The Tragedy of MACBETH

Characters in the Play

Three Witches, the Weïrd Sisters

DUNCAN, king of Scotland
MALCOLM, his elder son
DONALBAIN, Duncan's younger son

MACBETH, thane of Glamis
LADY MACBETH
SEYTON, attendant to Macbeth
Three Murderers in Macbeth's service
A Doctor
A Gentlewoman

A Porter

A Porter

BANQUO, commander, with Macbeth, of Duncan's army FLEANCE, his son

MACDUFF, a Scottish noble LADY MACDUFF Their son

LENNOX ROSS ANGUS MENTEITH

CAITHNESS

Scottish nobles

SIWARD, commander of the English forces YOUNG SIWARD, Siward's son

A Captain in Duncan's army An Old Man A Doctor at the English court

HECATE

Apparitions: an Armed Head, a Bloody Child, a Crowned Child, and eight nonspeaking kings

Three Messengers, Three Servants, a Lord, a Soldier

Attendants, a Sewer, Servants, Lords, Thanes, Soldiers (all nonspeaking)

The Tragedy of

MACBETH

ACT 1

1.1 Three witches plan to meet Macbeth.

- 3. When the hurly-burly's done: When the turmoil is over; after the battle
 - 5. ere: before
- 9. **Graymalkin:** the name of the first witch's "familiar" (an attendant spirit serving her in the form of a cat)
- 10. **Paddock:** a toad, the familiar of the second witch (See picture, below.)
- 11. **Anon:** immediately (perhaps, the response of the third witch to her familiar)
 - 13. filthy: murky, thick



A toad. (1.1.10; 4.1.6) From Edward Topsell, *The historie of serpents*...(1608).

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.
FIRST WITCH I come, Graymalkin.
SECOND WITCH Paddock calls.

THIRD WITCH Anon.

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

They exit.

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1.2 Duncan, king of Scotland, hears an account of the success in battle of his noblemen Macbeth and Banquo. Duncan orders the execution of the rebel thane of Cawdor and sends messengers to announce to Macbeth that he has been given Cawdor's title.

0 SD. Alarum: a trumpet "call to arms"; within: offstage

4. **sergeant:** soldier, officer (also called *Captain* in the Folio stage directions and speech prefixes)

7. broil: i.e., battle

10. spent: exhausted

11. **choke their art:** prevent each other from using their skill (in swimming) **art:** skill

12. to that: to make him that (i.e., a rebel)

13. villainies: shameful evils

14. **the Western Isles:** the Hebrides (islands off the west coast of Scotland)

15. kerns and gallowglasses: i.e., fierce (Irish) soldiers

16. Fortune: the goddess Fortuna (See pictures, pages 44, 110, 188.) damnèd quarrel: the accursed cause (for which he fought)

17. **Showed...whore:** appeared to have granted the rebellious Macdonwald her favors; **all's:** everything (that Macdonwald and Fortune can do) is

21. Valor's minion: the chosen darling of Valor

22. slave: villain (i.e., Macdonwald)

24. **unseamed...chops:** ripped him open from his navel to his jaw

(continued)

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Scene 2

Alarum within. Enter King 「Duncan, [¬] Malcolm, ponalbain, 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. This is the sergeant MALCOLM 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 And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald (Worthy to be a rebel, for to that The multiplying villainies of nature Do swarm upon him) from the Western Isles Of kerns and [gallowglasses] is supplied: And Fortune, on his damned [quarrel] smiling. 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.

O valiant cousin, worthy gentleman!

O valiant cousin, worthy gentleman!

As whence the sun 'gins his reflection Shipwracking storms and direful thunders 「break, ¬ 27–28. **As...break:** i.e., just **as** the east, from which the sun's rays first appear, also brings **storms** (Shakespeare more than once uses *reflect* to describe the sun's emission of rays.)

29. spring: source

34. **the Norweyan lord:** i.e., the king of Norway, surveying vantage: seeing his chance

40. say sooth: speak truthfully

41. **overcharged:** overloaded; **cracks:** i.e., explosive charges

43. Except: unless

44. **memorize another Golgotha:** make the event (or place) memorable by turning it into a second Golgotha **Golgotha:** "the place of dead men's skulls" (Mark 15.22) where Jesus was crucified

48. smack: have the flavor, taste

- 50. **Thane:** a title used in Scotland as the equivalent of "baron"
 - 52. should he: is one likely to
 - 57. flout: mock



Golgotha. (1.2.44)
From Martin Luther, Ein Sermon (1523).

The second section is the second seco	
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.	3
Dismayed not this our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?	
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.	4
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds Or memorize another Golgotha, I cannot tell— But I am faint. My gashes cry for help.	4
So well thy words become thee as thy wounds: They smack of honor both.—Go, get him surgeons. The Captain is led off by Attendants.	
Enter Ross and Angus.	
Who comes here? ALCOLM The worthy Thane of Ross. ENNOX	5
What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he look that seems to speak things strange.	
oss God save the King. BUNCAN Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane? OSS From Fife, great king,	5
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky	

58. people: i.e., troops

59. Norway himself: i.e., the king of Norway

61. dismal: ominous

62. **Bellona:** Roman goddess of war (Her **bride-groom** would be the fiercest of warriors.) **lapped in proof:** dressed in proven armor

63. him: the king of Norway (See longer note, page 193.) self-comparisons: (attacks) that matched

his own

65. lavish: unrestrained

69. Norways': Norwegians'; craves composition: asks for terms of peace

71. **Saint Colme's Inch:** i.e., Inchcolm, a small island in the Firth of Forth **Colme's:** pronounced "kollums."

73–74. **deceive / Our bosom interest:** betray my dearest concerns **Our:** i.e., my (the royal "we")

74. present: immediate

- 1.3 The three witches greet Macbeth as "Thane of Glamis" (as he is), "Thane of Cawdor," and "king hereafter." They then promise Banquo that he will father kings, and they disappear. Almost as soon as they are gone, Ross and Angus arrive with news that the king has named Macbeth "Thane of Cawdor." Macbeth contemplates killing Duncan in order to become "king hereafter" as the witches have called him.
- 7. **Aroint thee:** begone; **rump-fed:** fed on rump meat; fat-rumped; **runnion:** term of abuse for a woman (a Shakespearean coinage used here and in *Merry Wives of Windsor* [4.2.185])

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And fan our people cold.
Norway himself, with terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict,
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapped in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit. And to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

DUNCAN Great happiness!

ROSS That now Sweno,

The Norways' king, craves composition. Nor would we deign him burial of his men Till he disbursèd at Saint Colme's Inch Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

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.
NUNCAN

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

They exit.

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 And munched and munched and munched. "Give me," quoth I.

"Aroint thee, witch," the rump-fed runnion cries.

8. Tiger: the name of the sailor's ship

10. like: in the form of

15. the other: i.e., the other winds

16–18. And ... card: These lines are variously explained by editors, though all agree that the witch here claims to control the direction and force of the winds (and thus can keep the sailor's ship away from any port). ports they blow: perhaps, harbors to which the winds blow quarters: i.e., geographical directions card: compass card or chart (See picture of winds, below.)

