
If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well  
It were done quickly. If the assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch  
With his surcease success; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and the end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases  
We still have judgment here, that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
To plague th' inventor: this even-handed justice  
Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice  
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:  
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,  
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,  
Who should against his murderer shut the door,  
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan  
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been  
So clear in his great office, that his virtues  
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against  
The deep damnation of his taking-off;  
And pity, like a naked newborn babe,  
Striding the blast, or heaven’s cherubim, horsed  
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,  
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,  
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur  
To prick the sides of my intent, but only  
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself  
And falls on th' other.

**Act 1, Scene 7, Page 2**

Enter LADY MACBETH

How now! What news?

LADY MACBETH  
He has almost supped. Why have you left the  
chamber?

MACBETH  
Hath he asked for me?
LADY MACBETH
Know you not he has?

MACBETH
We will proceed no further in this business.
He hath honored me of late, and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH
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. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat i' th' adage?

MACBETH
Prithee, peace:
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH
What beast was 't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both.
They have made themselves, and that their fitness
now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me.
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

MACBETH
If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—
Whereeto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? What not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?
MACBETH
Bring forth men-children only,
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have marked with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done ’t?
Modern Text

do, we can lay all the blame on the drunken
servants.

MACBETH
May you only give birth to male children, because
your fearless spirit should create nothing that isn’t
masculine. Once we have covered the two
servants with blood, and used their daggers to
kill, won’t people believe that they were the
culprits?

Act 1, Scene 7, Page 4

LADY MACBETH
Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar
Upon his death?
MACBETH
I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show.
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

Exeunt

Act 2, Scene 1

Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE, with a torch before
him

BANQUO
How goes the night, boy?
FLEANCE
The moon is down. I have not heard the clock.
BANQUO
And she goes down at twelve.
FLEANCE
I take ’tis later, sir.
BANQUO
Hold, take my sword. There’s husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose.

Enter MACBETH and a SERVANT with a torch

MACBETH
Give me my sword. Who’s there?

Enter BANQUO enters with FLEANCE, who lights the
way with a torch.

BANQUO
How’s the night going, boy?
FLEANCE
The moon has set. The clock hasn’t struck yet.
BANQUO
The moon sets at twelve, right?
FLEANCE
I think it’s later than that, sir.
BANQUO
Here, take my sword. The heavens are being
stingy with their light. Take this, too. I’m tired and
feeling heavy, but I can’t sleep. Merciful powers,
keep away the nightmares that plague me when I
rest!

MACBETH
enters with a SERVANT, who carries
a torch.

MACBETH
Give me my sword. Who’s there?

MACBETH
A friend.
Act 2, Scene 1, Page 2

BANQUO
All’s well.
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:
To you they have showed some truth.

MACBETH
I think not of them.
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.

BANQUO
At your kind’st leisure.

MACBETH
If you shall cleave to my consent, when ’tis,
It shall make honor for you.

BANQUO
So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counselled.

MACBETH
Good repose the while!

BANQUO
Thanks, sir: the like to you!

Exeunt BANQUO and FLEANCE

MACBETH
(to the SERVANT) Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

Exit SERVANT

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? Or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressèd brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
Original Text

As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall’st me the way that I was going,
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools of’ th’ other senses,
Or else worth all the rest. I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There’s no such thing.
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Now o’er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtained sleep. Witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate’s offerings, and withered murder,
Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl’s his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin’s ravishing strides, towards his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives.
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

Modern Text

real as this other dagger that I’m pulling out
now. (he draws a dagger) You’re leading me
—
toward the place I was going already, and I was
planning to use a weapon just like you. My
eyesight must either be the one sense that’s not
working, or else it’s the only one that’s working
right. I can still see you, and I see blood splotches
on your blade and handle that weren’t there
before. (to himself) There’s no dagger here. It’s
the murder I’m about to do that’s making me think
I see one. Now half the world is asleep and being
deceived by evil nightmares. Witches are offering
sacrifices to their goddess Hecate. Old man
murder, having been roused by the howls of his
wolf, walks silently to his destination, moving
like Tarquin, as quiet as a ghost. (speaking to the
ground) Hard ground, don’t listen to the direction
of my steps. I don’t want you to echo back where
I am and break the terrible stillness of this
moment, a silence that is so appropriate for what
I’m about to do. While I stay here talking, Duncan
lives. The more I talk, the more my courage
cools.

Act 2, Scene 1, Page 3

A bell rings

I go, and it is done. The bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

Exit

MACBETH

Act 2, Scene 2

Enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH
That which hath made them drunk hath made me
bold.
What hath quenched them hath given me fire.
Hark! Peace! It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal
bellman,
Which gives the stern’st good-night. He is about it.
The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugged
their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH
(within) Who’s there? What, ho!

LADY MACBETH
Alack, I am afraid they have awakened,
And ‘tis not done. Th’ attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;

LADY MACBETH

The alcohol that got the servants drunk has made
me bold. The same liquor that quenched their
thirst has fired me up. Listen! Quiet! That was the
owl that shrieked, with a scary “good night” like
the bells they ring before they execute people.
Macbeth must be killing the king right now. The
doors to Duncan’s chamber are open, and the
drunk servants make a mockery of their jobs by
snoring instead of protecting the king. I put so
many drugs in their drinks that you can’t tell if
they’re alive or dead.

MACBETH
(from offstage) Who’s there? What is it?

LADY MACBETH
Oh no, I’m afraid the servants woke up, and the
murder didn’t happen. For us to attempt murder
and not succeed would ruin us. (She hears a
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

Enter MACBETH, with bloody daggers

MACBETH
I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH
I have done the deed. Did you hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH
I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?

MACBETH
When?

MACBETH enters carrying bloody daggers.

My husband!

MACBETH
I have done the deed. Did you hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH
I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Didn't you say something?

MACBETH
When?

LADY MACBETH
Just now.

MACBETH
As I came down?

LADY MACBETH
Yes.

MACBETH
Listen! Who's sleeping in the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH
Donalbain.

MACBETH
(looking at his hands) This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH
A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH
There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried.
“Murder!”
That they did wake each other. I stood and heard
them.
But they did say their prayers, and addressed them
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH
There are two lodged together.

MACBETH
One cried, “God bless us!” and “Amen” the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
List'ning their fear I could not say “Amen,”
When they did say “God bless us!”

LADY MACBETH
Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH
But wherefore could not I pronounce “Amen”?

LADY MACBETH
Malcolm and Donalbain are asleep in the same
room.

MACBETH
One servant cried, “God bless us!” and the other
replied, “Amen,” as if they had seen my bloody
hands. Listening to their frightened voices, I
couldn't reply “Amen” when they said “God bless
us!”

LADY MACBETH
Don't think about it so much.

MACBETH
But why couldn't I say “Amen”? I desperately
Original Text

I had most need of blessing, and “Amen”
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH
These deeds must not be thought
After these ways. So, it will make us mad.

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 3

MACBETH
35 Methought I heard a voice cry, “Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep”—the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the raveled sleave of care,
The death of each day’s life, sore labor’s bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature’s second course,
Chief nourisher in life’s feast.

LADY MACBETH
What do you mean?

MACBETH
Still it cried, “Sleep no more!” to all the house.
“Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more. Macbeth shall sleep no more.”

LADY MACBETH
Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there. Go carry them and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH
I’ll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on ’t again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH
Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures. ’Tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I’ll gild the faces of the grooms withal,
For it must seem their guilt.

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 4

MACBETH
Whence is that knocking?
How is ’t with me when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? Ha! They pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
needed God’s blessing, but the word “Amen”
stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH
We can’t think that way about what we did. If we
do, it’ll drive us crazy.

MACBETH
I thought I heard a voice cry, “Sleep no more!
Macbeth is murdering sleep.” Innocent sleep.
Sleep that soothes away all our worries. Sleep
that puts each day to rest. Sleep that relieves the
weary laborer and heals hurt minds. Sleep, the
main course in life’s feast, and the most
nourishing.

LADY MACBETH
What are you talking about?

MACBETH
The voice kept crying, “Sleep no more!” to
everyone in the house. “Macbeth has murdered
sleep, and therefore Macbeth will sleep no more.”

LADY MACBETH
Who said that? Why, my worthy lord, you let
yourself become weak when you think about
things in this cowardly way. Go get some water
and wash this bloody evidence from your hands.
Why did you carry these daggers out of the
room? They have to stay there. Go take them
back and smear the sleeping guards with the
blood.

MACBETH
I can’t go back. I’m afraid even to think about
what I’ve done. I can’t stand to look at it again.

LADY MACBETH
Coward! Give me the daggers. Dead and
sleeping people can’t hurt you any more than
pictures can. Only children are afraid of scary
pictures. If Duncan bleeds I’ll paint the servants’
faces with his blood. We must make it seem like
they’re guilty.

Exit
Knock within

LADY MACBETH exits.

MACBETH
Where is that knocking coming from? What’s
happening to me, that I’m frightened of every
noise? (looking at his hands) Whose hands are
these? Ha! They’re plucking out my eyes. Will all
the water in the ocean wash this blood from my
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

Enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH
My hands are of your color, but I shame
To wear a heart so white.

I hear a knocking
At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.
A little water clears us of this deed.
How easy is it, then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended.

MACBETH
To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.

Wake Duncan with thy knocking. I would thou
couldst.

Knock within
A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock within
A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock within
A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock within
A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock within
A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock within
A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock within
A sound of knocking from offstage.
Knock, knock! Never at quiet. What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further. I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.

Knock within

Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter. I'm coming, I'm coming! Please, don't forget to leave me a tip.

Opens the gate

Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX

MACDUFF

Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late?

PORTER

'Faith sir, we were carousing till the second cock. And drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

MACDUFF

What three things does drink especially provoke?

PORTER

Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes and unprovokes. It provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore, much drink may be said to be an equivocator with lechery. It makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to and not stand to; in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

MACDUFF

I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 3

PORTER

That it did, sir, 'th' very throat on me; but I requited him for his lie, and, I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

MACDUFF

Is thy master stirring?

Enter MACBETH

MACBETH enters.

Our knocking has awaked him. Here he comes.

PORTER

It did, sir. It got me right in the throat. But I got even with drink. I was too strong for it. Although it weakened my legs and made me unsteady, I managed to vomit it out and laid it flat on the ground.

MACDUFF

Is your master awake?

MACBETH enters.

Our knocking woke him up. Here he comes.
LENNOX
Good morrow, noble sir.
MACBETH
Good morrow, both.
MACDUFF
Is the king stirring, worthy thane?
MACBETH
Not yet.
MACDUFF
He did command me to call timely on him.
I have almost slipped the hour.
MACBETH
I'll bring you to him.
MACDUFF
I know this is a joyful trouble to you,
But yet 'tis one.
MACBETH
The labor we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.
MACDUFF
25 I'll make so bold to call,
For 'tis my limited service.
LENNOX
Goes the king hence today?
MACBETH
He does. He did appoint so.
LENNOX
The night has been unruly. Where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down and, as they say,
Lamentings heard 'th' air, strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatched to the woeful time. The obscure bird
Clamored the livelong night. Some say the Earth
Was feverous and did shake.
MACBETH
'Twas a rough night.
LENNOX
My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

Enter MACDUFF
MACDUFF
O horror, horror, horror!
Tongue nor heart cannot conceive nor name thee!
MACBETH & LENNOX
What's the matter?
MACDUFF
He commanded me to wake him up early. I've
almost missed the time he requested.
MACBETH
I'll bring you to him.
MACDUFF
I know the burden of hosting him is both an honor
and a trouble, but that doesn't mean it's not a
trouble just the same.
MACBETH
The work we enjoy is not really work. This is the
doors.
MACDUFF
I'll wake him, because that's my job.

