

# Macbeth

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## MACBETH SYNOPSIS

Three witches plan to meet with Macbeth.

We first hear of Macbeth from the bloody sergeant, who describes his hacking through an army to slay its rebellious leader. Macbeth then saves the day again by defeating the rebellious Thane of Cawdor. Duncan the King decides to reward Macbeth with Cawdor's titles and lands, and sends Ross and Angus to Macbeth with this news.

Banquo and Macbeth meet the witches on the heath. They hail Macbeth Thane of Fife, which he already is, then Thane of Cawdor, and future King. Banquo is hailed as the father of many kings. The witches vanish. When Macbeth is greeted as Thane of Cawdor by Ross, both Banquo and Macbeth reflect on the witches' prophecies. After greeting and thanking Macbeth, Duncan names his first born, Malcolm, heir to his throne. Macbeth then regards Malcolm as an obstacle to his own destiny of becoming king.

On reading this news in a letter from Macbeth, Lady Macbeth resolves to propel her husband to the throne by any means. Macbeth resists her murderous ideas as Duncan and his train visit Macbeth's castle. Near the end of a celebratory banquet, Lady Macbeth privately persuades Macbeth to kill Duncan. She plans to get Duncan's guards drunk and blame the murder on them. Macbeth does murder Duncan, but not before seeing an imaginary dagger. He also hears voices that say he will never sleep peacefully again. Macduff discovers Duncan's body in the morning and Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, fearing for their own lives, flee for England and Ireland. Their flight puts suspicion of Duncan's murder upon them, and Macbeth is named King.

Banquo is suspicious of Macbeth's rise to the throne but also hopes that his sons may one day become kings. He promises Macbeth to attend the evening's banquet and goes for a ride with Fleance. Macbeth, fearing he will someday lose his crown to Banquo's children, coerces two murderers to kill Banquo and his son Fleance. With Seyton, the murderers lay an ambush outside the castle. Banquo is killed but Fleance escapes. Macbeth receives this news at the beginning of the banquet. Banquo's ghost appears to him during the banquet and his reactions are so violent and fearful Lady Macbeth sends the guests home. He then determines to be ruthless in his self-preservation, and to revisit the witches to learn more of his fate.

When Macbeth revisits the witches an apparition tells Macbeth to beware of Macduff. A second apparition tells him not to fear any man born of a woman, and a third apparition tells him not to fear until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane Hill. Emboldened by these encouraging predictions he demands to know whether Banquo's children will ever be kings. He is shown that eight future Kings spring from Banquo's family line. After the witches and apparitions vanish, Macbeth learns that Macduff has fled to England. He realizes he must be completely ruthless to survive and decides to seize Macduff's castle and kill all his family. His murderers carry out this deed.

In England Malcolm tests Macduff's loyalty, then informs him an army is ready to march against Macbeth. Ross arrives with the news of Macduff's family and Macduff prays that he may be the one to revenge his family and slay Macbeth.

Back at Dunsinane Castle Lady Macbeth has been driven mad with guilt and while sleep-walking, inadvertently reveals the murders of Duncan and Banquo. As the English approach Dunsinane they chop down branches in Birnam Wood to disguise their numbers. Resigned now to his fate, Macbeth grimly prepares for battle.

No one can defeat Macbeth and when Macduff finally confronts him, Macbeth scoffs at him with the prophecy that no man born of a woman may slay him. Macduff tells Macbeth he was delivered by Caesarean section (and hence, not technically born of a woman.) Despite this, Macbeth fights on and is beheaded by Macduff. Malcolm claims the throne and invites all to witness him crowned at Scone.

## MACBETH

### LIST OF CHARACTERS

DUNCAN	King of Scotland
MALCOLM	Duncan's first-born son
DONALBAIN	Duncan's second-born son
MACBETH	Nobleman of Scotland
BANQUO	Nobleman of Scotland
MACDUFF	Nobleman of Scotland
LENNOX	Nobleman of Scotland
ROSS	Nobleman of Scotland
MENTEITH	Nobleman of Scotland
ANGUS	Nobleman of Scotland
CAITHNESS	Nobleman of Scotland
FLEANCE	Son of Banquo
SEYTON	Officer attending Macbeth
SERGEANT	Soldier in Duncan's army
LADY MACBETH	Wife of Macbeth
LADY MACDUFF	Wife of Macduff
SON	Son of Macduff
DOCTOR	Doctor attending on Lady
WAITING GENTLEWOMAN	Lady attending on Lady Macbeth
PORTER	
OLD MAN	
THREE WITCHES	
HECATE	
SIWARD	Earl of Northumberland
YOUNG SIWARD	Son of Northumberland
Apparitions, soldiers, messengers, attendants, lords, etc.	
SCENE	Scotland and England

**Act 1, Scene 1 The heath\***

*(Three WITCHES.)*

FIRST WITCH

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

SECOND WITCH

When the hurlyburly'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.

ALL

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

*(Exeunt WITCHES.)*

*heath* - open wasteland covered with heather and low shrubs, *hurlyburly* - turmoil, *ere* - before

## Act 1, Scene 2 A camp

(DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX and attendants, meeting a bleeding SERGEANT.)

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 against my captivity.

Hail, brave friend! Say to the king the knowledge of the broil as thou didst leave it.

SERGEANT

Doubtful it stood, as two spent swimmers, that do cling together and choke their art.

The merciless Macdonwald, from the western isles is supplied.

But all's too weak, for brave Macbeth (well he deserves that name),

disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel, which smoked with bloody execution,

carved out his passage till he faced the slave;

which never shook hands nor bade farewell to him,

till he unseamed him from the nave to the chops,\* and fixed his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN

O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!

SERGEANT

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 SERGEANT attended.)

Who comes here?

(Enter ROSS.)

MALCOLM

The worthy Thane\* of Ross.

ROSS

God save the King.

DUNCAN

Whence camest thou, worthy Thane?

*unseamed him from the nave to the chops* - sliced him from the navel to the chin,

*Thane* - a person of rank who holds land of the king

ROSS

From Fife, great King, where the Norwegian banners flout the sky and fan our people cold.  
Norway himself, assisted by that most disloyal traitor the Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict  
till Macbeth confronted him, point against point, curbing his lavish spirit.  
And to conclude, the victory fell on us.

DUNCAN

Great happiness!  
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.

*(Exeunt.)*

### Act 1, Scene 3 The heath near Forres

(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, and munched, and munched, and munched.