21. penthouse lid: eyelid

22. forbid: under a curse

25. bark: ship; lost: destroyed

29. pilot: helmsman

30. Wracked: wrecked; also, tormented

33. **Weïrd:** fateful, fate-determining (In the Folio, the spelling is "weyward" or "weyard.") **Weïrd** is the Scottish form of *wyrd*, the Old English word for fate or destiny.

34. Posters: those who post, i.e., travel rapidly



The winds. (1.3.12–18)
From Giulio Cesare Capaccio, Delle imprese trattato . . . (1592).

· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' th' <i>Tiger</i> ; But in a sieve I'll thither sail,	Section of
And, like a rat without a tail,	10
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.	
ECOND WITCH	
I'll give thee a wind.	
TRST WITCH	
Th' art kind.	
HIRD WITCH	
And I another.	
TRST WITCH	
I myself have all the other,	15
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	20
Hang upon his penthouse lid.	
He shall live a man forbid.	
Weary sev'nnights, nine times nine,	
Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine.	
Though his bark cannot be lost,	25
Yet it shall be tempest-tossed.	
Look what I have.	
ECOND WITCH Show me, show me.	
TRST WITCH	
Here I have a pilot's thumb,	
Wracked as homeward he did come. Drum within.	30
HIRD WITCH	
A drum, a drum!	
Macbeth doth come.	
LL, 「dancing in a circle T	
The Weïrd Sisters, hand in hand,	
Posters of the sea and land,	10000
Thus do go about, about,	35
Thrice to thine and thrice to mine	

- 38. **wound up:** coiled (i.e., like a spring ready for action)
 - 39. have not seen: have never seen before
 - 40. is 't called: is it said to be
 - 46. choppy: chapped; or, deeply wrinkled
- 47. **should be:** must **be** (i.e., most of your features indicate that you are)
 - 56. fantastical: figments of the imagination
- 58. **present grace:** i.e., the title of "Thane of Glamis," already possessed by Macbeth
- 59. **noble having:** i.e., possession **of noble** titles; **royal hope: hope** of **royal** status
- 60. That he seems rapt withal: so that he seems transported by it all
- 63-64. neither...hate: neither beg your favors nor fear your hate



Hautboy. (1.6.0 SD) From Balthasar Küchler, Repraesentatio . . . (1611).

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And thrice again, to make up nine. Peace, the charm's wound up.

Enter Macbeth and Banquo.

MACBETH					- SECRETAL		
MACBETH So foul	and	fair	a day	I	have	not	seen

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
me

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.

MACBETH Speak if you can. What are you?

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

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?—I' th' name of truth,
Are you fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly you 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. 69. happy: fortunate

70. get: beget, father

73. **imperfect speakers:** i.e., those who speak cryptically or in riddles

74. Sinel: Macbeth's father

79. owe: own

87. insane root: plant that causes insanity



Macbeth and Banquo meet the witches. (1.3.40–81). From Raphael Holinshed, *The historie of Scotland* (1577).

FIRST WITCH Hail!	6	5
SECOND WITCH Hail!		
THIRD WITCH Hail!		
FIRST WITCH		
Lesser than Macbeth and great	ater.	
SECOND WITCH		
Not so happy, yet much happ	ier.	
THIRD WITCH		
Thou shalt get kings, though	thou be none.	0
So all hail, Macbeth and Ban	quo!	
FIRST WITCH	Moreover statement 2011	
Banquo and Macbeth, all hai	$\Gamma_{ m cons}$, $\gamma_{ m cons}$, and $\gamma_{ m cons}$	
MACBETH		
Stay, you imperfect speakers.	Tell me more.	
By Sinel's death I know I am		
But how of Cawdor? The Tha		5
A prosperous gentleman, and		
Stands not within the prospe		
No more than to be Cawdor.		
You owe this strange intellige		
Upon this blasted heath you		0
With such prophetic greeting	S. Speak, I charge you. Witches vanish.	
BANQUO		
The earth hath bubbles, as the		
And these are of them. Whith	er are they vanished?	
MACBETH		
Into the air, and what seemed	l corporal melted,	
As breath into the wind. Wou	ald they had stayed! 8	35
BANQUO		
Were such things here as we		
Or have we eaten on the insa		
That takes the reason prisone	er?	
MACBETH		
Your children shall be kings.	v 1 111 12	
BANQUO	You shall be king.	00

93. happily: with satisfaction

96–97. **His wonders...his:** i.e., the wonder he feels, which makes him speechless, vies with his desire to offer praise (Since he is **silenced** [line 97], his wonder wins the battle.)

99. stout: fierce, formidable

101. Strange ... death: death in strange forms

101–2. **As thick...post:** couriers arrived as rapidly as they could be counted **tale:** count

107. herald: usher

109. **earnest:** a small payment to seal a bargain; thus, a promise **of a greater** reward to come

111. addition: title

116. Who: he who

119. combined: in conspiracy



Heads of traitors "fixed . . . upon" London Bridge. (1.2.25)
From Claes Jansz Visscher, Londinum
florentissima Britanniae urbs . . . [c. 1625].

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MACBETH

And Thane of Cawdor too. Went it not so?

BANQUO

To th' selfsame tune and words.—Who's here?

Enter Ross and Angus.

ROSS

The King hath happily received, Macbeth, The news of thy success, and, when he reads Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight, His wonders and his praises do contend Which should be thine or his. Silenced with that. In viewing o'er the rest o' th' selfsame day He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,

Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,

Strange images of death. As thick as tale [Came] post with post, and every one did bear Thy praises in his kingdom's great defense.

And poured them down before him.

We are sent ANGUS 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.

What, can the devil speak true? BANQUO

MACBETH

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

Who was the Thane lives yet. ANGUS But under heavy judgment bears that life

Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined

- 120. line the rebel: i.e., reinforce Macdonwald
- 126. **The greatest is behind:** the greater part of the prophecy is already accomplished
 - 132. home: i.e., fully
- 133. enkindle you unto: inflame you with hope for
 - 137. betray 's: betray us
 - 141. happy: fortunate
 - 143. soliciting: seduction, temptation
 - 144. ill: evil
 - 148. unfix my hair: make my hair stand on end
 - 149. seated: i.e., fixed in its place
- 150. Against...nature: unnaturally use: custom; Present fears: causes of fear that are present
 - 151. horrible imaginings: imaginary horrors
 - 152. fantastical: imaginary
- 154. **function:** ability to act; **surmise:** speculation
 - 155. but: except



A crossbow. (1.7.70)
From Wilhelm Dilich, ... Krieges-Schule ... (1689).