Exit MACDUFF
MACDUFF exits.
LENNOX
Is the king leaving here today?
MACBETH
He is. He told us to arrange it.
LENNOX
The night has been chaotic. The wind blew down
through the chimneys where we were sleeping.
People are saying they heard cries of grief in the
air, strange screams of death, and terrible voices
predicting catastrophes that will usher in a woeful
new age. The owl made noise all night. Some
people say that the earth shook as if it had a
fever.
MACBETH
It was a rough night.
LENNOX
I'm too young to remember anything like it.

Enter MACDUFF
MACDUFF enters, upset.
MACDUFF
Oh, horror, horror, horror! This is beyond words
and beyond belief!
MACBETH & LENNOX
What's the matter?
### Act 2, Scene 3, Page 5

**MACDUFF**

40 Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.  
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope  
The Lord’s anointed temple, and stole thence  
The life o’ th’ building!

**MACBETH**

What is ’t you say? “The life”?

**LENNOX**

Mean you his majesty?

**MACDUFF**

The worst thing imaginable has happened. A murderer has broken into God’s temple and stolen the life out of it.

**MACBETH**

What are you talking about? “The life”?

**LENNOX**

Do you mean the king?

**MACDUFF**

Go into the bedroom and see for yourself. What’s in there will make you freeze with horror. Don’t ask me to talk about it. Go look and then do the talking yourselves.

_Exit MACBETH and LENNOX._

Awake, awake!  
Ring the alarum bell. Murder and treason!  
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! Awake!  
Shake off this downy sleep, death’s counterfeit,  
And look on death itself! Up, up, and see  
The great doom’s image! Malcolm! Banquo!  
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,

To countenance this horror! Ring the bell  
_Bell rings._

**LADY MACBETH**

What’s the business,  
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley  
The sleepers of the house? Speak, speak!

**MACDUFF**

O gentle lady,  
’Tis not for you to hear what I can speak:  
The repetition, in a woman’s ear,  
Would murder as it fell.

**LADY MACBETH**

What’s going on? Why is that terrifying trumpet calling together everyone who’s sleeping in the house? Speak up and tell me!

**MACDUFF**

Oh gentle lady, my news isn’t fit for your ears. If I repeated it to you, it would kill you as soon as you heard it.

**LADY MACBETH**

Oh Banquo, Banquo, the king has been murdered!

**LADY MACBETH**

How horrible! What, in our own house?

### Act 2, Scene 3, Page 6

**BANQUO**

65 Too cruel any where.  
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,  
And say it is not so.

Enter MACBETH, LENNOX, and ROSS

**MACBETH**

Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessèd time, for from this instant
There’s nothing serious in mortality.
All is but toys. Renown and grace is dead.
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN

DONALBAIN
What is amiss?

MACBETH
You are, and do not know ’t.
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopped; the very source of it is stopped.

MACDUFF
Your royal father’s murdered.

MALCOLM
Oh, by whom?

LENNOX
Those of his chamber, as it seemed, had done ’t.
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood.
So were their daggers, which unwiped we found
Upon their pillows. They stared, and were distracted.
No man’s life was to be trusted with them.

MACBETH
Oh, yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.

MACDUFF
Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH
Who can be wise, amazed, temp’rate, and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.
Th’ expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood,
And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature
For ruin’s wasteful entrance; there, the murderers,
Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breeched with gore. Who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make ’s love known?

LADY MACBETH
Help me hence, ho!

MACDUFF
Look to the lady.

MALCOLM
(aside to DONALBAIN ) Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?

MACDUFF
What did you do that for?

MACBETH
Is it possible to be wise, bewildered, calm,
furious, loyal, and neutral all at once? Nobody
can do that. The violent rage inspired by my love
for Duncan caused me to act before I could think
rationally and tell myself to pause. There was
Duncan, his white skin all splattered with his
precious blood. The gashes where the knives
had cut him looked like wounds to nature itself.
Then right next to him I saw the murderers,
dripping with blood, their daggers rudely covered
in gore. Who could have restrained himself, who
loved Duncan and had the courage to act on it?

LADY MACBETH
Help me out of here, quickly!

MACDUFF
Take care of the lady.

MALCOLM
(speaking so that only DONALBAIN can hear) Why are we keeping quiet? The two of us
have the most to say in this matter.
DONALBAIN
(aside to MALCOLM) What should be spoken here, where our fate, Hid in an auger-hole, may rush and seize us? Let’s away. Our tears are not yet brewed.

MALCOLM
(aside to DONALBAIN) Nor our strong sorrow Upon the foot of motion.

BANQUO
Look to the lady.

Exit LADY MACBETH, attended

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 8

And when we have our naked frailties hid, That suffer in exposure, let us meet And question this most bloody piece of work, To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us.

BANQUO
Look to the lady.

Exit LADY MACBETH, attended

MACDUFF
And so do I.

ALL
So all.

MACBETH
Let’s briefly put on manly readiness, And meet i’ th’ hall together.

ALL
Well contented.

Exeunt all but MALCOLM and DONALBAIN

MALCOLM
What will you do? Let’s not consort with them. To show an unfelt sorrow is an office Which the false man does easy. I’ll to England.

DONALBAIN
To Ireland, I. Our separated fortune Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are, There’s daggers in men’s smiles. The near in blood, The nearer bloody.

MALCOLM
This murderous shaft that’s shot Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse, And let us not be dainty of leave-taking, But shift away. There’s warrant in that theft Which steals itself when there’s no mercy left.

MACBETH
What are you going to do? Let’s not stay here with them. It’s easy for a liar to pretend to feel sorrow when he actually feels none. I’m going to England.

DONALBAIN
I’ll go to Ireland. We’ll both be safer if we go separate ways. Wherever we go, men will smile at us while hiding daggers. Our closest relatives are the ones most likely to murder us.

MALCOLM
We haven’t yet encountered that danger, and the best thing to do is avoid it entirely. With that in mind, let’s get on our horses. We’d better not worry about saying polite good-byes; we should just get away quickly. There’s good reason to escape when there’s no mercy to be found anymore.
Act 2, Scene 4

Enter ROSS with an OLD MAN

ROSS
Ha, good father,

Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with man’s act,
Threatens his bloody stage. By th’ clock ‘tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp.
Is ’t night’s predominance or the day’s shame
That darkness does the face of Earth entomb

ROSS
Ah yes, old man. You can see the skies. They
look like they’re upset about what mankind has
been doing, and they’re threatening the Earth
with storms. The clock says it’s daytime, but dark
night is strangling the sun. Is it because night is
so strong, or because day is so weak, that
darkness covers the earth when it’s supposed to
be light?

OLD MAN
’Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that’s done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, tow’ring in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.

ROSS
And Duncan’s horses—a thing most strange and
certain—
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending ‘gainst obedience, as they would
Make war with mankind.

OLD MAN
’Tis said they eat each other.

ROSS
They did so, to th’ amazement of mine eyes
That looked upon ’t. Here comes the good Macduff.

Enter MACDUFF

MACDUFF
Why, see you not?

ROSS
Is ’t known who did this more than bloody deed?

MACDUFF
Those that Macbeth hath slain.

ROSS
Alas, the day!
What good could they pretend?

MACDUFF
Can’t you see for yourself?

ROSS
Does anyone know who committed this horrible
crime?

MACDUFF
The servants Macbeth killed.

ROSS
It’s too bad he killed them. What good would it
have done those men to kill Duncan?
Original Text

MACDUFF
They were suborned.

25 Malcolm and Donalbain, the king’s two sons, 
Are stol’n away and fled, which puts upon them 
Suspicion of the deed.

ROSS
‘Gainst nature still!
Thriftless ambition, that will raven up

30 Thine own lives’ means! Then ‘tis most like 
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

MACDUFF
He is already named and gone to Scone 
To be invested.

ROSS
Where is Duncan’s body?

MACDUFF
Carried to Colmekill, 
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors, 
And guardian of their bones.

ROSS
Will you to Scone?

MACDUFF
No, cousin, I’ll to Fife.

ROSS
Well, I will thither.

MACDUFF
Well, may you see things well done there. Adieu, 
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

ROSS
Farewell, father.

OLD MAN
God’s benison go with you and with those 
That would make good of bad and friends of foes.

Exeunt

Modern Text

MACDUFF
They were paid to betray their master. Malcolm 
and Donalbain, the king’s two sons, have run 
away and fled, which makes them the prime 
suspects.

ROSS
Everything about this is unnatural! What a stupid 
ambition, causing a son to kill the father who 
supports him. Then it looks like Macbeth will 
become king.

MACDUFF
He has already been named king and has left for 
Scone to be crowned.

ROSS
Where is Duncan’s body?

MACDUFF
It was carried to Colmekill to be placed in the 
tomb of his ancestors, where their bones are kept 
safe.

ROSS
Are you going to Scone?

MACDUFF
No, cousin, I’m going to Fife.

ROSS
Well, I’ll go to Scone.

Act 2, Scene 4, Page 3

MACDUFF
Well, may you see things well done there. Adieu, 
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

ROSS
Farewell, father.

OLD MAN
May God’s blessing go with you and with all who 
turn bad into good, and enemies into friends!

Exeunt

Act 3, Scene 1

Enter BANquo

BANquo
Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all, 
As the weird women promised, and I fear 
Thou played’st most fouly for ‘t. Yet it was said 
It should not stand in thy posterity,

5 But that myself should be the root and father 
Of many kings. If there come truth from them— 
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—
Why, by the verities on thee made good, 
May they not be my oracles as well,

10 And set me up in hope? But hush, no more.

BANquo
Now you have it all: you’re the king, the thane of 
Cawdor, and the thane of Glamis, just like the 
weird women promised you. And I suspect you 
cheated to win these titles. But it was also 
prophesied that the crown would not go to your 
descendants, and that my sons and grandsons 
would be kings instead. If the witches tell the 
truth—which they did about you—maybe what 
they said about me will come true too. But shhh! 
I’ll shut up now.
Original Text

Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH, as king, LADY MACBETH, as queen, LENNOX, ROSS, LORDS, LADIES, and attendants.

MACBETH
Here’s our chief guest.

LADY MACBETH
If he had been forgotten, It had been as a gap in our great feast, And all-thing unbecoming.

MACBETH
Tonight we hold a solemn supper, sir, And I’ll request your presence.

BANQUO
Let your highness Command upon me, to the which my duties Are with a most indissoluble tie Forever knit.

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 2

MACBETH
Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO
Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH
We should have else desired your good advice— Which still hath been both grave and prosperous— In this day’s council, but we’ll take tomorrow.

BANQUO
As far, my lord, as will fill up the time ‘Twixt this and supper. Go not my horse the better, I must become a borrower of the night For a dark hour or twain.

MACBETH
Fail not our feast.

BANQUO
My lord, I will not.

MACBETH
We hear our bloody cousins are bestowed In England and in Ireland, not confessing Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers With strange invention. But of that tomorrow, When therewithal we shall have cause of state Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse. Adieu, Till your return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

BANQUO
Ay, my good lord. Our time does call upon ’s.

Modern Text

A trumpet plays. MACBETH enters dressed as king, and LADY MACBETH enters dressed as queen, together with LENNOX, ROSS, LORDS, LADIES, and their attendants.

MACBETH
(indicating BANQUO) Here’s our most important guest.

LADY MACBETH
If we forgot him, our big celebration wouldn’t be complete, and that wouldn’t be any good.

MACBETH
(to BANQUO) Tonight we’re having a ceremonial banquet, and I want you to be there.

BANQUO
Whatever your highness commands me to do, it is always my duty to do it.

MACBETH
Are you going riding this afternoon?

BANQUO
Yes, my good lord.

MACBETH
We would have liked to have heard your good advice, which has always been serious and helpful, at the council today, but we’ll wait until tomorrow. Are you riding far?

BANQUO
I’m going far enough that I’ll be riding from now until dinner. Unless my horse goes faster than expected, I will be back an hour or two after sunset.

MACBETH
Don’t miss our feast.

BANQUO
My lord, I won’t miss it.