'Give me,' quoth I.

'Aroint thee,\* witch!' the rump-fed ronyon\* cries.

Her husband's to Aleppo\* gone, master of the 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 art kind.

THIRD WITCH

And I another.

FIRST WITCH

I myself have all the other.

Look what I have.

SECOND WITCH

Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH

Here I have a pilot's\* thumb, wrecked as homeward he did come.

(A drum.)

THIRD WITCH

A drum, a drum! Macbeth doth come.

(Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.)

*Aroint thee* - get thee gone, *rump fed ronyon* - fat-rumped scab, *Aleppo* - city in north-west Syria, *master of the Tiger* - ship's captain on the Tigris river, *pilot* - ship's navigator



MACBETH

So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BANQUO

What are these so withered and so wild in their attire,  
that look not like the inhabitants of the earth, and yet are on it?  
Live you?  
Are you aught\* that man may question?

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?  
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!

*aught* - anything, *rapt* - spellbound, *get* - be the father of

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 stands not within the prospect of belief, no more than to be Cawdor.

Say from whence you owe this strange intelligence,

or why upon this blasted heath you stop our way with such prophetic greeting?

Speak, I charge you!

*(WITCHES vanish.)*

BANQUO

Whither are they vanished?

MACBETH

Into the air.

Would they had stayed.

BANQUO

Were such things here as we do speak about?

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?

*(Enter ROSS and ANGUS.)*

ROSS

The King hath happily received, Macbeth, the news of thy success.

We are sent to give thee from our royal master thanks,

and, for an earnest of a greater honor, he bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor.

BANQUO

What, can the devil speak true?

*Sinel* - Macbeth's father

MACBETH

The Thane of Cawdor lives. Why do you dress me in borrowed robes?

ANGUS

Who was the Thane lives yet, but treasons capital, confessed and proved, have overthrown him.

MACBETH

*(Aside.)* Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor. The greatest is behind.\*

*(To ROSS and ANGUS.)* Thanks for your pains.

*(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.

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 us in deepest consequence.

Cousins, a word, I pray you.

MACBETH

*(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?

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

Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

MACBETH

Give me your favor. My dull brain was wrought with things forgotten. Let us toward the King.

*(To Banquo.)* Think upon what hath chanced, and at more time, let us speak our free hearts each to other.

BANQUO

Very gladly.

MACBETH

Till then, enough. Come, friends.

*(Exeunt.)*

*the greatest is behind* - 2/3 of the prophesy is now true, *That trusted home* - the prophecy fulfilled,  
*fantastical* - imaginary, *function...surmise* - normal powers are stopped by imagining the future

**Act 1, Scene 4 Forres - the palace**

*(Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX and attendants.)*

DUNCAN

Is execution done on Cawdor?

MALCOLM

My liege, 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.

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.)*

O worthiest cousin.

The sin of my ingratitude even now was heavy on me. More is thy due than more than all can pay.

MACBETH

The service and the loyalty I owe, in doing it, pays itself.

DUNCAN

Welcome hither.

I have begun to plant thee, and will labor to make thee full of growing.

Noble Banquo, that hast no less deserved, let me enfold thee and hold thee to my heart.

BANQUO

There if I grow, the harvest is your own.

DUNCAN

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 invest him only, but signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine on all deservers.  
From hence to Inverness, and bind us further to you.

MACBETH

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.

*there's no art...face* - there's no way to know a man's thoughts by looking at his face

MACBETH

*(Aside.)* The Prince of Cumberland!

That is a step on which I must fall down, or else overleap, for in my way it lies.  
Stars, hide your fires; let not light see my black and deep desires.

*(Exit MACBETH.)*

DUNCAN

Let's after him, whose care is gone before to bid us welcome.  
It is a peerless kinsman.

*(Exeunt.)*

## Act 1, Scene 5 Inverness - Macbeth's castle

(LADY MACBETH, reading a letter.)

LADY MACBETH

'They met me in the day of success; and I have learned 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. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives\* from the King, who all hailed me Thane of Cawdor, by which title these weird sisters saluted me before, and referred me to the coming on of time,\* with 'Hail, King that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst 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 of the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great, art not without ambition, but without the illness\* should attend it. 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.\*

(Enter a MESSENGER.)

What is your tidings?

MESSENGER

The King comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH

Thou art mad to say it!

Is not thy master with him, who, were it so, would have informed for preparation?

MESSENGER

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 MESSENGER)

The raven himself is hoarse that croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan under my battlements.  
Come, you spirits that tend on mortal\* thoughts, unsex me here,  
and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty.  
Come to my woman's breasts, and take my milk for gall,\* you murdering ministers.

*missives* - messengers, *coming on of time* - future,

*illness* - ruthlessness, *golden round* - crown, *mortal* - deadly,

*take my milk for gall* - exchange my breast milk with gall (green fluid secreted by the liver)

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!"

*(Enter MACBETH.)*

Great Glamis! Worthy Cawdor! Greater than both, by the all hail hereafter!

MACBETH

My dearest love. 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.

Bear welcome in your eye, your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it.

He that's coming must be provided for; and you shall put this night's great business into my dispatch.

MACBETH

We will speak further.

LADY MACBETH

Only look up clear. To alter favor\* ever is to fear.\*

Leave all the rest to me.

*(Exeunt.)*

*pall thee* - shroud thyself, *alter favor* - change countenance, *fear* - incur risk

**Act 1, Scene 6      Before Macbeth's castle**

*(Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, ANGUS and attendants.)*

DUNCAN

This castle hath a pleasant seat.\*

The air nimbly and sweetly recommends itself unto our gentle senses.

BANQUO

The temple-haunting martlet\* hath made his pendent bed\* and procreant\* cradle here.

Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed the air is delicate.

*(Enter LADY MACBETH.)*

DUNCAN

See, see, our honored hostess.

The love that follows us sometimes is trouble, which still we thank as love.

LADY MACBETH

All our service in every point twice done and then done double  
were poor and single business to compare with those honors deep and broad  
wherewith your majesty loads our house.

DUNCAN

Where's the Thane of Cawdor?

We coursed\* him at the heels, but he rides well,

and his great love, sharp as his spur, hath helped him to his home before us.

Fair and noble hostess, we are your guest tonight.

LADY MACBETH

Your servants ever.

DUNCAN

Give me your hand. Conduct me to mine host.

We love him highly, and shall continue our graces towards him.