With those of Norway, or did line the rebel	120
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both	
He labored in his country's wrack, I know not;	
But treasons capital, confessed and proved,	
Have overthrown him.	
MACBETH, [aside] Glamis and Thane of Cawdor!	125
The greatest is behind. \(\textit{To Ross and Angus.} \) Thanks	
for your pains.	
「Aside to Banquo. To you not hope your children	
shall be kings,	
When those that gave the Thane of Cawdor to me	130
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,	135
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,	
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's	
In deepest consequence.—	
Cousins, a word, I pray you. They step aside.	
MACBETH, 「aside Two truths are told	140
As happy prologues to the swelling act	
Of the imperial theme.—I thank you, gentlemen.	
「Aside. This supernatural soliciting	
Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,	
Why hath it given me earnest of success	145
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	150
Are less than horrible imaginings.	
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,	
Shakes so my single state of man	100
That function is smothered in surmise,	
And nothing is but what is not.	155
mid noming to out what to not	AND THE LOCAL

159. stir: stirring; taking action

161. our strange garments: i.e., new clothes; cleave ... mold: do not fit the body's form

162. But: except

164. Time...day: Proverbial: "The longest day has an end."

166. wrought: stirred up, affected

172. The interim having weighed it: i.e., having thought about it in the interim

172-73. speak ... hearts: i.e., speak our hearts freely

1.4 Duncan demands and receives assurances that the former thane of Cawdor has been executed. When Macbeth, Banquo, Ross, and Angus join Duncan, he offers thanks to Macbeth and Banquo. He then announces his intention to have his son Malcolm succeed him as king and his plan to visit Macbeth at Inverness. Macbeth sets out ahead of him to prepare for the royal visit. Now that Malcolm has been named Duncan's successor, Macbeth is convinced that he can become king only by killing Duncan.

0 SD. Flourish: fanfare of trumpets

2. **in commission:** i.e., commissioned (to carry out the execution)

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,	160
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.	165
MACBETH	
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,	170
The interim having weighed it, let us speak	
Our free hearts each to other.	
BANQUO Very gladly.	
MACBETH Till then, enough.—Come, friends.	175
They exit.	
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	5

11. owed: owned

12. careless: uncared for, worthless

22–23. That the proportion...mine: that both my thanks and my payment might have exceeded what you deserve

24. all: i.e., all I possess

26. pays itself: i.e., is its own reward

27–28. **our duties...servants:** i.e., we, as dutiful subjects, owe to you the obligations that **children** owe parents and **servants** owe masters

30. Safe toward: protective of



Execution of a Scottish nobleman. (1.4.1–12) From Raphael Holinshed, *The historie of Scotland* (1577).

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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.

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.

MACBETH

The service and the loyalty I owe
In doing it pays itself. Your Highness' part
Is to receive our duties, and our duties
Are to your throne and state children and servants,
Which do but what they should by doing everything
Safe toward your love and honor.

Welcome hither.

I have begun to plant thee and will labor
To make thee full of growing.—Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved nor must be known
No less to have done so, let me enfold thee
And hold thee to my heart.

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

40. Wanton: unrestrained

42. **places:** positions, standing; **nearest:** i.e., closest to the kingship

43. We ... upon: i.e., I name as my heir

44. hereafter: henceforth, from now on

45. Prince of Cumberland: heir to the throne

46. **Not...only:** i.e., **not** be bestowed on him without accompanying honors to others

48. Inverness: Macbeth's castle

50. rest: leisure, repose

51. **harbinger:** one who is sent before to procure lodging for an army or a royal train

59. The eye...hand: i.e., let my eye not see

what my hand does

- 61. **full so valiant:** perhaps, quite as **valiant** as you have said him to be (If this is the correct reading, Duncan is here responding to a comment made to him by Banquo during Macbeth's "aside.")
 - 62. his commendations: the praises given him

64. before: ahead



A serpent lurking in a strawberry plant. (1.5.76–78) From Claude Paradin, *The heroicall deuises of* . . . (1591).

UNCAN	My plenteous joys,	
Wanton in fullness	s, seek to hide themselves	40
In drops of sorrow	.—Sons, kinsmen, thanes,	
and you whose pla	aces are the nearest, know	
We will establish o		
Our eldest, Malcol	lm, whom we name hereafter	
The Prince of Cum	nberland; which honor must	45
	ed invest him only,	
But signs of noble	ness, like stars, shall shine	
On all deservers	-From hence to Inverness	
And bind us furthe	er to you.	
MACBETH		
The rest is labor w	which is not used for you.	50
	arbinger and make joyful	
	wife with your approach.	
So humbly take m	y leave.	
OUNCAN _	My worthy Cawdor.	
MACBETH, 「aside]		
	nberland! That is a step	55
	all down or else o'erleap,	
	ies. Stars, hide your fires;	
	ny black and deep desires.	
	e hand, yet let that be	
Which the eye fear	rs, when it is done, to see.	60
	He exi	ts.
DUNCAN	tailling with attention makeneds. O	
	quo. He is full so valiant,	
	ndations I am fed:	
	ne.—Let's after him,	
	e before to bid us welcome.	
It is a peerless kins	sman.	65

Flourish. They exit.

LAI

- 1.5 Lady Macbeth reads her husband's letter about his meeting the witches. She fears that Macbeth lacks the ruthlessness he needs to kill Duncan and fulfill the witches' second prophecy. When she learns that Duncan is coming to visit, she calls upon supernatural agents to fill her with cruelty. Macbeth arrives, and Lady Macbeth tells him that she will take charge of the preparations for Duncan's visit and for his murder.
 - 12. dues of rejoicing: i.e., the due measure of joy
 - 16. fear: worry about
- 18. catch: take; nearest way: shortest route; wouldst: wish to
 - 20. illness: i.e., ruthlessness
- 20–21. **wouldst highly:** would greatly like (to have); also, would like to do ambitiously—or idealistically
- 22. wouldst thou holily: would like (to do) in a saintly way
- 23–28. Thou'd'st... undone: Lady Macbeth's avoidance of such terms as "murder" and "assassination" leads to imprecise use of that and it.
 - 28. should be undone: i.e., should not be done
 - 29. spirits: vital power, energy
 - 30. chastise: rebuke; also, inflict punishment on
 - 31. the golden round: i.e., the crown
 - 32. metaphysical: supernatural
 - 33. withal: i.e., with

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Scene 5

Enter Macbeth's Wife, alone, with a letter.

LADY MACBETH, reading the letter They met me in the day of success, and I have learned by the perfect'st report they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I hurned 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, before, these Weird Sisters saluted me 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 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:

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'd'st 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.

37. were 't so: i.e., if the king were coming

38. **informed for preparation:** sent word so that we could be prepared

40. had the speed of him: outrode him

43. Give him tending: tend to (take care of) him

46. fatal: (1) directed by fate; (2) fatal to Duncan

48. mortal: deadly

49. crown: top of the head

51. remorse: compassion

52. **compunctious:** remorseful; **visitings:** promptings; **nature:** natural feelings

53. fell: cruel; deadly

53-54. keep...it: i.e., prevent my purpose from

having its effect

55. **take...gall:** i.e., turn **my milk** into **gall** (i.e., bile, the bitter liquid secreted by the liver and associated with choler or anger); **ministers:** agents

56. sightless: invisible

57. wait on: attend; also, perhaps, lie in wait for, or accompany; mischief: evil

58. pall thee: cover yourself as with a pall, a cloth

that is put over a coffin; dunnest: darkest

63. all-hail hereafter: i.e., future kingship

Enter Messenger.

CESENGER

What is your tidings?