MACBETH
We hear that the princes, those murderers, have hidden in England and Ireland. They haven’t confessed to cruelly murdering their own father, and they’ve been making up strange lies to tell their hosts. But we can talk more about that tomorrow, when we’ll discuss matters of state that concern us both. Hurry up and get to your horse. Good-bye, until you return tonight. Is Fleance going with you?

BANQUO
Yes, my good lord. It’s time we hit the road.
40
MACBETH
I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell.

Exit BANQUO

Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night. To make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till suppertime alone. While then, God be with you!

45

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 3

Exeunt all except MACBETH and a SERVANT

Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men
Our pleasure?

SERVANT
They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

MACBETH
Bring them before us.

Exit SERVANT

To be thus is nothing,
But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be feared. 'Tis much he
dares,
And to that dauntless temper of his mind
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear, and under him
My genius is rebuked, as it is said

50
55
60
65
70
75

To be the king is nothing if I’m not safe as the
king. I’m very afraid of Banquo. There’s
something noble about him that makes me fear
him. He’s willing to take risks, and his mind never
stops working. He has the wisdom to act bravely
but also safely. I’m not afraid of anyone but him.
Around him, my guardian angel is frightened, just
as Mark Antony’s angel supposedly feared
Octavius Caesar. Banquo chided the witches
when they first called me king, asking them to tell
him his own future. Then, like prophets, they
named him the father to a line of kings. They
gave me a crown and a scepter that I can’t pass
on. Someone outside my family will take these
things away from me, since no son of mine will
take my place as king. If this is true, then I’ve
tortured my conscience and murdered the
gracious Duncan for Banquo’s sons. I’ve ruined
my own peace for their benefit. I’ve handed over
my everlasting soul to the devil so that they could
be kings. Banquo’s sons, kings! Instead of
watching that happen, I will challenge fate to
battle and fight to the death. Who’s there!

Enter SERVANT and two MURDERERS

Now go to the door and stay there till we call.

Now go to the door and stay there until I call for
Exit SERVANT

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

FIRST MURDERER
It was, so please your highness.

MACBETH
Well then, now
Have you considered of my speeches? Know
That it was he, in the times past, which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been
Our innocent self. This I made good to you
In our last conference, passed in probation with you,
How you were borne in hand, how crossed, the
instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that
might
To half a soul and to a notion crazed
Say, “Thus did Banquo.”

FIRST MURDERER
You made it known to us.

MACBETH
I did so, and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature
That you can let this go? Are you so gospeled
To pray for this good man and for his issue,
Whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave
And beggared yours forever?

FIRST MURDERER
We are men, my liege.

MACBETH
Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels,
curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are clept
All by the name of dogs. The valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike. And so of men.

Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not ’t th’ worst rank of manhood, say ’t,
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 5
SECOND MURDERER
I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER
And I another
So weary with disasters, tugged with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on ‘t.

MACBETH
Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS
True, my lord.

MACBETH
So is he mine; and in such bloody distance
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near’st of life. And though I could
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Who I myself struck down. And thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.

SECOND MURDERER
We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.

FIRST MURDERER
Though our lives—

MACBETH
Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at
most
I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o’ th’ time,
The moment on ‘t; for ‘t must be done tonight,
And something from the palace; always thought
That I require a clearness. And with him—
To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—
Fleance, his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father’s, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart.
I’ll come to you anon.

BOTH MURDERERS
We are resolved, my lord.

MACBETH
I’ll call upon you straight. Abide within.

SECOND MURDERER
My lord, I’ve been so kicked around by the world,
and I’m so angry, that I don’t even care what I do.

FIRST MURDERER
I’m the same. I’m so sick of bad luck and trouble
that I’d risk my life on any bet, as long as it would
either fix my life or end it once and for all.

MACBETH
You both know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS
It’s true, my lord.

MACBETH
He’s my enemy too, and I hate him so much that
every minute he’s alive it eats away at my heart.
Since I’m king, I could simply use my power to
get rid of him. But I can’t do that, because he and
I have friends in common whom I need, so I have
to be able to moan and cry over his death in
public even though I’ll be the one who had him
killed. That’s why I need your help right now. I
have to hide my real plans from the public eye
for many important reasons.

SECOND MURDERER
We’ll do what you want us to, my lord.

FIRST MURDERER
Though our lives—

MACBETH
(interrupts him) I can see the determination in
your eyes. Within the next hour I’ll tell you where
to go and exactly when to strike. It must be done
tonight, away from the palace. Always remember
that I must be free from suspicion. For the plan to
work perfectly, you must kill both Banquo and his
son, Fleance, who keeps him company. Getting
rid of Fleance is as important to me as knocking
off Banquo. Each of you should make up your
own mind about whether you’re going to do this.
I’ll come to you soon.

BOTH MURDERERS
We have decided, my lord. We’re in.

MACBETH
I’ll call for you soon. Stay inside.
Act 3, Scene 2

Enter LADY MACBETH and a SERVANT

LADY MACBETH
Is Banquo gone from court?
SERVANT
Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.
LADY MACBETH
Say to the king I would attend his leisure
For a few words.
SERVANT
Madam, I will.

Exit SERVANT

LADY MACBETH
Naught’s had, all’s spent,
Where our desire is got without content.
‘Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH

MACBETH
We have scorched the snake, not killed it.
She’ll close and be herself whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,

Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie

In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave.
After life’s fitful fever he sleeps well.
Treason has done his worst; nor steel nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further.

Act 3, Scene 2, Page 2

LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

Modern Text

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul’s flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out tonight.

The deal is closed. Banquo, if your soul is going
to make it to heaven, tonight’s the night.

He exits.

LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

If you get what you want and you’re still not
happy, you’ve spent everything and gained
nothing. It’s better to be the person who gets
murdered than to be the killer and be tormented
with anxiety.

What’s going on, my lord? Why are you keeping
to yourself, with only your sad thoughts to keep
you company? Those thoughts should have died
when you killed the men you’re thinking about. If
you can’t fix it, you shouldn’t give it a second
thought. What’s done is done.

We have slashed the snake but not killed it. It will
heal and be as good as new, and we’ll be
threatened by its fangs once again. But the
universe can fall apart, and heaven and earth
crumble, before I’ll eat my meals in fear and
spend my nights tossing and turning with these
nightmares I’ve been having. I’d rather be dead
than endure this endless mental torture and
harrowing sleep deprivation. We killed those men
and sent them to rest in peace so that we could
gain our own peace. Duncan lies in his grave,
through with life’s troubles, and he’s sleeping
well. We have already done the worst we can do
to him with our treason. After that, nothing can
hurt him further—not weapons, poison, rebellion,
invasion, or anything else.
**Original Text**

Come on, gentle my lord,

30 Sleek o’er your rugged looks. Be bright and jovial
Among your guests tonight.

MACBETH

So shall I, love,
And so, I pray, be you. Let your remembrance
Apply to Banquo; present him eminence,
Both with eye and tongue: unsafe the while that we
35 Must love our honors in these flattering streams,
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

LADY MACBETH

You must leave this.

MACBETH

Oh, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know’st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

LADY MACBETH

But in them nature’s copy’s not eterne.

MACBETH

There’s comfort yet; they are assailable.
Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
His cloistered flight, ere to black Hecate’s summons
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums

45 Hath rung night’s yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH

What’s to be done?

MACBETH

Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale. Light thickens, and the crow
40 Makes wing to th’ rooky wood.

Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
Which keeps me pale. Light thickens, and the crow

50 Makes wing to th’ rooky wood.

MACBETH

It’s better you don’t know about it until after it’s
done, when you can applaud it. (to the
night)Come, night, and blindfold the kindhearted
day. Use your bloody and invisible hand to tear
up Banquo’s lease on life, which keeps me in
fear. (to himself) The sky’s getting dark, and the
crow is returning home to the woods. The gentle
creatures of the day are falling asleep, while
night’s predators are waking up to look for their
prey. (to LADY MACBETH) You seem surprised
at my words, but don’t question me yet. Bad
deeds force you to commit more bad deeds. So
please, come with me.

**Modern Text**

Come on, relax, dear. Put on a happy face and
look cheerful and agreeable for your guests
tonight.

MACBETH

That’s exactly what I’ll do, my love, and I hope
you’ll do the same. Give Banquo your special
attention. Talk to him and look at him in a way
that will make him feel important. We’re in a
dangerous situation, where we have to flatter him
and hide our true feelings.

LADY MACBETH

You have to stop talking like this.

MACBETH

Argh! I feel like my mind is full of scorpions, my
dear wife. You know that Banquo and his son
Fleance are still alive.

LADY MACBETH

But they can’t live forever.

MACBETH

That’s comforting. They can be killed, it’s true. So
be cheerful. Before the bat flies through the
castle, and before the dung beetle makes its little
humming noise to tell us it’s nighttime, a dreadful
deed will be done.

LADY MACBETH

What are you going to do?

MACBETH

It’s better you don’t know about it until after it’s
done, when you can applaud it. (to the
night)Come, night, and blindfold the kindhearted
day. Use your bloody and invisible hand to tear
up Banquo’s lease on life, which keeps me in
fear. (to himself) The sky’s getting dark, and the
crow is returning home to the woods. The gentle
creatures of the day are falling asleep, while
night’s predators are waking up to look for their
prey. (to LADY MACBETH) You seem surprised
at my words, but don’t question me yet. Bad
deeds force you to commit more bad deeds. So
please, come with me.

Exeunt

They exit.

**Act 3, Scene 3**

Enter three MURDERERS

FIRST MURDERER
But who did bid thee join with us?

The two MURDERERS enter with a
third MURDERER.

FIRST MURDERER
But who told you to come here and join us?
THIRD MURDERER
Macbeth.
SECOND MURDERER
He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers
Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.
FIRST MURDERER
Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.
Now spurs the lated traveler apace
To gain the timely inn, and near approaches
The subject of our watch.
THIRD MURDERER
Hark, I hear horses.
BANQUO
(within) Give us a light there, ho!
SECOND MURDERER
Then 'tis he: the rest
That are within the note of expectation
Already are i' th' court.
FIRST MURDERER
His horses go about.
THIRD MURDERER
Almost a mile; but he does usually—
So all men do—from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE with a torch

SECOND MURDERER
A light, a light!
THIRD MURDERER
'Tis he.
FIRST MURDERER
Stand to 't.
BANQUO
It will be rain tonight.
FIRST MURDERER
Let it come down.

The MURDERERS attack BANQUO

BANQUO
O treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou may 'st revenge —O slave!

BANQUO dies. Exit FLEANCE

THIRD MURDERER
Who did strike out the light?
FIRST MURDERER
Was 't not the way?
THIRD MURDERER
There’s but one down. The son is fled.
SECOND MURDERER
We have lost best half of our affair.
FIRST MURDERER
Well, let’s away and say how much is done.

Exeunt

THIRD MURDERER
There’s only one body here. The son ran away.
SECOND MURDERER
We failed in half of our mission.
FIRST MURDERER
Well, let’s get out of here and tell Macbeth what we did accomplish.

Act 3, Scene 4

Banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, LORDS, and attendants.

MACBETH
You know your own degrees; sit down. At first
And last, the hearty welcome.

LORDS
Thanks to your majesty.

MACBETH
Ourself will mingle with society
And play the humble host.
5 Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.

LADY MACBETH
Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends,
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

Enter FIRST MURDERER at the door

MACBETH
See, they encounter thee with their hearts’ thanks.
Both sides are even. Here I’ll sit i’ th’ midst.
Be large in mirth. Anon we’ll drink a measure
The table round.
(aside to FIRST MURDERER) There’s blood upon thy face.

FIRST MURDERER
’Tis Banquo’s then.

MACBETH
’Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatched?

MACBETH
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.

First Murderer
My lord, his throat is cut. That I did for him.