*(Exeunt.)*

*seat* - site, *martlet* - martin; swallow, *pendent bed* - overhanging nest,  
*procreant* - breeding, *coursed* - chased



**Act 1, Scene 7 Macbeth's castle***(MACBETH.)*

MACBETH

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly.  
 If the assassination could catch with his surcease\* success,  
 that but this blow might be the be-all and the end-all here, we'd risk 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 the 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 been so clear in his great office,  
 that his virtues will plead like angels, trumpet tongued, against the deep damnation of his taking-off.

*(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.

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?

MACBETH

Prithee, peace!

I dare do all that may become a man; who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH

What beast was it, then, that made you break this enterprise to me?  
 When you durst\* do it, then you were a man.  
 I have given suck, and know how tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:

*surcease* - death, *still* - always, *chalice* - cup, *account* - judge, *durst* - dared

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

We fail.

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,\* and we'll not fail.

When Duncan is asleep (whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey soundly invite him) his two chamberlains will I with drugged wine so convince that memory shall be a fume.

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 it?

LADY MACBETH

Who dares receive it other?

MACBETH

I am settled.

Away, and mock the time with fairest show;

false face must hide what the false heart doth know.

*(Exeunt.)*

*sticking place* - notch that holds the taut string on a crossbow, *spongy* - drunk,  
*quell* - killing, *undaunted mettle* - fearless spirit

## Act 2, Scene 1 Courtyard of Macbeth's castle

*(Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE, with a torch.)*

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 it, 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO  
Hold, take my sword.  
There's husbandry\* in heaven; their candles are all out.  
A heavy summons\* lies like lead upon me, and yet I would not sleep.

*(Enter MACBETH and SEYTON, with a torch.)*

Give me my sword. Who's there?

MACBETH  
A friend.

BANQUO  
What sir, not yet at rest?  
The King's a-bed, and shut up in measureless content. 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, we would spend it in some words upon that business.

BANQUO  
At your kindest 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 allegiance clear, I shall be counseled.

*husbandry* - economy, *summons* - desire to sleep, *cleave... 'tis* - follow my advice when the time comes

MACBETH

Good repose the while.

BANQUO

Thanks, sir. The like to you.

*(Exit BANQUO and FLEANCE.)*

MACBETH

Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready, she strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

*(Exit SEYTON.)*

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-oppressed\* brain?  
I see thee yet, in form as palpable\* as this which now I draw.  
Thou marshallst\* me the way that I was going, and such an instrument I was to use.  
Mine eyes are made the fools of the other senses, or else worth all the rest.  
I see thee still, and on thy blade 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 over the one half-world\* nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse the curtained sleep.  
Withered murder, with his stealthy pace 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 whereabouts.

*(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.)*

*heat-oppressed* - fevered, *palpable* - tangible, *marshallst* - leads me towards,  
*gouts* - drops, *informs thus* - gives a false impression,  
*half-world* - the half of the world in darkness, *prate* - speak, *knell* - sound of a bell

**Act 2, Scene 2    Courtyard of Macbeth's castle**

*(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.

He is about it.

The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms\* do mock their charge\* with snores.

MACBETH

*(Within.)* Who's there? What, ho!

LADY MACBETH

Alack, I am afraid they have awaked, and 'tis not done.

The attempt and not the deed confounds us.

I laid their daggers ready; he could not miss them.

Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had done it.

*(Enter MACBETH.)*

My husband.

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

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

MACBETH

When?

LADY MACBETH

Now.

MACBETH

As I descended?

LADY MACBETH

Ay.

MACBETH

Hark!

Who lies in the second chamber?

*surfeited grooms* - servants to the King who have drunk too much, *charge* - duty

LADY MACBETH

Donalbain.

MACBETH

*(Looking on his hands.)* This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH

A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH

There's one did laugh in his 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.\*  
Listening 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?'  
I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen' stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH

These deeds must not be thought after these ways; it will make us mad.

MACBETH

Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more! Macbeth does murder sleep'—  
the innocent sleep, sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve 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.

*hangman's hands* - dismembering the hanged would give executioners very bloody hands,  
*balm* - something that soothes

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 it again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH

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.

*(Exit LADY MACBETH.)*

*(Knocking without.)*

MACBETH

Whence is that knocking?

How is it with me, when every noise appalls 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 the multitudinous seas incarnadine, making the green one, red.\*

*(Re enter LADY MACBETH.)*

LADY MACBETH

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

*(Knocking.)*

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.

*(Knocking.)*

Hark! More knocking.

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us, and show us to be watchers.

Be not lost so poorly in your thoughts.

MACBETH

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

*(Knocking.)*

Wake Duncan with thy knocking. I would thou couldst.

*(Exeunt.)*

*gild* - paint, *multitudinous...red* - my hands will turn the green seas red

### Act 2, Scene 3 Courtyard of Macbeth's castle

*(Knocking without. Enter a PORTER.)*

PORTER

Here's a knocking indeed!

If a man were porter of hell-gate, he would grow old turning the key.

*(Knocking.)*

Knock, knock, knock. Who's there, in the name of Beelzebub?\*

Here's a farmer that hanged himself on the expectation of plenty.\* Come in! Here you'll sweat for it.

*(Knocking.)*

Knock, knock. Who's there?

Faith, here's an English tailor come hither, for stealing\* out of a French hose.\*

Come in, tailor. Here you may roast your goose.

*(Knocking.)*

Knock, knock. Never quiet! What are you?

But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further.

Anon, anon! I pray you.

*(Opens the gate.)*

I pray you remember the porter.

*(Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX.)*

MACDUFF

Was it so late, friend, when 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:

**Beelzebub** - Satan, **the expectation of plenty** - the farmer got a large crop but the 'plenty' caused prices to be low, **stealing** - stealing material, **French hose** - close fitting breeches, **second cock** - second cock-crow (3 a.m.)



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.

MACDUFF

Is thy master stirring?

*(Enter MACBETH.)*

Our knocking has awaked him. 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

I'll make so bold to call.

*(Exit MACDUFF.)*

LENNOX

Goes the King hence today?

MACBETH

He did appoint so.

LENNOX

The night has been unruly.

*physics pain* - cures trouble

Where we lay, our chimneys were blown down;  
and lamentings heard in the air; strange screams of death.  
Some say, the earth was feverous and did shake.

MACBETH  
'Twas a rough night.

LENNOX  
My young remembrance cannot parallel a fellow to it.