The King comes here tonigh	t	35
ADV MACBETH	Thou 'rt mad to say it.	
Is not thy master with him,	who, were 't so,	
Would have informed for pr	eparation?	
MESSENGER	Manufactor of the Manufactor	
So please you, it is true. Our	thane is coming.	
One of my fellows had the s	peed of him,	40
Who, almost dead for breatl	n, had scarcely more	
Than would make up his me	essage.	
ADY MACBETH	Give him tending.	
He brings great news.	Messenger exits.	
The ra	ven himself is hoarse	45
That croaks the fatal entran		
Under my battlements. Com	ne, you spirits	
That tend on mortal though	ts, unsex me here,	
And fill me from the crown	to the toe top-full	
Of direst cruelty. Make thick		50
Stop up th' access and passa		
That no compunctious visiti		
Shake my fell purpose, nor		
Th' effect and it. Come to m		
And take my milk for gall, y		55
Wherever in your sightless s		
You wait on nature's mischi		
And pall thee in the dunnes		
That my keen knife see not	the wound it makes,	

Enter Macbeth.

Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark

To cry "Hold, hold!"

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

- 64. letters have: letter has
- 65. ignorant: unknowing
- 66. instant: present moment
- 74. beguile the time: deceive those around us
- 76-78. Look like ... under 't: See picture, page 28.
- 80. **dispatch:** management (with a secondary sense of "putting to death")
 - 82. solely sovereign: absolute; sway: power
 - 84. look up clear: look cheerful and undisturbed
- 85. To alter...fear: perhaps, a changed countenance frightens others; or, perhaps, when one is fearful one's countenance always changes favor: countenance, face
- **1.6** Duncan and his attendants arrive at Inverness. Lady Macbeth welcomes them.
- 0 SD. **Hautboys:** powerful double-reed woodwind instruments, also called "shawms," designed for outdoor ceremonials (Oboes are later descendants of hautboys, with a much softer tone.) See picture, page 16.
 - 1. seat: site, situation

Thy letters have transported me beyond	
This ignorant present, and I feel now	. 65
The future in the instant.	
My dearest love,	
Duncan comes here tonight.	
And when goes hence?	
ACBETH	
Tomorrow, as he purposes.	70
ADY 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,	
Look like the time. Bear welcome in your eye,	75
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,	80
Which shall to all our nights and days to come	00
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.	,
ACBETH	
We will speak further.	
ADY MACBETH Only look up clear.	0.5
To alter favor ever is to fear.	85

They exit.

Scene 6

Hautboys and Torches. Enter King \(^\Duncan,^\Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Banquo, Lennox, Macduff, Ross, Angus, and Attendants.

DUNCAN

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

Leave all the rest to me.

- 5. martlet: house martin; approve: demonstrate
- 6. **By his loved mansionry:** i.e., by the fact that he loves to build nests here
 - 7. wooingly: invitingly; jutty: projection
- 8. **coign of vantage:** i.e., protruding corner **of vantage:** affording a good observation point
- 9. **pendant:** hanging, suspended; **procreant cradle: cradle** where he breeds
- 14–15. **The love...as love:** perhaps, uninvited attention from someone who loves us can be troublesome, but we are grateful for it as a sign of **love** (These lines are difficult, in part, because Duncan's use of **us** could mean "me" [the royal plural] or could indicate a generalization, as we here interpret it.)
- 15-17. Herein...trouble: i.e., in saying this, I teach you how to say "thank you" for the trouble I'm causing you, since it is the result of my love God 'ild: God yield (i.e., thank you)
 - 20. single: trivial
 - 20-21. contend / Against: rival, try to match
 - 22. those: i.e., those honors
 - 23. late: recent; heaped up: added
- 24. We rest your hermits: we remain your beadsmen (Beadsmen repaid gifts with prayers for the donor. See picture, page 114.)
 - 26. We: i.e., I (royal plural); coursed: pursued
- 27. **purveyor:** a servant who makes advance preparations for a noble master
- 33. **theirs:** i.e., their dependents; **what is theirs:** what they own; **in compt:** in trust (from the king)
 - 35. Still: always

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This guest of summ MANOUO The temple-haunting [martlet,] does approve, 5 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 10 observed. The air is delicate. Enter Lady Macbeth. NINCAN 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. ADY MACBETH All our service. In every point twice done and then done double. Were poor and single business to contend 20 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. Where's the Thane of Cawdor? 25 DUNCAN 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 helped him To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess. 30 We are your guest tonight. IADY MACBETH Your servants ever Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs in compt

To make their audit at your Highness' pleasure,

Give me your hand.

Still to return your own.

DINCAN

1.7 Macbeth contemplates the reasons why it is a terrible thing to kill Duncan. Lady Macbeth mocks his fears and offers a plan for Duncan's murder, which Macbeth accepts.

0 SD. Sewer: butler; service: i.e., food

1–2. **If...quickly:** This sentence plays with several meanings of **done** (finished with, accomplished, performed) and for the moment leaves it unspecified.

3. trammel up: catch as in a net (See picture,

page 40.)

4. his surcease: Duncan's death; or its (the assassination's) completion; that but: if only

7. jump the life to come: risk the fate of my soul

17. **Hath...meek:** has exercised his power so humbly (or so compassionately)

18. clear: blameless

19. plead: argue (as in a court of law)

20. taking-off: i.e., murder

22. Striding the blast: riding the wind; cherubin: angel (See longer note, page 193.)

Taking her hand.

conduct me to mine host. We love him highly and shall continue our graces towards him.

By your leave, hostess.

They exit.

Scene 7

autboys. Torches. Enter a Sewer and divers Servants with dishes and service over the stage. Then enter Macbeth.

CBETH

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well were done quickly. If th' assassination fould 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 th' ingredience 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 cherubin horsed

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- 23. **sightless couriers:** invisible or unseen coursers or steeds
- 25. That: so that; tears shall drown the wind; i.e., tears as thick as rain will still the wind
- 27. which o'erleaps itself: i.e., which, in leaping into the saddle, jumps too far
 - 35. bought: acquired
 - 37. would be: ought to be, wish to be
- 41. **green and pale:** sickly, as if hung over from drinking
 - 43. Such: i.e., fickle, like his hope and resolution
 - 48. wait upon: always follow, accompany
- 49. **the poor cat i' th' adage:** i.e., **the cat** who would eat fish but would not get its feet wet (proverbial) **adage:** proverb
 - 52. none: i.e., not a man (line 51)



A trammel net. (1.7.3) From Fables d'Esope (1678).

Ipon the sightless couriers of the air, shall blow the horrid deed in every eye, That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur 25 To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself and falls on th' other-Enter Lady Macbeth. How now, what news? INY MACBETH He has almost supped. Why have you left the 30 chamber? ACBETH Hath he asked for me? Know you not he has? ADY MACBETH ACBETH We will proceed no further in this business. He hath honored me of late, and I have bought 35 Golden opinions from all sorts of people, Which would be worn now in their newest gloss, Not cast aside so soon. Was the hope drunk ADY MACBETH Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since? 40 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 45 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? Prithee, peace. 50 MACBETH I dare do all that may become a man.

Who dares \[\forall do \] more is none.

55. break: broach, disclose

56. durst: dared

58. Nor...nor: neither ... nor

59. adhere: agree, conjoin

- 60. **that their fitness:** their very convenience (for the assassination)
 - 62. unmake: i.e., unman, unnerve
- 70. **But:** only; **screw...place:** The image may be that of a crossbow string that is mechanically tightened into its notch. (See picture, page 22.)