MACBETH
Thou art the best o’ th’ cutthroats:
Yet he’s good that did the like for Fleance.

FIRST MURDERER
My lord, his throat is cut. I did that to him.

MACBETH
You are the best of the cutthroats. But whoever
did the same to Fleance must also be good. If
20 If thou didst it, thou art the nonpareil.

FIRST MURDERER
Most royal sir, Fleance is ‘scape.d.

MACBETH
Then comes my fit again. I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing air.

25 But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears.—But Banquo’s safe?

FIRST MURDERER
Ay, my good lord. Safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenchèd gashes on his head,
The least a death to nature.

MACBETH
Thanks for that. The grown serpent lies. The worm that’s fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed;
No teeth for th’ present. Get thee gone. Tomorrow
We'll hear ourselves again.

Exit FIRST MURDERER

LADY MACBETH
My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer. The feast is sold
That is not often vouched, while ‘tis a-making,
‘Tis given with welcome. To feed were best at home;
From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.

30

MACBETH
Sweet remembrancer!
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!

LENNOX
May ’t please your highness sit.

MACBETH
Here had we now our country’s honor roofed,
Were the graced person of our Banquo present,
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance.

ROSS
His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please ‘t your
highness
To grace us with your royal company?

MACBETH
It’s nice of you to remind me. (raising a glass to
toast his guests) Since good digestion requires a
good appetite, and good health requires both of
those, here’s to good appetites, good digestion,
and good health!

LENNOX
Why don’t you have a seat, your highness?

MACBETH
We would have all the nobility of Scotland
gathered under one roof, if only Banquo were
here. I hope it turns out that he’s late out of
rudeness, and not because something bad has
happened to him.
MACBETH
The table’s full.

LENNOX
Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH
Where?

LENNOX
Here, my good lord. What is ‘t that moves your highness?

MACBETH
Which of you have done this?

LORDS
What, my good lord?

MACBETH
(to GHOST) Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake Thy gory locks at me.

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 4

ROSS
Gentlemen, rise. His highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH
Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often thus
And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat. The fit is momentary; upon a thought He will again be well. If much you note him,

MACBETH
Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that Which might appall the devil.

LADY MACBETH
O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear. This is the air-drawn dagger which you said Led you to Duncan. Oh, these flaws and starts, Impostors to true fear, would well become A woman’s story at a winter’s fire, Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!

MACBETH
Why do you make such faces? When all’s done, You look but on a stool.

MACBETH
Prithee, see there! Behold! Look! Lo! How say you? Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too. If charnel houses and our graves must send Those that we bury back, our monuments Shall be the maws of kites.

ROSS
Gentlemen, stand up. His highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH
Sit down, worthy friends. My husband is often like this, and he has been since he was a child. Please stay seated. This is just a brief fit. In a moment he’ll be well again. If you pay too much attention to him you’ll make him angry, and that will make his convulsions go on longer. Eat your dinner and pay no attention to him. (speaking so that only MACBETH can hear) Are you a man?

MACBETH
Yes, and a brave one, who dares to look at something that would frighten the devil.

LADY MACBETH
Oh, that’s nonsense! This is just another one of the hallucinations you always get when you’re afraid. This is like that floating dagger you said was leading you toward Duncan. These outbursts of yours don’t even look like real fear. They’re more like how you would act if you were a woman telling a scary story by the fireside in front of her grandmother. Shame on you! Why are you making these faces? When the vision passes, you’ll see that you’re just looking at a stool.

MACBETH
Please, just look over there. Look! Look! See! (to the GHOST) What do you have to say? What do I care? If you can nod, then speak too. If the dead are going to return from their graves, then there’s nothing to stop the birds from eating the bodies. So there’s no point in our burying people.

Exit GHOST
The GHOST vanishes.
Original Text

LADY MACBETH
What, quite unmanned in folly?

MACBETH
If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH
Fie, for shame!

MACBETH
Blood hath been shed ere now, i’ th’ olden time,
Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;
Ay, and since too, murders have been performed
Too terrible for the ear. The time has been
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end. But now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns
And push us from our stools. This is more strange
Than such a murder is.

LADY MACBETH
My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

MACBETH
I do forget.

Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends.

MACBETH
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all.
Then I’ll sit down. Give me some wine. Fill full.

Enter the GHOST OF BANQUO

I drink to the general joy o’ th’ whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here! To all and him we thirst,
And all to all.

LORDS
Our duties, and the pledge.

They drink

Modern Text

LADY MACBETH
What, has your foolishness paralyzed you completely?

MACBETH
As sure as I’m standing here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH
Nonsense!

MACBETH
In ancient times, before there were laws to make
the land safe and peaceful, a lot of blood was spilled. Yes, and since then murders have been committed that are too awful to talk about. It used to be that when you knocked a man’s brains out he would just die, and that would be it. But now they rise from the dead with twenty fatal head wounds and push us off our stools. This haunting business is even stranger than murder.

LADY MACBETH
My worthy lord, your noble friends miss your company.

MACBETH
I forgot about them. (to the guests) Don’t be alarmed on my account, my most worthy friends. I have a strange disorder, which no longer shocks those who know me well. (raising his glass to toast the company) Come, let’s drink a toast: love and health to you all. Now I’ll sit down. Give me some wine. Fill up my cup.

The GHOST OF BANQUO reappears in MACBETH’s seat.

I drink to the happiness of everyone at the table, and to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss. I wish he were here! Let’s drink to everyone here, and to Banquo. Now, everybody, drink

LORDS
Hear, hear.

They drink

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 6

MACBETH
(seeing the GHOST) Avaunt, and quit my sight! Let
the earth hide thee.
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold.
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with!

LADY MACBETH
Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom. ’Tis no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

MACBETH
(to the GHOST) Go! And get out of my sight!
Stay in your grave. There’s no marrow in your
bones, and your blood is cold. You’re staring at
me with eyes that have no power to see.

LADY MACBETH
Good friends, think of this as nothing more than
a strange habit. It’s nothing else. Too bad it’s
spoiling our pleasure tonight.
**Original Text**

MACBETH

What man dare, I dare.
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The armed rhinoceros, or th’ Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble. Or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword.

If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence!

Exit GHOST

MACBETH

Can such things be,
And overcome us like a summer’s cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanched with fear.

LADY MACBETH

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired disorder.

MACBETH

And overcome us like a summer’s cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanched with fear.

ROSS

What sights, my lord?

**Modern Text**

MACBETH

I am as brave as any other man. Come at me in the form of a rugged Russian bear, an armor-plated rhinoceros, or a tiger from Iran. Take any shape other than the one you have now and I will never tremble in fear. Or come back to life again and challenge me to a duel in some deserted place. If I tremble then, you can call me a little girl. Get out of here, you horrible ghost, you hallucination. Get out!

The GHOST vanishes.

MACBETH

(to the guests) Can things like this happen so suddenly without making us all astonished? You make me feel like I don’t know myself, when I see you looking at these terrible things and keeping a straight face, while my face has gone white with fear.

LADY MACBETH

You have ruined our good cheer and disrupted the gathering by making a spectacle of yourself.

ROSS

What things, my lord?

**Act 3, Scene 4, Page 7**

LADY MACBETH

I pray you, speak not. He grows worse and worse. Question enrages him. At once, good night. Stand not upon the order of your going, But go at once.

LENNOX

Good night, and better health
Attend his majesty!

LADY MACBETH

A kind good night to all!

_Exeunt all but MACBETH and LADY MACBETH_

MACBETH

It will have blood, they say. Blood will have blood. Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak.

Augurs and understood relations have
By magot pies and coughs and rooks brought forth
The secret’st man of blood.—What is the night?

LADY MACBETH

Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

LADY MACBETH

Please, don’t speak to him. He’s getting worse and worse. Talk makes him crazy. Everybody, please leave right now. Don’t bother exiting in the order of your rank, but just leave right away.

LENNOX

Good night. I hope the king recovers soon!

LADY MACBETH

A kind good night to all!

_Exeunt all but MACBETH and LADY MACBETH_

MACBETH

There’s an old saying: the dead will have their revenge. Gravestones have been known to move, and trees to speak, to bring guilty men to justice. The craziest murderers have been exposed by the mystical signs made by crows and magpies. How late at night is it?

LADY MACBETH

It's almost morning. You can’t tell whether it’s day or night.
MACBETH
How say’st thou that Macduff denies his person

MACBETH
What do you think about the fact that Macduff refuses to come to me when I command him?

LADY MACBETH
Did you send to him, sir?

LADY MACBETH
Did you send for him, sir?

MACBETH
I hear it by the way; but I will send.
There’s not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant fee’d. I will tomorrow—
And betimes I will—to the weird sisters.

MACBETH
I’ve heard about this indirectly, but I will send for him. In every one of the lords’ households I have a servant paid to spy for me. Tomorrow, while it’s still early, I will go see the witches. They will tell me more, because I’m determined to know the worst about what’s going to happen. My own safety is the only important thing now. I have walked so far into this river of blood that even if I stopped now, it would be as hard to go back to being good as it is to keep killing people. I have some schemes in my head that I’m planning to put into action. I have to do these things before I have a chance to think about them.

LADY MACBETH
You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

MACBETH
Come, we’ll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use.
We are yet but young in deed.

Act 3, Scene 5

FIRST WITCH
Why, how now, Hecate! You look angrily.

HECATE
Have I not reason, beldams as you are?
Saucy and overbold, how did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death,
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never called to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now. Get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i’ th’ morning. Thither he
Will come to know his destiny.
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and everything beside.

I am for the air. This night I’ll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end.
Great business must be wrought ere noon.
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vap’rous drop profound.

I’ll catch it ere it come to ground.
And that distilled by magic sleights
Shall raise such artificial sprites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion.

He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes ’bove wisdom, grace, and fear.
And you all know, security
Is mortals’ chiefest enemy.

Music and a song within: ‘Come away, come away,‘
&c

Hark! I am called. My little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me.

First Witch
Come, let’s make haste; she’ll soon be back again.

Exeunt They all exit.

LENNOX
My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther. Only I say
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth. Marry, he was dead.
And the right-valiant Banquo walked too late,
Whom, you may say, if ’t please you, Fleance killed,
For Fleance fled. Men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? Damnèd fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! Did he not straight
In pious rage the two delinquents tear
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?

Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too,
For ’twould have angered any heart alive
To hear the men deny ’t. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well. And I do think
That had he Duncan’s sons under his key—
As, an’t please heaven, he shall not—they should find
What ’twere to kill a father. So should Fleance.
But, peace! For from broad words, and ’cause he

LENNOX
What I’ve already said shows you we think alike,
so you can draw your own conclusions. All I’m
saying is that strange things have been going on.
Macbeth pitied Duncan—after Duncan was dead.
And Banquo went out walking too late at night. If
you like, we can say that Fleance must have
killed him, because Fleance fled the scene of the
crime. Clearly, men should not go out walking too
late! And who can help thinking how monstrous it
was for Malcolm and Donalbain to kill their
gracious father? Such a heinous crime—how it
saddened Macbeth! Wasn’t it loyal of him to kill
those two servants right away, while they were
still drunk and asleep? That was the right thing to
do, wasn’t it? Yes, and it was the wise thing, too,
because we all would have been outraged to hear
those two deny their crime. Considering all this, I
think Macbeth has handled things well. If he had
Duncan’s sons in prison—which I hope won’t
happen—they would find out how awful the
punishment is for those who kill their fathers, and
so would Fleance. But enough of that. I hear that
Macduff is out of favor with the king because he
failed  
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear  
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell  
Where he bestows himself?

LORD  
The son of Duncan—

25 From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth—  
Lives in the English court and is received  
Of the most pious Edward with such grace  
That the malevolence of fortune nothing  
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff  
is gone to pray the holy king upon his aid  
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward,  
That by the help of these—with Him above  
To ratify the work—we may again  
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,  
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,  
Do faithful homage and receive free honors.  
All which we pine for now. And this report  
Hath so exasperated the king that he  
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Act 3, Scene 6, Page 2

LENNOX  
Sent he to Macduff?