*(Re enter MACDUFF.)*

MACDUFF  
O horror, horror, horror!  
Tongue nor heart cannot conceive nor name thee!

MACBETH  
What's the matter?

MACDUFF  
Confusion now hath made his masterpiece.  
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke open the Lord's anointed temple,  
and stole thence the life of the building.

MACBETH  
What is it you say? The life?

LENNOX  
Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF  
Approach the chamber. Do not bid me speak. See, and then speak 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!  
Ring the bell!

*(Bell rings.)*

*(Enter LADY MACBETH.)*

LADY MACBETH  
What's the business, that such a hideous trumpet calls to parley\* the sleepers of the house?  
Speak, speak!

*parley* - talk with

MACDUFF

O gentle lady, tis not for you to hear what I can speak.

*(Enter BANQUO.)*

O Banquo, Banquo, our royal master 's murdered!

LADY MACBETH

Woe, alas! What, in our house?

BANQUO

Too cruel anywhere.

Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself and say it is not so.

*(Re enter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS.)*

MACBETH

Had I but died an hour before this chance, I had lived a blessed time;  
for from this instant there's nothing serious in mortality.

*(Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.)*

DONALBAIN

What is amiss?

MACBETH

You are, and do not know it.

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

O, by whom?

LENNOX

Those of his chamber, as it seemed, had done it.

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

O, yet I do repent me of my fury that I did kill them.

MACDUFF

Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH

Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious, loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man!  
Here lay Duncan, his silver skin laced with his golden blood;  
there, the murderers, steeped in the colors of their trade.  
Who could refrain that had a heart to love, and in that heart courage to make his love known?

LADY MACBETH

Help me hence. (*LADY MACBETH faints.*)

BANQUO

Look to the lady.

(*LADY MACBETH is carried out.*)

Let us meet, and question this most bloody piece of work, to know it further.  
Fears and scruples\* shake us.  
In the great hand of God I stand, and fight against treasonous malice.

MACDUFF

And so do I.

ALL

So all.

MACBETH

Let's briefly put on manly readiness,\* and meet in the hall together.

ALL

Well contented.

(*Exeunt all but MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*)

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.  
I'll to England. What will you do?

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.  
Farewell.

(*Exeunt in different directions.*)

*scruples* - doubts, *manly readiness* - clothes; warlike equipment or temper,  
*this murderous...lighted* - since the purpose of Duncan's assassination is the crown,  
the lives of Malcolm and Donalbain are still in danger

## Act 2, Scene 4 Outside Macbeth's castle

*(Enter ROSS and an OLD MAN.)*

OLD MAN

Threescore and ten\* I can remember well, but this sore night hath trifled former knowings.

ROSS

Ah, good father, thou seest the heavens, troubled with man's acts, threaten his bloody stage.

OLD MAN

On Tuesday last, a falcon, towering in her pride of place, was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.

ROSS

And Duncan's horses, beauteous and swift, the minions\* of their race,  
turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, as they would make war with mankind.

OLD MAN

'Tis said they ate each other.

ROSS

They did so, to the amazement of mine eyes that looked upon it.  
Here comes the good Macduff.

*(Enter MACDUFF.)*

How goes the world, sir, now?

MACDUFF

Why, see you not?

ROSS

Is it known who did this more than bloody deed?

MACDUFF

Those that Macbeth hath slain.

ROSS

Alas, the day. What good could they pretend?

MACDUFF

They were suborned.\*

Malcolm and Donalbain, the King's two sons, are stolen away and fled,  
which puts upon them suspicion of the deed.

*Threescore and ten* - 70 years, *minions* - darlings, *suborned* - induced

ROSS

Against nature still.

Then 'tis most like the sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

MACDUFF

He is already named, and gone to Scone\* to be invested.\*

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.

*(Exit MACDUFF.)*

ROSS

Farewell, father.

OLD MAN

God's benison\* go with you.

*(Exeunt.)*

*Scone* - Scottish Kings were crowned on the Stone of Destiny, found at the ancient royal city of Scone,  
*invested* - crowned, *Fife* - Macduff's castle, *benison* - blessing

## Act 3, Scene 1 Forres - the palace

(*BANQUO.*)

BANQUO

Thou hast it now—King, Cawdor, Glamis, all, as the weird women promised;  
and I fear thou play'dst most foully for it.

Yet it was said it should not stand in thy posterity,\*

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, and set me up in hope?

But hush! No more.

(*Enter MACBETH as King, LADY MACBETH, 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.

MACBETH

Tonight we hold a solemn supper, sir, and I'll request your presence.

BANQUO

Let your highness command upon me.

MACBETH

Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO

Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH

We should have else desired your good advice in this day's council; but we'll take tomorrow.

Is it far you ride?

BANQUO

As far, my lord, as will fill up the time betwixt this and supper.

MACBETH

Fail not our feast.

BANQUO

My lord, I will not.

*posterity* - future generations, *verities* - truths

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. Hie you to horse.  
Goes Fleance with you?

BANQUO

Ay, my good lord. Our time does call upon us.

MACBETH

I wish your horses swift and sure of foot. Farewell.

*(Exit BANQUO.)*

Let every man be master of his time till seven at night.  
To make society the sweeter, we will keep ourself till supper-time, alone.  
God be with you.

*(Exeunt all but MACBETH and SEYTON.)*

Sirrah, attend those men our pleasure?

SEYTON

They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

MACBETH

Bring them before us.

*(Exit SEYTON.)*

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 Mark Antony's was by Caesar.\*  
He chid the sisters when first they put the name of king upon me, and bade them speak to him.  
Then prophet like they hailed him father to a line of kings.  
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown, and put a barren sceptre in my grip,  
thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand, no son of mine succeeding.  
If it be so, for Banquo's issue\* have I filed\* my mind; for them the gracious Duncan have I murdered;  
put rancours in the vessel of my peace only for them,  
and mine eternal jewel\* given to the common enemy of man\* to make them kings,  
the seed of Banquo kings!  
Rather than so, come fate into the list, and I'll be the champion to the uttermost.\*

*parricide* - murdering of a parent, *Genius...Ceasar* - Ceasar's charisma humbled Antony's gifts,  
as the destiny of Banquo's children humbles Macbeth's throne, *issue* - children, *filed* - defiled,  
*jewel* - soul, *enemy of man* - the devil, *come fate...uttermost* - come to the field of battle, Fate, and I will defeat you



Who's there?

*(Re enter SEYTON, with TWO MURDERERS.)*

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

*(Exit SEYTON.)*

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.