72. Whereto the rather: to which all the sooner

73. Soundly invite him: i.e., invite him to sleep soundly; chamberlains: servants of the bedchamber

74. **wassail:** carousing; **convince:** overpower (Latin *vincere*, "to conquer")

75. warder: guardian

76. receipt of reason: container that encloses reason

77. **limbeck:** alembic (the upper part of a still into which fumes rise)

78. drenchèd natures: drowned faculties

80. put upon: impute to, blame on

81. spongy: i.e., having soaked up wine

82. quell: murder

84. mettle: spirit; metal

85. received: accepted as true

43		
LADY MACBETH then,	What beast was 't,	
	ak this enterprise to me?	55
	it, then you were a man;	55
	n what you were, you would	
	he man. Nor time nor place	
Be so much more to	nd yet you would make both.	
They have made the	emselves, and that their fitness	60
now		00
Does unmake you.	I have given suck, and know	
	ove the babe that milks me.	
	as smiling in my face,	
	ipple from his boneless gums	65
	ins out, had I so sworn as you	
Have done to this.		
MILIO	f we should fail—	
LADY MACBETH	We fail?	
But screw your cou	rage to the sticking place	70
	Vhen Duncan is asleep	
	r shall his day's hard journey	
), his two chamberlains	
	d wassail so convince	
That memory, the v		75
	d the receipt of reason	
A limbeck only. Wh		
	ures lies as in a death,	
What cannot you a		
	can? What not put upon	80
	, who shall bear the guilt	
Of our great quell?		
	Bring forth men-children only,	
	mettle should compose	
	Will it not be received,	85
	ked with blood those sleepy two	
Of his own chambe That they have don	r and used their very daggers, e 't?	

89. other: otherwise

92. settled: determined

92–93. **bend...agent:** exert all the power in my body

93. to: i.e., to perform

94. mock: deceive

95. False: deceptive; false: treacherous



Fortune. (1.2.16–17, 19)
From George Wither, A collection of emblemes . . . (1635).

LADY MACBETH Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar 90
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.

They exit.

The Tragedy of MACBETH

ACT 2

- **2.1** Banquo, who has accompanied Duncan to Inverness, is uneasy because he too is tempted by the witches' prophecies, although only in his dreams. Macbeth pretends to have forgotten them. Left alone by Banquo, Macbeth sees a gory dagger leading him to Duncan's room. Hearing the bell rung by Lady Macbeth to signal completion of her preparations for Duncan's death, Macbeth exits to kill the king.
 - 6. husbandry: careful use of resources, frugality
- 7. Take thee that: perhaps giving Fleance his dagger
 - 8. heavy summons: summons to sleep
 - 17. largess: gifts, tips; offices: i.e., servants



Tarquin and Lucrece. (2.1.67) From Jost Amman, *Icones Liuianae* (1572).

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.

MANQUO And she goes down at twelve.

MEANCE I take 't 'tis later, sir.

RANQUO

Hold, take my sword. The gives his sword to Fleance.

There's husbandry in heaven;

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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.

Give me my sword.—Who's

there?

WACBETH A friend.

BANQUO

What, sir, not yet at rest? The King's abed. He hath been in unusual pleasure, and Sent forth great largess to your offices.

This diamond he greets your wife withal,

19. shut up: concluded (his remarks); or summed

up (what he had to say)

22-23. Our will ... wrought: i.e., our desire (to entertain the king properly) was limited (by our lack of time to prepare); otherwise our desire would have operated freely, liberally will: desire became the servant to defect: was subjected to deficiency wrought: operated

- 29. entreat an hour to serve: i.e., find a time that suits us
- 34. cleave to my consent: i.e., support me, join my party cleave: adhere

37. still: always, continue to

- 38. My bosom franchised: my inmost being free
- 39. I shall be counseled: I will be willing to listen: or. I will follow your counsel
- 48. fatal vision: an apparition (1) that is ominous or fateful, (2) that represents a deadly weapon. or (3) that shows what is fated, sent by Fate

48-49. sensible / To feeling: perceptible to the sense of touch

)- 102	
By the name of most kind hostess, and shut up	
In measureless content.	
THe gives Macbeth a jewel.	
MACBETH Being unprepared,	
Our will became the servant to defect,	
Which else should free have wrought.	
ANQUO All's well.	
I dreamt last night of the three Weïrd 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.	
At your kind'st leisure.	
MACBETH	
If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,	
It shall make honor for you.	
So I lose none	
In seeking to augment it, but still keep	
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,	
I shall be counseled.	
MACBETH Good repose the while.	
BANQUO Thanks, sir. The like to you.	
Banquo and Fleance exit.	
MACBETH Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,	
Charteiles upon the hell. Cot thee to hed	
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed. [Servant] exits.	
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	

50. false: unreal

51. **heat-oppressèd:** feverishly excited

54. Thou marshal'st: you lead

- 56. made the fools o' th' other senses: made fools of by the evidence given by my sense of touch
- 57. Or else worth all the rest: or else my eyes alone report the truth

58. dudgeon: handle; gouts: clots

- 59. There's no such thing: i.e., the dagger does not exist
 - 62. abuse: deceive

64. **Hecate's off'rings:** sacrifices offered to Hecate, goddess of the moon and of witchcraft

65. Alarumed: summoned to action (all' arme,

"to arms!")

66. watch: i.e., cry, like that of a watchman; thus: Macbeth here begins to move with the stealthy

pace of a murderer, toward his design.

67. **Tarquin:** a Roman infamous for his rape of Lucrece (Shakespeare had told the story of the rape and Lucrece's suicide in his *Lucrece* [1594].) **ravishing:** (1) ravenous; (2) leading to rape (See picture, page 48.)

72. take ... time: take away (with the sound of his footsteps) the horror of the moment's absolute

silence

73. suits: agrees, fits in; threat: offer threats

74. **Words...gives:** i.e., talking simply cools off **the heat** that drives action

A dagger of the mind, a false creation	50
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?	
I see thee yet, in form as palpable	
As this which now I draw. THe draws his dagger.	
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going,	
And such an instrument I was to use.	55
Mine eyes are made the fools o' 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	60
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one-half world	00
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse	
The curtained sleep. Witchcraft celebrates	
Pale Hecate's off'rings, and withered murder,	
Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,	65
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 \(\text{way they} \) walk, for fear	.70
Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts	
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.	
A bell rings.	
I go, and it is done. The bell invites me.	75

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.

He exits.

- 2.2 Lady Macbeth waits anxiously for Macbeth to return from killing Duncan. When Macbeth enters, he is horrified by what he has done. He has brought with him the daggers that he used on Duncan, instead of leaving them in the room with Duncan's servants as Lady Macbeth had planned. When he finds himself incapable of returning the daggers, Lady Macbeth does so. She returns to find Macbeth still paralyzed with horror and urges him to put on his gown and wash the blood from his hands.
- 5. **bellman:** town crier, who sounded the hours of the night and tolled the bell on the evening before an execution (Here, **the owl** is a bellman because, according to superstition, the hoot of the owl portends death. It is **fatal** perhaps because sent by Fate, or perhaps because it predicts death.) See pictures, pages 56 and 64.
 - 6. He: Macbeth
- 8. **mock their charge:** make a mockery of their responsibility
 - 9. possets: hot drinks, containing milk and liquor
 - 15. Confounds: ruins
 - 16. He: Macbeth: he: Duncan

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Scene 2

Enter Lady \(Macbeth. \)

ADY	MA	CB	FT	H

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!