LORD  
He did, and with an absolute “Sir, not I,”  
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,  
And hums, as who should say “You’ll rue the time  
That clogs me with this answer.”

LENNOX  
And that well might  
Advise him to a caution, t' hold what distance  
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel  
Fly to the court of England and unfold  
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing  
May soon return to this our suffering country

LORD  
I'll send my prayers with him.

Exeunt They exit.

Act 4, Scene 1

A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron. Thunder.  
Enter the three WITCHES.

FIRST WITCH  
Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.

SECOND WITCH  
Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined.

THIRD WITCH  
Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.
Harpier cries, “’Tis time, ’tis time.”

FIRST WITCH
Round about the cauldron go,
In the poisoned entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Sweltered venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i’ th’ charmèd pot.

ALL
10 Double, double toil and trouble,
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake.
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder’s fork and blind-worm’s sting,
Lizard’s leg and owlet’s wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL
20 Double, double toil and trouble,
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH
(holding something up) We’ll boil you in the cauldron next—a slice of swamp snake. All the rest of you in too: a newt’s eye, a frog’s tongue, fur from a bat, a dog’s tongue, the forked tongue of an adder, the stinger of a burrowing worm, a lizard’s leg, an owl’s wing. (speaking to the ingredients) Make a charm to cause powerful trouble, and boil and bubble like a broth of hell.

ALL
25 Double, double toil and trouble,
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH
Cool it with a baboon’s blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

HECATE enters with three other WITCHES
HECATE
Oh well done! I commend your pains,
And every one shall share i’ th’ gains.
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

_Original Text_ | _Modern Text_
---|---
_Music and a song: “Black spirits,” &c._ HECATE retires | _Music plays and the six WITCHES sing a song called “Black Spirits.” HECATE leaves._

**SECOND WITCH**

By the pricking of my thumbs,

Something wicked this way comes.

Open, locks,

Whoever knocks.

---

45

**SECOND WITCH**

I can tell that something wicked is coming by the tingling in my thumbs. Doors, open up for whoever is knocking!

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**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 3**

_Enter MACBETH_

**MACBETH**

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags?

What is ’t you do?

**ALL**

A deed without a name.

**MACBETH**

I conjure you by that which you profess—

Howe’er you come to know it—answer me.

Though you untie the winds and let them fight

Against the churches, though the yeasty waves

Confound and swallow navigation up,

Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down,

Though castles topple on their warders’ heads,

Though palaces and pyramids do slope

Their heads to their foundations, though the treasure

Of nature’s germens tumble all together,

Even till destruction sicken, answer me

To what I ask you.

**FIRST WITCH**

Speak.

**SECOND WITCH**

Demand.

**THIRD WITCH**

We’ll answer.

**FIRST WITCH**

Say, if th’ hadst rather hear it from our mouths,

Or from our masters’.

**MACBETH**

Call ’em. Let me see ’em.

**FIRST WITCH**

Pour in sow’s blood, that hath eaten

Her nine farrow; grease that’s sweated

From the murderer’s gibbet throw

Into the flame.

---

65

**FIRST WITCH**

Speak.

**SECOND WITCH**

Demand.

**THIRD WITCH**

We’ll answer.

**FIRST WITCH**

Would you rather hear these things from our mouths or from our master’s?

**MACBETH**

Call them. Let me see them.

**FIRST WITCH**

Pour in the blood of a sow who has eaten her nine offspring. Take the sweat of a murderer on the gallows and throw it into the flame.

---

**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 4**

**ALL**

Come, high or low;

**ALL**

Come, high or low spirits. Show yourself and
Original Text

70 Thyself and office dantzly show!

    Thunder. **FIRST APPARITION** : an armed head

**MACBETH**
Tell me, thou unknown power—

**FIRST WITCH**
He knows thy thought.
Hear his speech but say thou nought.

**FIRST APPARITION**
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff.
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

Descends

**MACBETH**
75 Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks.
Thou hast harped my fear aright. But one word more—

**FIRST WITCH**
He will not be commanded. Here’s another
More potent than the first.

    Thunder. **SECOND APPARITION** : a bloody child

**SECOND APPARITION**
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!—

**MACBETH**
80 Had I three ears, I’d hear thee.

**SECOND APPARITION**
Be bloody, bold, and resolute. Laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.

Descends

**MACBETH**
85 Then live, Macduff. What need I fear of thee?
But yet I’ll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate. Thou shalt not live,
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

    Thunder. **THIRD APPARITION** : a child crowned,
    with a tree in his hand

**THIRD APPARITION**
Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care

What is this
That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby-brow the round
And top of sovereignty?

**ALL**
Listen but speak not to ’t.

**THIRD APPARITION**
Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are.

Modern Text

what you do.

**MACBETH**
Tell me, you unknown power—

**FIRST WITCH**
He can read your thoughts. Listen, but don’t speak.

**FIRST APPARITION**
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff.
Beware the thane of Fife. Let me go. Enough.

    Thunder. The **FIRST APPARITION** descends.

**MACBETH**
Whatever you are, thanks for your advice. You
have guessed exactly what I feared. But one word more—

**FIRST WITCH**
He will not be commanded by you. Here’s another,
stronger than the first.

    Thunder. The **SECOND APPARITION** appears,
    looking like a bloody child.

**SECOND APPARITION**
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

**MACBETH**
If I had three ears I’d listen with all three.

**SECOND APPARITION**
Be violent, bold, and firm. Laugh at the power of
other men, because nobody born from a woman
will ever harm Macbeth.

The **SECOND APPARITION** descends.

**MACBETH**
Then I don’t need to kill Macduff. I have no
reason to fear him. But even so, I’ll make doubly
sure. I’ll guarantee my own fate by having you
killed, Macduff. That way I can conquer my own
fear and sleep easy at night.

    Thunder. The **THIRD APPARITION** appears, in
    the form of a child with a crown on his head and
    a tree in his hand.

What is this spirit that looks like the son of a king
and wears a crown on his young head?

**ALL**
Listen but don’t speak to it.

**THIRD APPARITION**
Be brave like the lion and proud. Don’t even
worry about who hates you, who resents you,
Original Text

Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill
Shall come against him.

MACBETH

That will never be.

Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earthbound root? Sweet bodements! Good!
Rebellious dead, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart

Throbs to know one thing. Tell me, if your art
Can tell so much: shall Banquo’s issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

Descends

The THIRD APPARITION descends.

MACBETH

That will never happen. Who can command the
forest and make the trees pull their roots out of
the earth? These were sweet omens! Good! My
murders will never come back to threaten me
until the forest of Birnam gets up and moves, and
I will be king for my entire natural life. But my
heart is still throbbing to know one thing. Tell me,
if your dark powers can see this far: will
Banquo’s sons ever reign in this kingdom?

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 6

ALL

Seek to know no more.

MACBETH

I will be satisfied. Deny me this,

And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.

Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise is this?

Hautboys

Hautboys play music for a ceremonial

procession.

FIRST WITCH

Show.

SECOND WITCH

Show.

THIRD WITCH

Show.

ALL

Show his eyes and grieve his heart.

Come like shadows; so depart!

A show of eight kings, the last with a glass in his
hand, followed by BANQUO

MACBETH

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo. Down!

Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs. And thy hair,

Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.

A third is like the former.—Filthy hags!

Why do you show me this? A fourth? Start, eyes!

What, will the line stretch out to th’ crack of doom?

Another yet? A seventh? I’ll see no more.

And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass

Which shows me many more, and some I see

That twofold balls and treble scepters carry.

Horrible sight! Now I see ’tis true;

For the blood-boltered Banquo smiles upon me

And points at them for his.

MACBETH

You look too much like the ghost of Banquo. Go
away!

(to the first) Your crown hurts my eyes. (to the second) Your blond hair, which
looks like another crown underneath the one
you’re wearing, looks just like the first king’s hair.

Now I see a third king who looks just like the
second. Filthy hags! Why are you showing me
this? A fourth! My eyes are bulging out of their
sockets! Will this line stretch on forever? Another
one! And a seventh! I don’t want to see any
more. And yet an eighth appears, holding a
mirror in which I see many more men. And some
are carrying double balls and triple scepters,
meaning they’re kings of more than one country!
Original Text

Horrible sight! Now I see it is true, they are Banquo’s descendants. Banquo, with his blood-clotted hair, is smiling at me and pointing to them as his.

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 7

Apparitions vanish

What, is this so?

FIRST WITCH
Ay, sir, all this is so. But why Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites, And show the best of our delights.
I’ll charm th’ air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round.
That this great king may kindly say, Our duties did his welcome pay.

Music. The WITCHES dance and then vanish

MACBETH
Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour Stand aye accursèd in the calendar!
Come in, without there.

Enter LENNOX

LENNOX
What’s your grace’s will?

MACBETH
Saw you the weird sisters?
LENNOX
No, my lord.

MACBETH
Came they not by you?
LENNOX
No, indeed, my lord.

MACBETH
Infected be the air whereon they ride, And damned all those that trust them! I did hear The galloping of horse. Who was ‘t came by?

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 8

LENNOX
‘Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH
Fled to England?
LENNOX
Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH
Time, thou anticipat’st my dread exploits.

Original Text

The flighty purpose never is o’ertook
Unless the deed go with it. From this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and
done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise,
Seize upon Fife, give to th’ edge o’ th’ sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool.
This deed I’ll do before this purpose cool.
But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are.

Modern Text

person does something the second he thinks of
it, he’ll never get a chance to do it. From now on,
as soon as I decide to do something I’m going to
act immediately. In fact, I’ll start following up my
thoughts with actions right now. I’ll raid Macduff’s
castle, seize the town of Fife, and kill his wife, his
children, and anyone else unfortunate enough to
stand in line for his inheritance. No more foolish
talk. I will do this deed before I lose my sense of
purpose. But no more spooky visions!—Where
are the messengers? Come, bring me to them.

Exeunt

They exit.

Act 4, Scene 2

Enter LADY MACDUFF, her SON, and ROSS

LADY MACDUFF
What had he done to make him fly the land?
ROSS
You must have patience, madam.

LADY MACDUFF
He had none.
His flight was madness. When our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.
ROSS
You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.
LADY MACDUFF
Wisdom! To leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the natural touch. For the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love,
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.
ROSS
My dearest coz,
I pray you school yourself. But for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o’ th’ season. I dare not speak much further;
But cruel are the times when we are traitors
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumor
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and none. I take my leave of you.
Shall not be long but I’ll be here again.
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before.—My pretty cousin, Blessing upon you.

LADY MACDUFF
What did he do that made him flee this land?
ROSS
You have to be patient, madam.

LADY MACDUFF
He had no patience. He was crazy to run away.
Even if you’re not a traitor, you’re going to look
like one if you run away.
ROSS
You don’t know whether it was wisdom or fear
that made him flee.
LADY MACDUFF
How could it be wisdom! To leave his wife, his
children, his house, and his titles in a place so
unsafe that he himself flees it! He doesn’t love us.
He lacks the natural instinct to protect his family.
Even the fragile wren, the smallest of birds, will
fight against the owl when it threatens her young
ones in the nest. His running away has everything
to do with fear and nothing to do with love. And
since it’s so unreasonable for him to run away, it
has nothing to do with wisdom either.
ROSS
My dearest relative, I’m begging you, pull yourself
together. As for your husband, he is noble, wise,
and judicious, and he understands what the times
require. It’s not safe for me to say much more
than this, but times are bad when people get
denounced as traitors and don’t even know why.
In times like these, we believe frightening rumors
but we don’t even know what we’re afraid of. It’s
like being tossed around on the ocean in every
direction, and finally getting nowhere. I’ll say
good-bye now. It won’t be long before I’m back.
When things are at their worst they have to stop,
or else improve to the way things were before. My
LADY MACDUFF
Fathered he is, and yet he's fatherless.
ROSS
I am so much a fool, should I stay longer
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.
30 I take my leave at once.