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 gosselled to pray for this good man and for his issue,  
whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave and beggared yours for ever?

FIRST MURDERER

We are men, my liege.

MACBETH

Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men.

Now, if you have a station in that file, not in the worst rank of manhood, say it;  
and I will put that business in your bosoms, whose execution takes your enemy off,  
and grapples\* you to the heart and love of us.

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, that I would set\* my life on any chance.

MACBETH

Both of you know Banquo was your enemy.

*grapples* - binds, *incensed* - maddened, *set* - risk

BOTH MURDERERS

True, my lord.

MACBETH

So is he mine.

And though I could with barefaced power sweep him from my sight,  
yet I must not, for certain friends that are both his and mine.

And thence it is, that I to your assistance do make love.

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,  
for it must be done tonight, and something from\* the palace.

Always think that I require a clearness.

And with him Fleance his son, that keeps him company, whose absence is no less material to me,  
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.

*(Exit MURDERERS.)*

It is concluded.

Banquo, thy soul's flight, if it find heaven, must find it out to night.

*(Exit MACBETH.)*

*from* - away from

## Act 3, Scene 2 The palace

(Enter LADY MACBETH and SEYTON.)

LADY MACBETH

Is Banquo gone from court?

SEYTON

Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.

LADY MACBETH

Say to the King, I would attend his leisure for a few words.

SEYTON

Madam, I will.

(Exit SEYTON.)

LADY MACBETH

Naught's had,\* all's spent, when our desire is got without content.  
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

(Enter MACBETH.)

How now, my lord. Why do you keep alone?

Things without all remedy should be without regard. What's done is done.

MACBETH

We have scorched\* the snake, not killed it. She'll heal and be herself.  
But let the frame of things disjoint,\* 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.

LADY MACBETH

Gentle my lord, sleek\* over your rugged looks; be bright and jovial among your guests tonight.

MACBETH

So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you.

LADY MACBETH

Let your remembrance apply to Banquo. Present him eminence\* both with eye and tongue.

*naught's had* - nothing's gained, *scorched* - slashed it with a knife,  
*frame of things disjoint* - universe collapse, *foreign levy* - foreign armies,  
*sleek* - smooth, *present him eminence* - i.e. assign to him the highest rank

MACBETH

Unsafe the while, that we must cleanse our honors in these flattering streams\*  
and make our faces masks to our hearts, disguising what they are.

LADY MACBETH

You must leave this.

MACBETH

O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!  
Thou knowest that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.

LADY MACBETH

But in them nature's copy's not eternal.

MACBETH

There's comfort yet; they are assailable.  
Ere the bat hath flown his cloistered flight, 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 makes wing to the rooky wood.  
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse, while night's black agents to their preys do rouse.\*  
Thou marvellest at my words, but hold thee still; things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.  
So prithee go with me.

*(Exeunt.)*

*cleanse...streams* - keep our honor clean by flattering Banquo,  
*seeling* - sewing the eyelids of a falcon together with very fine thread to make him more obedient,  
*scarf up* - put a scarf over, *great bond* - Banquo's life, *rouse* - attack

**Act 3, Scene 3    A park near the palace**

*(Enter TWO MURDERERS and SEYTON.)*

FIRST MURDERER

But who did bid thee join with us?

SEYTON

Macbeth.

SECOND MURDERER

Then stand with us. The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.

SEYTON

Hark! I hear horses.

BANQUO

Give us a light there!

SECOND MURDERER

'Tis he.

*(Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE, with a torch)*

FIRST MURDERER

Stand to it.

BANQUO

It will be rain tonight.

FIRST MURDERER

Let it come down!

*(They set upon BANQUO.)*

BANQUO

O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly! Thou mayest revenge.

O slave!

*(BANQUO dies. FLEANCE escapes.)*

SEYTON

Who did strike out the light?

FIRST MURDERER

Wast not that the plan?

SEYTON

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.)*

## Act 3, Scene 4    A Hall in the palace

*(A banquet - 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.

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.

*(FIRST MURDERER appears at the door.)*

MACBETH

Be large in mirth;\* anon we'll drink a measure the table round.

*(Approaching the door.)*

There's blood on thy face.

FIRST MURDERER

'Tis Banquo's then.

MACBETH

Better thee without than he within. Is he dispatched?

FIRST MURDERER

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

MACBETH

Thou art the best of the cut-throats. Yet he's good that did the like for Fleance.

FIRST MURDERER

Most royal sir, Fleance is escaped.

MACBETH

Then comes my fit again. I had else been perfect. Now I am 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 trenched gashes on his head.

*degrees* - ranks, *keeps her state* - remains in her chair of state, *mirth* - fun, *bides* - resides

MACBETH

Thanks for that.

Get thee gone. Tomorrow we'll speak again.

*(Exit FIRST MURDERER.)*

LADY MACBETH

My royal lord, you do not give the cheer.

MACBETH

Sweet remembrancer.

Now, good digestion wait on appetite, and health on both.

LENNOX

May it please your highness sit?

*(The GHOST OF BANQUO enters and sits in MACBETH'S place.)\**

MACBETH

Here had we now our country's honor roofed were the graced person of our Banquo present.

ROSS

His absence, sir, lays blame upon his promise.

Please it your highness to grace us with your royal company?

MACBETH

The table's full.

LENNOX

Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH

Where?

LENNOX

Here, my good lord. What is it that moves your highness?

MACBETH

Which of you have done this?

LORDS

What, my good lord?

MACBETH

Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake thy gory locks\* at me.

*Ghost of Banquo* - the ghost's entrances and exits are at the director's discretion, *gory locks* - bloody hair



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, you shall offend him and extend his passion. Feed, and regard him not. (*Aside to Macbeth.*) Are you a man?

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. 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!

(*GHOST OF BANQUO vanishes.*)

LADY MACBETH

What, quite unmanned in folly?

MACBETH

If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH

Fie, for shame!

MACBETH

The times have 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:  
I have a strange infirmity,\* which is nothing to those that know me.  
Come, love and health to all!  
I'll sit down. Give me some wine, fill full.

*crowns* - heads, *lack* - want; need, *infirmity* - illness

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

LORDS

Our duties, and the pledge.

*(Re enter GHOST OF BANQUO.)*

MACBETH

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

What man dare, I dare.  
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear, the armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;  
take any shape but that, and my firm nerves shall never tremble.  
Hence, horrible shadow! Unreal mockery, hence!