Alack, I am afraid they have awaked, And 'tis not done. Th' attempt and not the deed Confounds us. Hark!—I laid their daggers ready; He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled My father as he slept, I had done 't.

Enter Macbeth \(\text{with bloody daggers.} \) \(\text{7} \)

My husband?

MACBETH

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

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

MACBETH When?

IADY MACBETH Now.

MACBETH As I descended?

LADY MACBETH Ay.

MACBETH Hark!—Who lies i' th' second chamber?

LADY MACBETH Donalbain.

28. sorry: deplorable, wretched

34. addressed them: applied themselves

38. **As:** as if; hangman's: executioner's (The hangman also had to cut the body to pieces, hence his bloody hands.)

39. List'ning: i.e., listening to

42. wherefore: why

46. so: if so

47. Methought: it seemed to me

49. knits: ties; raveled sleave: tangled threads

51. second course: i.e., main course



A bellman. (2.2.5) From Thomas Dekker, *The belman of London* (1616).

57	Macbein	ACI 2. SC. 2
MACBETH This is a so	orry sight.	of Consideration
LADY MACBETH		
A foolish thought, t	o say a sorry sigh	it.
MACBETH		
There's one did lau "Murder!"	gh in 's sleep, and	one cried
That they did wake them.	each other. I stoo	od and heard
But they did say th Again to sleep.	eir prayers and ac	ldressed them
LADY MACBETH There	are two lodged to	ogether.
MACBETH	420 0110 104804	8
One cried "God ble As they had seen m List'ning their fear. When they did say	e with these hang I could not say "A	gman's hands,
LADY MACBETH Consi		l _v ,
	der it not so deep	19.
MACBETH But wherefore coul I had most need of Stuck in my throat	blessing, and "An	
LADY MACBETH After these ways; so	These deeds mus	
MACBETH		
Methought I heard Macbeth does mure Sleep that knits up The death of each of	der sleep"—the in the raveled sleave	nocent sleep, e of care,
Balm of hurt minds Chief nourisher in		econd course,
LADY MACBETH	What de	o you mean?
MACBETH		
Still it cried "Sleep "Glamis hath murd Cawdor		

Shall sleep no more. Macbeth shall sleep no more."

- 59. **unbend:** loosen, slacken (contrasts with "bend up" at 1.7.92)
 - 60. brainsickly: madly; or, morbidly
 - 61. witness: evidence
- 72. **gild:** i.e., smear; **withal:** with it (i.e., with Duncan's blood)
- 78. **Neptune:** the Roman god of the sea (See picture, below.)
- 80. **multitudinous:** vast; **incarnadine:** turn bloodred
 - 81. one red: i.e., a uniform red color
 - 82. shame: would be ashamed
 - 87. constancy: firmness of mind
 - 88. left you unattended: abandoned you



Neptune, god of the sea. (2.2.78) From Vincenzo Cartari, *Imagini delli dei de gl'antichi* ... (1674).

Knock.

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	6
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.	6
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	7
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,	
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal,	
For it must seem their guilt.	
She exits \(\text{with the daggers.} \) Knock within.	
MACBETH Whence is that	
knocking?	7.
How is 't 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,	80
Making the green one red.	
Enter Lady 「Macbeth. T	
ADY MACBETH	
My hands are of your color, but I shame	
To wear a heart so white. Knock.	
I hear a knocking	
At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.	85
A little water clears us of this deed.	0.3

How easy is it, then! Your constancy Hath left you unattended.

- 90. nightgown: dressing gown; occasion: circumstances
- 91. **show us to be watchers:** reveal that we are still up and awake
 - 92. poorly: poor-spiritedly, dispiritedly
- 2.3 A drunken porter, answering the knocking at the gate, plays the role of a devil-porter at the gates of hell. He admits Macduff and Lennox, who have come to wake Duncan. Macbeth appears and greets them. Macduff exits to wake Duncan, then returns to announce Duncan's murder. Macbeth and Lennox go to see for themselves. When they return, Lennox announces that Duncan's servants are the murderers. Macbeth reveals that he has slain the servants. When his motives are questioned, Lady Macbeth interrupts by calling for help for herself. Duncan's sons, Malcolm and Donalbain, plan to flee for their lives—Malcolm to England, Donalbain to Ireland.

0 SD. Porter: gatekeeper

2. old: i.e., plenty of

4. Beelzebub: Matthew 12.24: "Beelzebub, the

prince of the devils"

4–5. **farmer...plenty:** perhaps, the **farmer** hoarded crops only to face an unexpected surplus and dropping prices

6. napkins: handkerchiefs (to mop up his sweat)

8. equivocator: one who intentionally speaks ambiguously, either by using words that can be

(continued)

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.

Knock.

Wake Duncan with thy knocking. I would thou couldst.

They exit.

Scene 3

Knocking within. Enter a Porter.

PORTER Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell gate, he should have old turning the key. (Knock.) Knock, knock! Who's there, i' th' name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer that hanged himself on th' expectation of plenty. Come in time! Have napkins enough about you; here you'll sweat for 't. (Knock.) Knock, knock! Who's there, in th' other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator that could swear in both the scales against either scale, who committed treason enough for God's sake yet could not equivocate to heaven. O, come in. equivocator. (Knock.) Knock. 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. (Knock.) 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 th' everlasting bonfire. (Knock.) Anon, anon!

The Porter opens the door to Macduff and Lennox.

I pray you, remember the porter.

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taken more than one way or by mentally hedging or limiting his or her words (See longer note, page 194.)

14. stealing...hose: perhaps, stealing cloth in

the process of making breeches

15. roast your goose: heat your tailor's iron (Goose was also a slang term for prostitute.)

19. **primrose way...bonfire:** the broad and pleasurable path to hell (See Matthew 7.13.)

20. Anon: right away

21. I pray you, remember the porter: This is a request for a tip.

24-25. the second cock: i.e., 3 A.M.

29. **nose-painting:** reddening the nose through drink

37. **giving him the lie:** (1) lying to him; (2) laying him out

40. i' th' very throat on me: in my very throat (To "give a lie in the throat" was to accuse someone of deep, deliberate lying.) on: of

42. took up my legs: lifted my feet off the ground (an image from wrestling), perhaps in a drunken

stagger

43. made a shift: managed; cast him: give him a fall (as in wrestling); throw it out (vomit, urinate)

50. timely: early

51. slipped the hour: allowed the hour to slip by

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.

What three things does drink especially pro-

voke?

*** 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.

I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

That it did, sir, i' 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.

WACDUFF Is thy master stirring?

Enter Macheth.

Our knocking has awaked him. Here he comes.

Porter exits.

ENNOX

Good morrow, noble sir.

Good morrow, both. ACRETH

MCDUFF

Is the King stirring, worthy thane?

MCBETH

Not vet.

MCDUFF

He did command me to call timely on him. have almost slipped the hour.

50

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55. **physics:** relieves (To *physic* was to treat an illness with physic, or medicine.)