LADY MACDUFF
Sirrah, your father's dead.
And what will you do now? How will you live?
SON
As birds do, Mother.
LADY MACDUFF
What, with worms and flies?
SON
With what I get, I mean, and so do they.
LADY MACDUFF
Poor bird! Thou 'dst never fear the net nor lime,
The pitfall nor the gin.
SON
Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.
LADY MACDUFF
Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for a father?
SON
Nay, how will you do for a husband?
LADY MACDUFF
Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Act 4, Scene 2, Page 3

SON
Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.
LADY MACDUFF
Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, 't faith,
With wit enough for thee.
SON
Was my father a traitor, Mother?
LADY MACDUFF
Ay, that he was.
SON
What is a traitor?
LADY MACDUFF
Young man, your father's dead. What are you
going to do now? How are you going to live?
SON
I will live the way birds do, Mother.
LADY MACDUFF
What? Are you going to start eating worms and
flies?
SON
I mean I will live on whatever I get, like birds do.
LADY MACDUFF
You'd be a pitiful bird. You wouldn't know enough
to be afraid of traps.
SON
Why should I be afraid of them, Mother? If I'm a
pitiful bird, like you say, hunters won't want me.
No matter what you say, my father is not dead.
LADY MACDUFF
Yes, he is dead. What are you going to do for a
father?
SON
Maybe you should ask, what will you do for a
husband?
LADY MACDUFF
Oh, I can buy twenty husbands at any market.

SON
Nay, how will you do for a husband?
LADY MACDUFF
Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

SON
Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.
LADY MACDUFF
Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, 't faith,
With wit enough for thee.
SON
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LADY MACDUFF
Ay, that he was.
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to be afraid of traps.
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pitiful bird, like you say, hunters won't want me.
No matter what you say, my father is not dead.
LADY MACDUFF
Yes, he is dead. What are you going to do for a
father?
SON
Maybe you should ask, what will you do for a
husband?
LADY MACDUFF
Oh, I can buy twenty husbands at any market.

SON
If so, you'd be buying them to sell again.
LADY MACDUFF
You talk like a child, but you're very smart
anyway.
SON
Was my father a traitor, Mother?
LADY MACDUFF
Yes, he was.
SON
What is a traitor?
LADY MACDUFF
Young man, your father's dead. What are you
going to do now? How are you going to live?
SON
I will live the way birds do, Mother.
LADY MACDUFF
What? Are you going to start eating worms and
flies?
SON
I mean I will live on whatever I get, like birds do.
LADY MACDUFF
You'd be a pitiful bird. You wouldn't know enough
to be afraid of traps.
SON
Why should I be afraid of them, Mother? If I'm a
pitiful bird, like you say, hunters won't want me.
No matter what you say, my father is not dead.
LADY MACDUFF
Yes, he is dead. What are you going to do for a
father?
Original Text

Why, one that swears and lies.
SON
And be all traitors that do so?
LADY MACDUFF
50 Every one that does so is a traitor and must be hanged.
SON
And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?
LADY MACDUFF
Every one.
SON
Who must hang them?
LADY MACDUFF
Why, the honest men.
SON
55 Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enough to beat the honest men and hang up them.
LADY MACDUFF
Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?
SON
If he were dead, you'd weep for him. If you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.
LADY MACDUFF
Poor Prattler, how thou talk'st!

Modern Text

Someone who makes a promise and breaks it.
SON
And is everyone who swears and lies a traitor?
LADY MACDUFF
Everyone who does so is a traitor and should be hanged.
SON
And should everyone who makes promises and breaks them be hanged?
LADY MACDUFF
Everyone.
SON
Who should hang them?
LADY MACDUFF
The honest men.
SON
Then the liars are fools, for there are enough liars in the world to beat up the honest men and hang them.
LADY MACDUFF
(laughing) Heaven help you for saying that, boy! (sad again) But what will you do without a father?
SON
If he were dead, you'd be weeping for him. If you aren't weeping, it's a good sign that I'll soon have a new father.
LADY MACDUFF
Silly babbler, how you talk!

Act 4, Scene 2, Page 4

Enter a MESSENGER

MESSENGER
Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known, though in your state of honor I am perfect. I doubt some danger does approach you nearly. If you will take a homely man's advice, be not found here. Hence with your little ones. To fright you thus methinks I am too savage; to do worse to you were fell cruelty, which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you! I dare abide no longer.

Exit

LADY MACDUFF
Whither should I fly? I have done no harm. But I remember now I am in this earthly world, where to do harm is often laudable, to do good sometime accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas, do I put up that womanly defense, to say I have done no harm?

A MESSENGER enters.

MESSENGER
Bless you, fair lady! You don't know me, but I know you're an important person. I'm afraid something dangerous is coming toward you. If you'll take a simple man's advice, don't be here when it arrives. Go away and take your children. I feel bad for scaring you like this, but it would be much worse for me to let you come to harm. And harm is getting close! Heaven keep you safe!

The MESSENGER exits.

LADY MACDUFF
Where should I go? I haven't done anything wrong. But I have to remember that I'm here on Earth, where doing evil is often praised, and doing good is sometimes a stupid and dangerous mistake. So then why should I offer this womanish defense that I'm innocent?
Enter **MURDERERS**

What are these faces?

**FIRST MURDERER**

Where is your husband?

**LADY MACDUFF**

I hope, in no place so unsanctified

Where such as thou mayst find him.

**FIRST MURDERER**

He’s a traitor.

**SON**

Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain!

---

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 5**

**FIRST MURDERER**

(Stabbing him)

What, you egg?

**SON**

He has killed me, mother.

Run away, I pray you!

_He dies. Exit LADY MACDUFF, crying “Murder!” followed by MURDERERS_

---

**Act 4, Scene 3**

Enter **MALCOLM and MACDUFF**

**MALCOLM**

Let us seek out some desolate shade and there

Weep our sad bosoms empty.

**MACDUFF**

Let us rather

Hold fast the mortal sword and, like good men,

Brestride our downfall'n birthdom. Each new morn

New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows

Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds

As if it felt with Scotland and yelled out

Like syllable of dolor.

**MALCOLM**

What I believe I'll wail;

What know believe, and what I can redress,

As I shall find the time to friend, I will.

What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.

This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,

Was once thought honest. You have loved him well.

He hath not touched you yet. I am young, but

something

You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom

To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb

T' appease an angry god.

**MACDUFF**

I am not treacherous.

---

**MALCOLM**

Let’s seek out some shady place where we can sit down alone and cry our hearts out.

**MACDUFF**

Instead of crying, let's keep hold of our swords and defend our fallen homeland like honorable men. Each day new widows howl, new orphans cry, and new sorrows slap heaven in the face, until it sounds like heaven itself feels Scotland’s anguish and screams in pain.

**MALCOLM**

I will avenge whatever I believe is wrong. And I'll believe whatever I’m sure is true. And I’ll put right whatever I can when the time comes. What you just said may perhaps be true. This tyrant, whose mere name is so awful it hurts us to say it, was once considered an honest man. You were one of his favorites. He hasn’t done anything to harm you yet. I’m inexperienced, but maybe you’re planning to win Macbeth’s favor by betraying me to him. It would be smart to offer someone poor and innocent like me as a sacrificial lamb to satisfy an angry god like Macbeth.

**MACDUFF**

I am not treacherous.
MALCOLM But Macbeth is. A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon.
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose.
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

MALCOLM But Macbeth is. Even someone with a good and virtuous nature might give way to a royal command. But I beg your pardon. My fears can't actually make you evil. Angels are still bright even though Lucifer, the brightest angel, fell from heaven. Even though everything evil wants to look good, good still has to look good too.

MACDUFF I have lost my hopes.

MALCOLM Perchance even there where I did find my doubts. Why in that rawness left you wife and child, Those precious motives, those strong knots of love, Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

MACDUFF Bleed, bleed, poor country! Great tyranny, go ahead and build yourself up, because good people are afraid to stand up to you. Enjoy everything you stole, because your title is safe! Farewell, lord. I wouldn't be the villain you think I am even if I were offered all of Macbeth's kingdom and the riches of the East too.

MALCOLM Be not offended. I speak not as in absolute fear of you. I think our country sinks beneath the yoke. It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash is added to her wounds. I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here from gracious England have I offer
Of goodly thousands. But, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF What should he be?

MALCOLM It is myself I mean, in whom I know

MALCOLM I'm talking about myself. I know I have so many
Original Text

All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless harms.

MACDUFF
Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned
In evils to top Macbeth.

MALCOLM
I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name. But there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness. Your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids could not fill up
The cistern of my lust, and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear
That did oppose my will. Better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

MACDUFF
Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny. It hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours. You may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty
And yet seem cold; the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough. There cannot be
That vulture in you to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.

Act 4, Scene 3, Page 4

MALCOLM
With this there grows
In my most ill-composed affection such
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
Desire his jewels and this other's house.
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more, that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

MACDUFF
This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings. Yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,
Of your mere own. All these are portable,
With other graces weighed.

MALCOLM
Along with being full of lust, I'm also incredibly greedy. If I became king, I would steal the nobles' lands, taking jewels from one guy and houses from another. The more I had, the greedier I would grow, until I'd invent false quarrels with my good and loyal subjects, destroying them so I could get my hands on their wealth.

MACDUFF
The greed you're talking about is worse than lust because you won't outgrow it. Greed has been the downfall of many kings. But don't be afraid. Scotland has enough treasures to satisfy you out of your own royal coffers. These bad qualities are bearable when balanced against your good sides.

MALCOLM
vices that when people see all of them exposed, evil Macbeth will seem as pure as snow in comparison, and poor Scotland will call him a sweet lamb when they compare him to me and my infinite evils.

MACDUFF
Even in hell you couldn't find a devil worse than Macbeth.

MALCOLM
I admit that he’s murderous, lecherous, greedy, lying, deceitful, violent, malicious, and guilty of every sin that has a name. But there is no end, absolutely none, to my sexual desires. Your wives, your daughters, your old women, and your young maids together could not satisfy my lust. My desire would overpower all restraints and anyone who stood in my way. It would be better for Macbeth to rule than someone like me.
Original Text

But I have none. The king-becoming graces, 
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness, 
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness, 
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude, 
I have no relish of them but abound 
In the division of each several crime, 
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should 
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell, 
Uproar the universal peace, confound 
All unity on earth.

MACDUFF
O Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLM
If such a one be fit to govern, speak. 
I am as I have spoken.

MACDUFF
Fit to govern?

MALCOLM
If someone like me is fit to be king, let me know. I 
really am exactly as I have described myself to 
you.

MACDUFF
Oh Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLM
If someone like me is fit to be king, let me know. I 
really am exactly as I have described myself to 
you.

MACDUFF
(toc MALCOLM) Fit to be king? You’re not fit to 
live!—Oh miserable nation, ruled by a usurping, 
murderous tyrant, when will you see peaceful 
days again? The man who has a legal right to the 
throne is, by his own admission, a cursed man 
and a disgrace to the royal family.——Your royal 
father Duncan was a virtuous king. Your mother 
spent more time on her knees in prayer than she 
did standing up, and she lived a life of absolute 
piety. Good-bye. The evils you have described 
inside yourself have driven me out of Scotland
forever. Oh my heart, your hope is dead!