*(GHOST OF BANQUO vanishes.)*

Why, so; being gone, I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

LADY MACBETH

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

MACBETH

Can such things be, and overcome us like a summer's cloud, without our special wonder?  
You make me strange\* 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?

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.

*Avaunt* - Go away, *make me strange* - other than my normal role of brave man, *blanched* - whitened

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.  
Prophecies have brought forth the most secret man of blood.  
What is the night?

LADY MACBETH

Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

MACBETH

How sayest thou, that Macduff denies his person at our great bidding?\*

LADY MACBETH

Did you send to 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 to the weird sisters. More shall they speak.  
For now I am bent to know, by the worst means, the worst.  
For mine own good, all causes shall give way.  
I am in blood stepped in so far that, should I wade no more, returning were as tedious as go o'er.  
We are but young in deed.

LADY MACBETH

You lack the season\* of all natures, sleep.

MACBETH

Come, we'll to sleep.

*(Exeunt.)*

*Macduff...bidding* - refused to come to our banquet, *fee'd* - paid, *season* - preservative

## Act 3, Scene 5 The heath

*(The THREE WITCHES meeting HECATE.)*

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, was never called to bear my part?

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 in the morning.

Thither he will come to know his destiny.

He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear his hopes above wisdom, grace, and fear:  
and you all know, pride is mortals' chiefest enemy.

Hark! I am called.

*(Exit HECATE.)*

FIRST WITCH

Come, let's make haste: she'll soon be back again.

*(Exeunt.)*

*Hecate* - Goddess of the dead, of sorcery, *beldams* - old crones; madwomen, *Acheron* - a river of Hades

## Act 3, Scene 6      Forres - the palace

(LENNOX and another LORD.)

LENNOX

My former speeches have but hit your thoughts, which can interpret further.  
 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 it 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? Damned 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 it.  
 So that I say he has borne all things well.  
 And I do think that had he Duncan's sons under his key (as, it please heaven, he shall not)  
 they should find what 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.  
 But peace.  
 For from broad words\* and 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, from whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,\* lives in the English court.  
 Thither Macduff is gone to pray the holy king.\*  
 This report hath so exasperate Macbeth that he prepares for some attempt of war.

LENNOX

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 under a hand accursed.

LORD

I'll send my prayers with him.

(*Exeunt.*)

*broad words* - plain speaking, *due of birth* - crown,  
*pray the holy king* - ask King Edward of England for help, *ere* - before

**Act 4, Scene 1    The heath - a cauldron**

(*The THREE WITCHES.*)

FIRST WITCH

Thrice the brinded\* cat hath mewed.

SECOND WITCH

Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.

THIRD WITCH

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 in the charmed pot.

ALL

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

Double, double, toil and trouble, fire burn and cauldron bubble.

THIRD WITCH

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf, liver of blaspheming Jew,  
nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips, gall of goat, and slips of yew,\*  
finger of birth strangled babe ditch-delivered by a drab,\* make the gruel thick and slab.

ALL

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.

(*Enter HECATE.*)

HECATE

O well done! I commend your pains,\* and every one shall share in the gains.

*brinded* - streaked or spotted; tawny, *Harpier* - a spirit, *fenny* - swamp, *blind worm* - a supposedly venomous lizard, *yew* - Yew, which grows freely in churchyards, was regarded as poisonous by the ancients, *drab* - whore, *pains* - efforts

*(HECATE retires.)*

SECOND WITCH

By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes.

*(Enter MACBETH.)*

MACBETH

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags. What is it you do?

ALL

A deed without a name.

MACBETH

I conjure\* you, by that which you profess, answer me to what I ask you.

FIRST WITCH

Speak.

SECOND WITCH

Demand.

THIRD WITCH

We'll answer.

FIRST WITCH

Say, if thou would rather hear it from our mouths, or from our masters?

MACBETH

Call them. Let me see them.

ALL

Come, high or low, thyself and office\* deftly show.

*(FIRST APPARITION: an Armed Head.)*

MACBETH

Tell me, thou unknown power—

FIRST WITCH

He knows thy thought: hear his speech, but say thou naught.

FIRST APPARITION

Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth, beware Macduff!  
Beware the Thane of Fife! Dismiss me. Enough.

*conjure* - summon, *office* - function

*(FIRST APPARITION descends.)*

MACBETH

Whatever 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.

*(SECOND APPARITION: A bloody child.)*

SECOND APPARITION

Be bloody, bold and resolute!  
Laugh to scorn the power of man, for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth.

*(SECOND APPARITION descends.)*

MACBETH

Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?  
But yet thou shalt not live that I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies.

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

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 it.

THIRD APPARITION

Be lion-mettled,\* proud, and take no care where conspirers are.  
Macbeth shall never vanquished be  
until great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill shall come against him.

*(THIRD APPARITION descends.)*

MACBETH

That will never be. Who can impress\* the forest, bid the tree unfix his earth-bound root?  
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?

ALL

Seek to know no more.

MACBETH

I will be satisfied. Deny me this, and an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.

*harped* - hit the tune of, *lion mettled* - lion spirited, *impress* - pressure, *issue* - offspring



FIRST WITCH

Show!

SECOND WITCH

Show!

THIRD WITCH

Show!

*(A show of eight kings, the last, the GHOST OF BANQUO, with a mirror in his hand.)*

MACBETH

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo. Down!

Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls. 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? What, will the line stretch out to the 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. Horrible sight!

Now I see 'tis true; for the blood-matted Banquo smiles upon me and points at them for his.

*(APPARITIONS and WITCHES vanish.)*

Where are they? Gone?

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 it came by?

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  
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 the edge of the 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.

*(Exeunt.)*

*firstlings...hand* - I shall act on first impulse

**Act 4, Scene 2 Fife - Macduff's castle**

*(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. All is the fear and nothing is the love.

ROSS

My dearest coz, I pray you school yourself.

But for your husband, he is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows the fits of the season.

I take my leave of you.

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.

I take my leave at once.

*(Exit ROSS.)*

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.

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.

SON

Was my father a traitor, mother?

LADY MACDUFF

Ay, that he was.

SON

What is a traitor?

LADY MACDUFF

Why, one that swears and lies.

SON

And be all traitors that do so?

LADY MACDUFF

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

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 would 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!

*(Enter SEYTON and MURDERERS.)*

What are these faces?

SEYTON

Where is your husband?

LADY MACDUFF

I hope in no place so unsanctified where such as thou mayest find him.