58. limited service: appointed duty

60. appoint: plan to do

66. combustion: tumult, confusion

67. **obscure bird:** bird of darkness, owl (See picture, below.) **obscure:** accent on first syllable

76. Confusion: destruction

78. **The Lord's anointed temple:** the body of the king, which was represented by Renaissance monarchies as having been **anointed** by God



"It was the owl, . . . the fatal bellman." (2.2.5; see also 2.2.20; 2.3.67–68; and 4.2.13) From George Wither, A collection of emblemes . . . (1635).

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ACBETH	ſ
ACBETH	I

I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF

I know this is a joyful trouble to you, But yet 'tis one.

ACBETH

The labor we delight in physics pain.

This is the door.

ACDUFF I'll make so bold to call,

For 'tis my limited service. Macduff exits.

ENNOX Goes the King hence today?

ENNOX Goes the King hence today?

He does. He did appoint so.

FNNOX

The night has been unruly. Where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' th' air, strange screams of
death.

And prophesying, with accents terrible,
0f dire combustion and confused events
New hatched to th' woeful time. The obscure bird
Clamored the livelong night. Some say the Earth
Was feverous and did shake.

ACBETH FINOX

'Twas a rough night.

My young remembrance cannot parallel A fellow to it.

Enter Macduff.

ICDUFF O horror, horror! Tongue nor heart cannot conceive nor name thee! ICBETH and LENNOX What's the matter?

CDUFF

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. 83. **Gorgon:** a mythological figure, the sight of whom brought instant death (See picture, below.)

90. great doom's image: a sight as terrible as

doomsday

91. As...sprites: as if, at the Last Judgment, you rise from your graves like ghosts

92. countenance: be in keeping with

94. **calls to parley:** The image is of the battle-field, where a **parley** is a conference.

98. repetition: report, account



Perseus with the Gorgon's head. (2.3.83) From Cesare Ripa, *Noua iconologia* (1618).

TH What is 't you say? The life?	80
x Mean you his Majesty?	
FF	
roach the chamber and destroy your sight	
h a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak.	
and then speak yourselves.	
Macbeth and Lennox exit.	
Awake, awake!	85
g the alarum bell.—Murder and treason!	
and Donalbain, Malcolm, awake!	
ke off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,	
l look on death itself. Up, up, and see	
great doom's image. Malcolm, Banquo,	90
rom your graves rise up and walk like sprites	
countenance this horror.—Ring the bell.	
Bell rings.	
Enter Lady 「Macbeth. 7	
MACBETH What's the business, at such a hideous trumpet calls to parley e sleepers of the house? Speak, speak! UFF O gentle lady, anot for you to hear what I can speak.	95
e repetition in a woman's ear ould murder as it fell.	
Enter Banquo.	
O Banquo, Banquo, r royal master's murdered.	100
MACBETH Woe, alas!	
nat, in our house?	
UO Too cruel anywhere.—	105
ar Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself d say it is not so.	103

107. but: only; chance: occurrence

109. nothing serious in mortality: nothing important in life

110. toys: trifles; grace: honor

111–12. **The wine...brag of:** i.e., the **vault** has had the wine **drawn** off and nothing **is left** but the dregs (**lees**)

113-14. What is amiss? / You are: i.e., "What is wrong (amiss)?" "You are damaged (amiss) in that

your father is killed."

115. head: fountainhead, source

120. badged: marked, as with badges

122. distracted: distraught

126. Wherefore: why

127. amazed: utterly confused, bewildered

128. in a moment: simultaneously

129. expedition: haste

132. **breach:** gap (technically, a break in a fortification caused by battering)

133. wasteful: destructive

Enter Macbeth, Lennox, and Ross.

ACBETH

Had I but died an hour before this chance. thad lived a blessed 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 Donalhain.

ONALBAIN What is amiss?

MCBETH 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.

ACDUFF

Your royal father's murdered.

MI.COLM

O. by whom?

FNNOX

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.

120

125

MACBETH

0, 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.

134. Steeped: soaked

135. Unmannerly breeched with gore: i.e., improperly clothed with blood (instead of being properly sheathed); refrain: hold himself back

137. make 's: make his

138. **Help me hence, ho!:** Lady Macbeth perhaps faints—or pretends to faint—at this point.

142. That ... ours: i.e., that have the best right to

speak on this subject

144. **Hid in an auger hole:** concealed in a tiny crack (i.e., hiding in ambush)

146. **upon the foot of motion:** ready to move, to take action

148. naked frailties hid: i.e., clothed our frail bodies

150. question: examine

151. **scruples:** suspicions

153-54. Against ... malice: i.e., I fight against the unrevealed purpose of the traitor

157. **briefly:** quickly; **put on manly readiness:** clothe ourselves properly (with perhaps also a sense of emotional readiness)

160. consort: join in league

161. office: function

MA

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MAL

To

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?	135
DY MACBETH Help me hence, ho!	
COUFF	
Look to the lady.	
LCOLM, [aside to Donalbain] Why do we hold our tongues,	140
That most may claim this argument for ours? NALBAIN, [「] 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.	145
LCOLM, ^r aside to Donalbain ⁷	1.5
Nor our strong sorrow upon the foot of motion.	
NOUO Look to the lady.	
Lady Macbeth is assisted to leave.	
And when we have our naked frailties hid,	
That suffer in exposure, let us meet	
And question this most bloody piece of work	150
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us.	
In the great hand of God I stand, and thence	
Against the undivulged pretense I fight	
Of treasonous malice.	
And so do I.	155
So all.	
CBETH	
Let's briefly put on manly readiness	
And meet i' th' hall together.	
Well contented.	
「All but Malcolm and Donalbain exit.	
ALCOLM	
What will you do? Let's not consort with them.	160
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office	
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.	

165-66. **The near...bloody:** a common expression, reminiscent of Matthew 10.36: "a man's enemies shall be they of his own household" **near:** nearer

170. dainty of: polite about

171. shift away: go away stealthily

- 2.4 An old man and Ross exchange accounts of recent unnatural happenings. Macduff joins them to report that Malcolm and Donalbain are now accused of having bribed the servants who supposedly killed Duncan. Macduff also announces that Macbeth has been chosen king. Ross leaves for Scone and Macbeth's coronation, but Macduff resolves to stay at his own castle at Fife.
 - 1. Threescore and ten: seventy years

3. sore: dreadful

5. **trifled former knowings:** made my earlier experiences seem trivial

8. his bloody stage: i.e., the Earth, on which

man performs his bloody acts

10–12. **Is 't night's...kiss it?:** i.e., is it dark because night has become more powerful than day, or because day is hiding its face in shame?

15. tow'ring in her pride of place: circling at the top of her ascent (For picture of falcon, see

page 74.)

16. **by a mousing owl hawked at:** attacked on the wing **by** an **owl**, whose normal prey is mice

NALBAIN

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.

ALCOLM 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. They exit.

Scene 4

Enter Ross with an Old Man.

D MAN

Threescore and ten I can remember well. Within the volume of which time I have seen Hours dreadful and things strange, but this sore night

Hath trifled former knowings.

Ha, good father, OSS Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with man's act, Threatens his bloody stage. By th' clock 'tis day, And vet dark night strangles the traveling lamp. Is't night's predominance or the day's shame That darkness does the face of earth entomb

When living light should kiss it? Tis unnatural. ID MAN 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.