MALCOLM
Macduff, this noble passion, 
Child of integrity, hath from my soul 
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts 
To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth 
By many of these trains hath sought to win me 
Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me 
From overcredulous haste. But God above 
Deal between thee and me, for even now 
I put myself to thy direction and 

MALCOLM
Macduff, this passionate outburst, which proves 
your integrity, has removed my doubts about you 
and made me realize that you really are 
thrustworthy and honorable. That devil Macbeth 
has tried many times to trick me and lure me into 
his power, and prudence prevents me from 
believing people too quickly. But with God as my 
witness, I will let myself be guided by you, and I 
take back my confession. I take back all the bad 
things I said about myself, because none of 
those flaws are really part of my character. I’m 
still a virgin. I have never told a lie. I barely care 
about what I already own, let alone feel jealous 
of another’s possessions. I have never broken a 
promise. I wouldn’t betray the devil himself. I love 
truth as much as I love life. The lies I told about 
my character are actually the first false words I 
have ever spoken. The person who I really am is 

Modern Text

But I don’t have any good sides. I don’t have a 
trace of the qualities a king needs, such as 
justice, truth, moderation, stability, generosity, 
perseverance, mercy, humility, devotion, 
patience, courage, and bravery. Instead, I 
overflow with every variation of all the different 
vices. No, if I had power I would take world 
peace and throw it down to hell.

MACDUFF
Oh Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLM
If someone like me is fit to be king, let me know. I 
really am exactly as I have described myself to 
you.

MACDUFF
(toc MALCOLM) Fit to be king? You’re not fit to 
live!—Oh miserable nation, ruled by a usurping, 
murderous tyrant, when will you see peaceful 
days again? The man who has a legal right to the 
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promise. I wouldn’t betray the devil himself. I love 
truth as much as I love life. The lies I told about 
my character are actually the first false words I 
have ever spoken. The person who I really am is 
ready to serve you and our poor country.
Act 4, Scene 3, Page 6

135 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach, Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men, Already at a point, was setting forth. Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?  

MACDUFF
140 Such welcome and unwelcome things at once 'Tis hard to reconcile.  

Enter a DOCTOR

MALCOLM
Well, more anon.—Comes the king forth, I pray you?  

DOCTOR
Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls That stay his cure. Their malady convinces The great assay of art, but at his touch— Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand— They presently amend.  

MALCOLM
I thank you, doctor.  

Exit DOCTOR

MACDUFF
What’s the disease he means?  

MALCOLM
'Tis called the evil. A most miraculous work in this good king, Which often since my here-remain in England I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven, Himself best knows, but strangely visited people, All swoll'n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye, The mere despair of surgery, he cures, Hanging a golden stamp about their necks, Put on with holy prayers. And, 'tis spoken,

150 To the succeeding royalty he leaves The healing benediction. With this strange virtue, He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy, And sundry blessings hang about his throne, That speak him full of grace.

Enter ROSS

MACDUFF
See, who comes here?  

MALCOLM
My countryman, but yet I know him not.  

MACDUFF
My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

155 They say that he bequeaths this ability to heal to his royal descendants. Along with this strange power, he also has the gift of prophecy and various other abilities. All of these signs mark him as a man graced by God.

ROSS enters.

MACDUFF
Who’s that coming over here?  

MALCOLM
By his dress I can tell he’s my countryman, but I don’t recognize him.  

MACDUFF
My noble kinsman, welcome.
MALCOLM
I know him now.—Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!

ROSS
Sir, amen.

MACDUFF
Stands Scotland where it did?

ROSS
Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be called our mother, but our grave, where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the
air
Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy. The dead man’s knell
Is there scarce asked for who, and good men’s lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

MACDUFF
Oh, relation
Too nice and yet too true!

ROSS
While I was coming here to tell you my sad
news, I heard rumors that many good men are
arming themselves to rebel against Macbeth.
When I saw Macbeth’s army on the move, I knew
the rumors must be true. Now is the time when
we need your help. Your presence in Scotland
Original Text

Would create soldiers, make our women fight, 190
To doff their dire distresses.

MALCOLM
Be 't their comfort
We are coming thither. Gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.

ROSS
Would I could answer
195 This comfort with the like. But I have words
That would be howled out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.

MACDUFF
What concern they?
The general cause, or is it a fee-grief
Due to some single breast?

ROSS
No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe, though the main part
Pertains to you alone.

MACDUFF
If it be mine,
Keep it not from me. Quickly let me have it.

ROSS
Let not your ears despise my tongue forever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.

MACDUFF
Hum! I guess at it.

ROSS
Your castle is surprised, your wife and babes
Savagely slaughtered. To relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murdered deer
To add the death of you.

MALCOLM
Merciful heaven!
What, man! Ne'er pull your hat upon your brows.
Give sorrow words. The grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'erfraught heart and bids it break.

MACDUFF
My children too?

ROSS
215 Wife, children, servants, all that could be found.

Modern Text

would inspire people to fight. Even the women
would fight to rid themselves of Macbeth’s oppression.

MALCOLM
Let them be comforted—I’m returning to
Scotland. Gracious King Edward has sent us
noble Siward and ten thousand soldiers. There is
no soldier more experienced or successful than
Siward in the entire Christian world.

ROSS
I wish I could repay this happy news with good
news of my own. But I have some news that
should be howled in a barren desert where
nobody can hear it.

MACDUFF
What is this news about? Does it affect all of us?
Or just one of us?

ROSS
No decent man can keep from sharing in the
sorrow, but my news affects you alone.

MACDUFF
If it’s for me, don’t keep it from me. Let me have
it now.

ROSS
I hope you won’t hate me forever after I say
these things, because I will soon fill your ears
with the most dreadful news you have ever
heard.

MACDUFF
I think I can guess what you’re about to say.

ROSS
Your castle was attacked. Your wife and children
were savagely slaughtered. If I told you how they
were killed, it would cause you so much pain that
it would kill you too, and add your body to the pile
of murdered corpses.

MALCOLM
Merciful heaven! (to MACDUFF) Come on, man,
don’t keep your grief hidden. Put your sorrow into
words. The grief you keep inside you will whisper
in your heart until it breaks.

MACDUFF
They killed my children too?

ROSS
They killed your wife, your children, your
servants, anyone they could find.
Act 4, Scene 3, Page 10

MACDUFF
And I must be from thence!
My wife killed too?

ROSS
I have said.

MALCOLM
Be comforted.

Let’s make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

MACDUFF
He has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?

MALCOLM
Dispute it like a man.

MACDUFF
I shall do so,
But I must also feel it as a man.
I cannot but remember such things were
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! Naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now.

MALCOLM
Be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief
Convert to anger. Blunt not the heart, enrage it.

MACDUFF
Oh, I could play the woman with mine eyes
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission. Front to front
Within my sword’s length set him; if he ‘scape,
Heaven forgive him too.

MALCOLM
This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king. Our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you may.
The night is long that never finds the day.

Exeunt They exit.

Act 5, Scene 1

MALCOLM
Now you sound like a man. Come on, let’s go
see King Edward. The army is ready. All we have
to do now is say goodbye to the king. Macbeth is
ripe for the picking. We’ll be acting as God’s
agents. Cheer up as much as you can. A new
day will come at last.
Enter a DOCTOR of physic and a waiting-
GENTLEWOMAN

DOCTOR
I have two nights watched with you but can perceive
no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

GENTLEWOMAN
Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her
rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her,
unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write
upon 't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to
bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

DOCTOR
A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the
benefit of sleep, and do the line>effects of watching.
In this slumbery agitation, besides her walking and
other actual performances, what, at any time, have
you heard her say?

GENTLEWOMAN
That, sir, which I will not report after her.

DOCTOR
You may to me, and 'tis most meet you should.

GENTLEWOMAN
Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to
confirm my speech.

Enter LADY MACBETH with a taper

LADY MACBETH
Lo you, here she comes. This is her very guise; and,
upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her, stand close.

DOCTOR
How came she by that light?

GENTLEWOMAN
Why, it stood by her. She has light by her continually.
'Tis her command.

DOCTOR
You see her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN
Ay, but their sense is shut.

DOCTOR
What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her
hands.

GENTLEWOMAN
It is an accustomed action with her to seem thus
washing her hands. I have known her continue in this
a quarter of an hour.

LADY MACBETH

Modern Text

A DOCTOR and a waiting-
GENTLEWOMAN enter.

DOCTOR
I've stayed up with you for two nights now, and I
haven't seen any evidence of what you were
talking about. When was the last time you saw
her sleepwalking?

GENTLEWOMAN
Since Macbeth went to war, I have seen her rise
from her bed, put on her nightgown, unlock her
closet, take out some paper, fold it, write on it,
read it, seal it up, and then return to bed,
remaining asleep the entire time.

DOCTOR
It's unnatural to be asleep and act as if you're
awake. When she is like this, besides walking
and performing various activities, have you heard
her say anything?

GENTLEWOMAN
She says something, sir, but I will not repeat it to
you.

DOCTOR
You can tell me. You really should.

GENTLEWOMAN
I will not confess it to you nor to anyone else,
because there was no one else to witness her
speech.

LADY MACBETH enters, holding a candle.

LADY MACBETH
Look, here she comes! This is exactly how she
always looks, and—I swear it—she is fast asleep.
Watch her. Keep hidden.

DOCTOR
How did she get that candle?

GENTLEWOMAN
It stands by her bedside. She always has to have
a light next to her. Those are her orders.

DOCTOR
You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN
Yes, but they don't see anything.

DOCTOR
What's she doing now? Look how she rubs her
hands.

GENTLEWOMAN
She often does that. She looks like she's washing
her hands. I've seen her do that before for as
long as fifteen minutes.

LADY MACBETH
Yet here’s a spot.

DOCTOR
Hark! She speaks. I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

LADY MACBETH
Out, damned spot! Out, I say!—One, two. Why, then, ’tis time to do ’t. Hell is murky!—Fie, my lord, fie! A soldier, and afraid? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?—Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him.

DOCTOR
Do you mark that?

LADY MACBETH
The thane of Fife had a wife. Where is she now?—What, will these hands ne’er be clean?—No more o’ that, my lord, no more o’ that. You mar all with this starting.

DOCTOR
Go to, go to. You have known what you should not.

GENTLEWOMAN
She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that. Heaven knows what she has known.

LADY MACBETH
Here’s the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, Oh, Oh!

DOCTOR
What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

GENTLEWOMAN
I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

DOCTOR
Well, well, well.

GENTLEWOMAN
Pray God it be, sir.

DOCTOR
This disease is beyond my practice. Yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holly in their beds.

LADY MACBETH
Wash your hands. Put on your nightgown. Look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo’s buried; he cannot come out on ’s grave.
Act 5, Scene 1, Page 4

GENTLEWOMAN
Directly.

DOCTOR
Foul whisperings are abroad. Unnatural deeds do breed unnatural troubles. Infected minds to their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets. More needs she the divine than the physician. God, God forgive us all! Look after her, Remove from her the means of all annoyance, And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night. My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight. I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN
Good night, good doctor.

Exit

Act 5, Scene 2

Drum and colors. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, and soldiers

MENTEITH
The English power is near, led on by Malcolm, His uncle Siward and the good Macduff. Revenges burn in them, for their dear causes Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm Excite the mortified man.

ANGUS
Near Birnam Wood Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

CAITHNESS
Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

LENNOX
For certain, sir, he is not. I have a file Of all the gentry. There is Siward’s son, And many unrough youths that even now Protest their first of manhood.
No Fear Shakespeare – Macbeth (by SparkNotes)

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 2

MENTEITH
What does the tyrant?

CAITHNESS
Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.
Some say he’s mad, others that lesser hate him
Do call it valiant fury. But, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distempered cause
Within the belt of rule.

ANGUS
Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands.
Now minutely revolts upbraid his faith-breach.
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love. Now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant’s robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Act 5, Scene 3

MENTEITH
Who then shall blame
His pestered senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?

CAITHNESS
Well, march we on,
To give obedience where ’tis truly owed.
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country’s purge
Each drop of us.

LENNOX
Or so much as it needs,
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.

Exeunt, marching

Enter MACBETH, DOCTOR, and attendants

MACBETH
Bring me no more reports. Let them fly all.
Till Birnam Wood remove to Dunsinane
I cannot taint with fear. What’s the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:
“Fear not, Macbeth. No man that’s born of woman
Shall e’er have power upon thee.” Then fly, false
thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures.