SEYTON

He's a traitor.

SON

Thou liest, thou shag haired villain!

SEYTON

What, you egg?

*(SEYTON stabs SON.)*

Young fry of treachery!

SON

He has killed me, mother. Run away, I pray you!

*(SON dies and the MURDERERS stab LADY MACDUFF.)*

**Act 4, Scene 3    England***(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, bestride our down-fallen 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.

MALCOLM

This tyrant, whose name blisters our tongues, was once thought honest; you have loved him well; he hath not touched you yet.

MACDUFF

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM

But Macbeth is.

Why in that rawness left you wife and child, those strong knots of love, without leave taking?

I pray you, let not my suspicions be your dishonors, but mine own safeties.

You may be rightly just whatever I shall think.

MACDUFF

Lord, I would not be the villain that thou think'st for the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp, and the rich East to boot.

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,

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 all the particulars\* of vice so grafted\*

that, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth will seem as pure as snow.

MACDUFF

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

*particulars* - varieties, *grafted* - implanted

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. Better Macbeth than such a 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.

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.

MACDUFF

This avarice sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root than summer-seeming lust. Yet do not fear. Scotland hath riches to fill up your will of your mere own. All these are bearable, with other graces weighed.

MALCOLM

But I have none, as justice, perseverance, mercy, devotion, patience, courage, fortitude, I have no relish of them, but abound in each several\* crime, acting it many ways. Had I power, I should pour the sweet milk of concord into hell, 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? No, not to live!  
Thy royal father was a most sainted King; the Queen that bore thee, oftener upon her knees\* than on her feet. Fare thee well. These evils thou repeatest upon thyself have banished me from Scotland. O my breast, thy hope ends here.

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.

*avaricious* - greedy, *cistern* - large tank for storing water, *intemperance* - overindulgence, in this case with sex, *convey* - obtain by stealth, *stanchless avarice* - greed that is impossible to control, *several* - particular, *her knees* - i.e. praying

Devilish Macbeth by many of these trains\* hath sought to win me into his power,  
 and modest wisdom plucks me from over credulous haste.  
 But God above deal between thee and me!  
 For even now I unspeak mine own detraction,  
 here abjure the taints and blames I laid upon myself, for strangers to my nature.  
 I am yet unknown to woman, never was forsworn, scarcely have coveted\* what was mine own,  
 at no time broke my faith, and delight no less in truth than life.  
 My first false speaking was this upon myself.  
 What I am truly, is thine and my poor country's to command;  
 which before thy approach, with ten thousand warlike men, was setting forth.  
 Why are you silent?

MACDUFF

Such welcome and unwelcome things at once, is hard to reconcile.

*(Enter ROSS.)*

MACDUFF

See who comes here?

MALCOLM

My countryman; but yet I know him not.

MACDUFF

My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

MALCOLM

I know him now.

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.  
 The dead man's knell is there scarce asked for who,  
 and good men's lives expire before the flowers in their caps.

MACDUFF

O, too true.

How does my wife?

ROSS

Why, well.

*trains* - plots, *coveted* - desired ownership of



MACDUFF  
And all my children?

ROSS  
Well too.

MACDUFF  
The tyrant has not battered at their peace?

ROSS  
No, they were well at peace when I did leave them.

MACDUFF  
Be not niggard of your speech. How goes it?

ROSS  
When I came hither to transport the tidings, there ran a rumor of many worthy fellows that were out.\*  
Now is the time of help. Your eye in Scotland would create soldiers, make our women fight.

MALCOLM  
Be it their comfort we are coming thither.  
Gracious England hath lent us good Siward and ten thousand men.

ROSS  
Would I could answer 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 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  
Your castle is surprised, your wife and babes savagely slaughtered.

MALCOLM  
Merciful heaven!

MACDUFF  
My children too?

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

*out* - up in arms, *latch* - catch hold of

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.  
Heaven rest them now.

MALCOLM

Be this the whetstone\* of your sword. Let grief convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

MACDUFF

O, I could play the woman with mine eyes and braggart with my tongue.  
But, gentle heavens, front to front bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself.  
Within my sword's length set him. If he escape, 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.\*

*(Exeunt.)*

*He* - Macbeth, *dam* - mother, *whetstone* - sharpening stone,  
*put on their instruments* - arm themselves; urge us to act

## Act 5, Scene 1    Dinsinane - a room in the castle

*(A DOCTOR and a WAITING GENTLEWOMAN.)\**

DOCTOR

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 it, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

DOCTOR

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 candle.)*

Lo you, here she comes. This is her very guise,\* and, upon my life, fast asleep.

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.

**WAITING GENTLEWOMAN** - likely a noblewoman and not just a servant, *meet* - fitting, *guise* - habit

LADY MACBETH

Yet here's a spot.

DOCTOR

She speaks.

LADY MACBETH

Out, damned spot! Out, I say! One–two–why, then, 'tis time to do it. Hell is murky!

Fie, my lord, fie, a soldier and afeard?

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 never be clean?

No more of that, my lord, no more of that! You mar all with this starting.

DOCTOR

You have known what you should not.

GENTLEWOMAN

She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that.

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.

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 his grave.

DOCTOR

Even so?

LADY MACBETH

To bed, to bed!

There's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand.

What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed.

*(Exit LADY MACBETH.)*

DOCTOR

Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN

Directly.

DOCTOR

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.

GENTLEWOMAN

Good night, good doctor.

*(Exeunt.)*

## Act 5, Scene 2 The country near Dunsinane

*(Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX and soldiers.)*

MENTEITH

The English power is near, led on by Malcolm, his uncle Siward and the good Macduff.  
Revenues burn in them.

ANGUS

Near Birnam Wood shall we well meet them.

CAITHNESS

Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

LENNOX

For certain, sir, he is not. I have a list of all the gentry.

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.

ANGUS

Now does he feel his secret murders sticking on his hands.  
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.

CAITHNESS

Well, march we on to give obedience where 'tis truly owed.

LENNOX

Make we our march towards Birnam.

*(Exeunt.)*

### Act 5, Scene 3    Dunsinane - a room in the castle

(*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 ever have power upon thee.'  
 Then fly, false Thanes, and mingle with the English epicures.\*  
 The mind I sway by and the heart I bear shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

(*Enter a SERVANT.*)

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

SERVANT

There is ten thousand—

MACBETH

Geese, villain?

SERVANT

Soldiers, sir.