MACBETH, a DOCTOR, and attendants enter.

MACBETH
Don’t bring me any more reports. I don’t care if all
the thanes desert me. Until Birnam Wood gets up
and moves to Dunsinane, I won’t be affected by
fear. What’s the boy Malcolm? Wasn’t he born
from a woman? The spirits that know the future
have told me this: “Don’t be afraid, Macbeth. No
man born from a woman will ever defeat you.” So
get out of here, disloyal thanes, and join the weak
and decadent English! My mind and courage will
never falter with doubt or shake with fear.

Enter a SERVANT

A SERVANT enters.
Original Text

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!
Where got'st thou that goose look?

SERVANT
There is ten thousand—

MACBETH
Geese, villain?

SERVANT
15 Soldiers, sir.

MACBETH
Go, prick thy face and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-livered boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! Those linen cheeks of thine
Are counselors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

SERVANT
20 The English force, so please you.

MACBETH
Take thy face hence.

Exit SERVANT

Modern Text

May the devil turn you black, you white-faced fool! Why do you look like a frightened goose?

SERVANT
There are ten thousand—

MACBETH
Geese, you idiot?

SERVANT
Soldiers, sir.

MACBETH
Go pinch your cheeks and bring some color back into your face, you cowardly boy. What soldiers, fool? Curse you! That pale face of yours will frighten the others as well. What soldiers, milky-face?

SERVANT
The English army, sir.

MACBETH
Get out of my sight.

Exit SERVANT

Act 5, Scene 3, Page 2

Seyton!—I am sick at heart, When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now. I have lived long enough. My way of life Is fall'n into the sere, the yellow leaf, And that which should accompany old age, As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends, I must not look to have, but, in their stead, Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honor, breath Which the poor heart would fain deny and dare not. Seyton!

Enter SEYTON

SEYTON
What's your gracious pleasure?

MACBETH
What news more?

SEYTON
All is confirmed, my lord, which was reported.

MACBETH
I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hacked. Give me my armor.

SEYTON
35 'Tis not needed yet.

MACBETH
I'll put it on. Send out more horses. Skirr the country round. Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor. How does your patient, doctor?
Act 5, Scene 3, Page 3

**MACBETH**
Cure her of that.
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

**DOCTOR**
Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

**MACBETH**
Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.
Come, put mine armor on. Give me my staff.
Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes fly from me.
Come, sir, dispatch.—If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.—Pull 't off, I say.—
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?

**DOCTOR**
Ay, my good lord. Your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

**MACBETH**
Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and bane,
Till Birnam Forest come to Dunsinane.

**DOCTOR**
(aside) Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here.

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**Act 5, Scene 4**

_Drum and colors._
Original Text

MALCOLM
Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.

MENTEITH
We doubt it nothing.

SIWARD
What wood is this before us?

MENTEITH
The wood of Birnam.

MALCOLM
Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear ’t before him. Thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host and make discovery
Err in report of us.

SOLDIERS
It shall be done.

SIWARD
We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane and will endure
Our setting down before ’t.

MALCOLM
’Tis his main hope:
For, where there is advantage to be given,
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.

MACDUFF
Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.

Modern Text

MALCOLM
Kinsmen, I hope the time is coming when people will be
safe in their own bedrooms.

MENTEITH
We don’t doubt it.

SIWARD
What’s the name of this forest behind us?

MENTEITH
Birnam Wood.

MALCOLM
Tell every soldier to break off a branch and hold it in
front of him. That way we can conceal how many of us
there are, and Macbeth’s spies will give him inaccurate
reports.

SOLDIERS
We’ll do it.

SIWARD
We have no news except that the overconfident
Macbeth is still in Dunsinane and will allow us to lay
siege to the castle.

MALCOLM
He wants us to lay siege. Wherever his soldiers have an
opportunity to leave him, they do, whatever rank they
are. No one fights with him except men who are forced
to, and their hearts aren’t in it.

MACDUFF
We shouldn’t make any judgments until we achieve our
goal. Let’s go fight like hardworking soldiers.

Act 5, Scene 4, Page 2

SIWARD
The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate.
Towards which, advance the war.

Exeunt, marching

They exit, marching.

Act 5, Scene 5

Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and SOLDIERS, with
drum and colors

MACBETH
Hang out our banners on the outward walls.
The cry is still “They come!” Our castle’s strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn. Here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up.
Were they not forced with those that should be ours,
Original Text

We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.

A cry within of women

What is that noise?

SEYTON
It is the cry of women, my good lord.

Exit

MACBETH
I have almost forgot the taste of fears.

The time has been my senses would have cooled
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir
As life were in 't. I have supped full with horrors.

Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts

Cannot once start me.

Enter SEYTON

Wherefore was that cry?

SEYTON
The queen, my lord, is dead.

Modern Text

soldiers revolted and joined them, we could have met them out in front of the castle, man to man, and beaten them back to England.

A sound of women crying offstage.

What's that noise?

SEYTON
It's women crying, my good lord.

Exit

MACBETH
I've almost forgotten what fear feels like. There was a time when I would have been terrified by a shriek in the night, and the hair on my skin would have stood up when I heard a ghost story. But now I've had my fill of real horrors. Horrible things are so familiar that they can't startle me.

Enter SEYTON

What was that cry for?

SEYTON
The queen is dead, my lord.

Act 5, Scene 5, Page 2

MACBETH
She should have died later anyway. That news was bound to come someday. Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow. The days creep slowly along until the end of time. And every day that's already happened has taken fools that much closer to their deaths. Out, out, brief candle. Life is nothing more than an illusion. It's like a poor actor who struts and worries for his hour on the stage and then is never heard from again. Life is a story told by an idiot, full of noise and emotional disturbance but devoid of meaning.

Enter a MESSENGER

You've come to tell me something. Tell me quickly.

MESSENGER
My gracious lord, I should tell you what I saw, but I don't know how to say it.

MACBETH
Just say it.

MESSENGER
As I was standing watch on the hill, I looked toward Birnam, and I thought I saw the forest begin to move.

MACBETH
Liar and slave!
To doubt th’ equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth. “Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane”; and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane.—Arm, arm, and out!—
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I ‘gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish th’ estate o’ th’ world were now undone.—
Ring the alarum-bell!—Blow, wind! Come, wrack!
At least we’ll die with harness on our back.

Exeunt

MALCOLM, old SIWARD, MACDUFF, and their army enter carrying branches, with a drummer and flag.

MALCOLM
We’re close enough now. Throw down these branches and show them who you really are. Uncle Siward, you and your son will lead the first battle. Brave Macduff and I will do the rest, according to our battle plan.

SIWARD
Good luck. If we meet Macbeth’s army tonight, let us be beaten if we cannot fight.

MACDUFF
Blow all the trumpets. They loudly announce the news of blood and death.

Exeunt

Act 5, Scene 7

Alarums. Enter MACBETH

MACBETH
They have tied me to a stake. I cannot fly,
But, bearlike, I must fight the course. What’s he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none. 

Enter YOUNG SIWARD

YOUNG SIWARD
What is thy name?

MACBETH
Thou 'lt be afraid to hear it.

YOUNG SIWARD
No, though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.

MACBETH
My name's Macbeth.

YOUNG SIWARD
The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.

MACBETH
No, nor more fearful.

YOUNG SIWARD
Thou liest, abhorred tyrant. With my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speakest.

They fight and YOUNG SIWARD is slain

MACBETH
Thou wast born of woman.
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandished by man that's of a woman born.

Act 5, Scene 7, Page 2

Exit

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF

MACDUFF
That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!
If thou beest slain, and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms
Are hired to bear their staves. Either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword with an unbattered edge
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of the greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, Fortune,
And more I beg not.

Exit. Alarums

Enter MALCOLM and SIWARD

SIWARD
This way, my lord. The castle's gently rendered.
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight,
The noble thanes do bravely in the war,
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.

MALCOLM
We have met with foes

Exit.

Trumpets and battle sounds. MACDUFF enters.

MACDUFF
The noise is coming from over there. Tyrant, show your face! If someone other than me kills you, the ghosts of my wife and children will haunt me forever. I can't be bothered to fight these lame soldiers who only fight for money. I'll either fight you, Macbeth, or else I'll put down my sword unused. You must be over there. By the great noise, it sounds like one of the highest-ranking men is being announced. I hope I find him! I ask for nothing more than that.

MACDUFF exits. More battle noises.

MALCOLM and old SIWARD enter.

SIWARD
Come this way, my lord. The castle has been surrendered without a fight. Macbeth's soldiers are fighting on both sides. Our noblemen are battling bravely. The victory is almost yours, and it seems like there's not much left to do.

MALCOLM
Our enemies fight as if they're trying not to hurt
Act 5, Scene 8

Enter MACBETH

MACBETH
Why should I play the Roman fool and die
On mine own sword? Whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.

Enter MACDUFF

MACDUFF
Turn, hellhound, turn!

MACBETH
Of all men else I have avoided thee.
But get thee back. My soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.

MACDUFF
I have no words.
My voice is in my sword. Thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out!

They fight

MACBETH
Thou losest labor.
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed.
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmèd life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

MACDUFF
Despair thy charm,
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripped.

MACDUGFF enters.

MACBETH
Despair thy charm,
For it hath cowed my better part of man!
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

MACDUFF
Then surrender, coward, and we'll put you in a
freakshow, just like they do with deformed
animals. We'll put a picture of you on a sign, right
above the words “Come see the tyrant!”

MACBETH
tells me so,
For it hath cowed my better part of man!
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense,
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

MACDUFF
Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o’ th' time.
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted on a pole, and underwrit,
Original Text

“Here may you see the tyrant.”

MACBETH

I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.

Though Birnam Wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. Before my body
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,
And damned be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"

Exeunt, fighting. Alarums. They enter fighting,
and MACBETH slain. Retreat. Flourish.
colors MALCOLM, SIWARD, ROSS, THANES,
and SOLDIERS

MALCOLM

I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

SIWARD

Some must go off. And yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

MALCOLM

Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

ROSS

Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt.

He only lived but till he was a man,
The which no sooner had his prowess confirmed
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.

SIWARD

Then he is dead?

ROSS

Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

SIWARD

Had he his hurts before?

ROSS

Ay, on the front.

SIWARD

Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death.

And so, his knell is knolled.

MALCOLM

He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

SIWARD

So he's dead?

ROSS

Yes, and he's been carried off the field. Your grief
should not be equal to his worth, because then
your sorrow would never end.

SIWARD

Were his wounds on his front side?

ROSS

Yes, on his front.

SIWARD

Well then, he's God's soldier now! If I had as
many sons as I have hairs on my head, I couldn't
hope that any of them would die more honorably
than he did. And that's all there is to it.

MALCOLM

He is worth more mourning than that, and I will
mourn for him.
SIWARD
He's worth no more.
They say he parted well and paid his score.
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

Enter MACDUFF with MACBETH's head

MACDUFF
Hail, king! For so thou art. Behold where stands
The usurper’s cursed head. The time is free.
I see thee compassed with thy kingdom’s pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds,
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine.
Hail, King of Scotland!

MALCOLM
We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honor named. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny,
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiendlike queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time, and place.
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crowned at Scone.

MALCOLM
It won't be long before I reward each of you as he
deserves. My thanes and kinsmen, I name you all
earls, the first earls that Scotland has ever had.
We have a lot to do at the dawn of this new era.
We must call home all of our exiled friends who
fled from the grip of Macbeth's tyranny, and we
must bring to justice all the evil ministers of this
dead butcher and his demon-like queen, who,
rumor has it, committed suicide. This, and
whatever else we are called to do by God, we will
do at the right time and in the right place. So I
thank you all, and I invite each and every one of
you to come watch me be crowned king of
Scotland at Scone.