MACBETH

Go prick thy face and over red thy fear thou lily-livered boy.\*  
 Death of thy soul! What soldiers, whey-face?\*

SERVANT

The English force, so please you.

MACBETH

Take thy face hence.

(*Exit SERVANT.*)

Seyton!—I am sick at heart, when I behold—Seyton, I say!

I have lived long enough. My way of life is fallen into the sear,\* the yellow leaf,  
 and that which should accompany old age, as honor, love, obedience, troops of friends, I must not look to have.  
 Seyton!

(*Enter SEYTON.*)

*consequences* - sequence of events, *epicures* - those fond of sensual pleasure (versus the austere Scots),  
*prick...boy* - color your white, fearful face with your red blood, *whey* - thin milk, *sear* - dried up; unfeeling

SEYTON

What is 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

'Tis not needed yet.

MACBETH

I'll put it on!

Send out more horses, skirt the country round, hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor!

How does your patient, doctor?

DOCTOR

Not so sick, my lord, as she is troubled with thick-coming fancies, that keep her from her rest.

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, 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 it off, I say! Bring it after me.

I will not be afraid of death and bane,\* till Birnam Forest come to Dunsinane.

*(Exit MACBETH.)*

DOCTOR

Were I from Dunsinane away and clear, profit again should hardly draw me here.

*(Exit DOCTOR.)*

*raze* - erase, *physic* - medicine, *bane* - destruction



**Act 5, Scene 4 Country near Birnam Wood**

*(Enter MALCOLM, SIWARD and YOUNG SIWARD, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS and soldiers.)*

MALCOLM

Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand that chambers\* will be safe.

MENTEITH

We doubt it not.

SIWARD

What wood is this before us?

MENTEITH

The Wood of Birnam.

MALCOLM

Let every soldier hew him down a bough and bear it before him:  
thereby shall we shadow the numbers of our host and make discovery\* err in report of us.

SOLDIERS

It shall be done.

*(Exeunt.)*

*chambers* - sleeping chambers, *discovery* - reports by scouts

**Act 5, Scene 5 Dunsinane - within the castle**

*(Enter MACBETH, SEYTON and soldiers.)*

MACBETH

Hang out our banners on the outward walls. 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, we might have met them daresful, beard to beard,  
and beat them backward home.

*(A cry of women within.)*

What is that noise?

SEYTON

It is the cry of women, my good lord.

*(Exit SEYTON.)*

MACBETH

I have almost forgot the taste of fears.  
The time has been, my senses would have cooled to hear a night-shriek.  
I have supped full with horrors.

*(Re enter SEYTON.)*

Wherefore was that cry?

SEYTON

The Queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH

She should have died hereafter: there would have been a time for such a word.  
Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, creeps in this petty pace from day to day  
to the last syllable of recorded time,  
and all our yesterdays have lighted fools the way to dusty death.  
Out, out, brief candle.  
Life's but a walking shadow,  
a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more.  
It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

*(Enter a MESSENGER.)*

Thou comest to use thy tongue: thy story quickly.

MESSENGER

Gracious my lord, I should report that which I say I saw, but know not how to do it.

*ague* - fever

MACBETH  
Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER  
As I did stand my watch upon the hill, I looked toward Birnam, and anon methought the wood began to move.

MACBETH  
Liar and slave!

MESSENGER  
Let me endure your wrath if it be not so: within this three mile may you see it coming. I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH  
If thou speak'st false, upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive, till famine cling thee.  
If thy speech be truth, I care not if thou dost for me as much.  
I begin to doubt the 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 no flying hence nor tarrying here.  
I gin to be aweary of the sun, and wish the estate of the world were now undone.  
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! Come, wrack! At least we'll die with harness\* on our back.

*(Exeunt.)*

**Act 5, Scene 6     Dunsinane - before the castle**

*(Enter MALCOLM, SIWARD, MACDUFF and their army, with boughs.)*

MALCOLM

Your leafy screens throw down, and show like those you are.

You, worthy uncle, shall with my cousin, your right-noble son, lead our first battle.

Worthy Macduff and we shall take upon us what else remains to do.

SIWARD

Fare you well.

Do we but find the tyrant's power tonight, let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

MACDUFF

Make all our trumpets speak, give them all breath,  
those clamorous harbingers\* of blood and death.

*(Exeunt.)*

***harbingers*** - someone or thing that announces or foretells

## Act 5, Scene 7 Another part of the field

*(Alarums. Enter MACBETH.)*

MACBETH

They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly, but bear like 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 wilt be afraid to hear it.

YOUNG SIWARD

No, though thou callest 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.

*(Exit MACBETH.)*

*(Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.)*

MACDUFF

Tyrant, show thy face!

If thou be 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.

Let me find him, fortune, and more I beg not.

*course* - attack (as in a bear baiting), *still* - always, *kerns* - foot soldiers, *staves* - spears

*(Exit MACDUFF.)*

*(Enter MALCOLM and SIWARD.)*

SIWARD

This way, my lord. The castle's gently rendered:\*  
the tyrant's people on both sides do fight, the day is yours, and little is to do.

MALCOLM

We have met with foes that strike beside us.

SIWARD

Enter, sir, the castle.

*(Exeunt.)*

*rendered* - surrendered

## Act 5, Scene 8 Another part of the field

*(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, hell-hound, turn!

MACBETH

Of all men else I have avoided thee. 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.

*(They fight.)*

MACBETH

Thou lovest labor. Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests.  
I bear a charmed 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.\*

MACBETH

Accursed be that tongue that tells me so, 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 yield thee, coward, and live to be the show and gaze of the time.  
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters\* are, painted on a pole, and underwrit '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.  
Lay on, Macduff, and damned be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"

*(MACBETH and MACDUFF exit fighting.)*

*angel* - the devil, *untimely ripped* - Macduff was born by a Caesarean section, *monsters* - freaks

*(Enter MALCOLM, SIWARD, ROSS and the other 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, but like a man he died.

SIWARD

Then he is dead?

ROSS

Ay, and brought off the field.

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.

*(Re 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.

Hail, King of Scotland!

ALL

Hail, King of Scotland!

MALCOLM

We shall not spend a large expense of time before we reckon with your several loves.

My thanes and kinsmen, henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland in such an honor named.

What's more to do, as calling home our exiled friends abroad that fled the snares of watchful tyranny, and what needful else that calls upon us, 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. *(The end.)*

*go off* - die, *hurts before* - wounds on the front of his body