220 And Duncan's horses (a thing most strange and certain).

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- 19. minions of their race: choicest examples of their breed
 - 21. as: as if
 - 23. eat: ate
- 34. **good:** i.e., benefit (for themselves); **pretend:** intend
 - 35. suborned: secretly bribed
- 40. **Thriftless:** unprofitable; **ravin up:** devour hungrily
- 43. **Scone:** the ancient royal city where Scottish kings were crowned
- 44. **invested:** (1) dressed in his coronation robes; (2) crowned
- 46. **Colmekill:** the small island (now called Iona), off the coast of Scotland, where Scottish kings were buried
- 47. **storehouse:** i.e., crypt, where the bodies were placed



A falcon. (2.4.15) From George Turberville, *The booke of faulconrie* . . . (1575).

Contending 'gainst obed Make war with mankind	roke their stalls, flung out, ience, as they would l.
other.	'Tis said they eat each
oss They did so, to th' amaze That looked upon 't.	ement of mine eyes
Enter l	Macduff.
Here	comes the good
Macduff.—	
How goes the world, sir,	
MACDUFF	Why, see you not?
OSS	1 11 1 1
Is 't known who did this	more than bloody deed?
MACDUFF	-1-:-
Those that Macbeth hath	
oss What good could they pr	Alas the day,
MACDUFF	They were suborned.
Malcolm and Donalbain	
Are stol'n away and fled, Suspicion of the deed.	
oss 'Ga	ainst nature still!
Thriftless ambition, that	will ravin up
Thine own lives' means.	
The sovereignty will fall	upon Macbeth.
ACDUFF	
He is already named and	gone to Scone
To be invested.	D
OSS Where is I	Duncan's body?
The sacred storehouse of	
And guardian of their ho	

50. Fife: Macduff's castle

51. thither: i.e., to Scone

54. father: a term of respect for an elderly man

55. **benison:** blessing



Coronation of a Scottish king. (2.4.43–44) From Raphael Holinshed, *The historie of Scotland* (1577).

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.

All exit.

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The Tragedy of MACBETH

ACT 3

3.1 Banquo suspects that Macbeth killed Duncan in order to become king. Macbeth invites Banquo to a feast that night. Banquo promises to return in time. Macbeth, fearing that Banquo's children, not his own, will be the future kings of Scotland, seizes upon the opportunity provided by Banquo's scheduled return after dark to arrange for his murder. To carry out the crime, Macbeth employs two men whom he has persuaded to regard Banquo as an enemy.

4. stand: be valid, hold good

8. by: judging by; on thee made good: made good with regard to you

10 SD. **Sennet:** flourish of trumpets to announce the entrance of a person of high degree

13. It had: it would have; as: like

14. all-thing: wholly

15. solemn: ceremonial

ACT 3

Scene 1

Enter Banquo.

RANQUO

Thou hast it now—king, Cawdor, Glamis, all As the Weïrd Women promised, and I fear Thou played'st most foully for 't. 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.

Sennet sounded. Enter Macbeth as King, Lady 「Macbeth, TLennox, Ross, Lords, and Attendants.

MACBETH

Here's our chief guest.

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

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18. Command upon me: i.e., royally invite me (as opposed to request, line 16); the which: i.e., your commands; duties: obligations

24. still: always; prosperous: conducive to suc-

cess

29-30. I...twain: i.e., I must ride an hour or two after dark

- 33. **bloody:** bloodthirsty; **cousins:** Malcolm and Donalbain
 - 36. invention: fictions
- 37. **therewithal:** in addition to that; **cause of state:** state affairs
- 38. **Craving us jointly:** requiring the attention of both of us; **Hie:** hurry
 - 45. society: (your) companionship
- 46. **The sweeter welcome:** the more sweetly welcome (to me)
 - 46-47. we will ... alone: I will stay ... alone
- 47. While then, God be with you: until then, good-bye

Command upon me, to the which my duties	
Are with a most indissoluble tie	
Forever knit.	20
ACBETH Ride you this afternoon?	
ANQUO Ay, my good lord.	
ACBETH	
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.	25
Is 't far you ride?	
ANQUO	
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.	30
Fail not our feast.	
ANQUO My lord, I will not.	
ACBETH	
We hear our bloody cousins are bestowed	
In England and in Ireland, not confessing	
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers	35
With strange invention. But of that tomorrow,	
When therewithal we shall have cause of state	
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse. Adieu,	
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?	
ANQUO	
Ay, my good lord. Our time does call upon 's.	40
ACBETH	
I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,	
And so I do commend you to their backs.	
Farewell. Banquo exits.	
Let every man be master of his time	
Till seven at night. To make society	45
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself	
Till suppertime alone. While then, God be with you.	
Lords \(\text{and all but Macbeth and a Servant } \) exit.	

48. Sirrah: term of address to a social inferior

48-49. Attend...pleasure: i.e., are those men waiting to see me?

50. without: outside

55. would be: ought to be

57. to: in addition to

61. genius: attendant spirit; rebuked: checked

62. Caesar: i.e., Octavius Caesar (Shakespeare will write about this again in Antony and Cleopatra.)

66. fruitless: without offspring

69. succeeding: inheriting the kingship

70. issue: descendants; filed: made foul, defiled

72. rancors: bitter ill-feelings

73. **eternal jewel:** i.e., soul

74. **common enemy:** i.e., the devil **common:** general

75. seeds: sons

76. **come fate:** let **fate come; list:** lists, arena for trial by combat

77. **champion me:** oppose me; **to th' utterance:** to the death (à *l'outrance*, "to the uttermost, to extremity")

77 SD. **Murderers:** i.e., men whom Macbeth will persuade to commit murder (See longer note, page 194.)

75

35	Macbeth	ACT 3. SC. 1	
	rd with you. Attend the	ose men	
Our pleasure		id at servo iss.	
ERVANT	等。[27] (17] (17] (17] (17] (17] (17] (17] (1		
They are, my _{(ACBETH}	lord, without the pala	ice gate.	5
	oforo us	Comment auto	
Bring them b		Servant exits.	
2 + 4 a b a a a f	To be thus is		
	ely thus. Our fears in F		
	nd in his royalty of nat		
dares,	which would be feared.	Tis much he	5
And to that d	launtless temper of his	mind	
He hath a wi	sdom that doth guide l	his valor	
	ety. There is none but h		
Whose being	I do fear; and under h	im	6
	rebuked, as it is said		
	's was by Caesar. He cl	nid the sisters	
	ey put the name of kin		
	m speak to him. Then,		
	nim father to a line of l		6
	d they placed a fruitle		0.
	rren scepter in my grip		
	wrenched with an unl		
	ne succeeding. If 't be		
	issue have I filed my r		71
For them the	gracious Duncan have	I murdarad	70
	n the vessel of my peac		
	n, and mine eternal jev		
Omy for then	ii, and mine eternal jev	vei	

And champion me to th' utterance.—Who's there? Enter Servant and two Murderers.

To make them kings, the seeds of Banquo kings.

Given to the common enemy of man

Rather than so, come fate into the list,

To the Servant. Now go to the door, and stay there till we call. Servant exits. 87. in probation: in proving it

88. **borne in hand:** deceived, deluded (from the French *maintenir*); **crossed:** thwarted; also barred, debarred, shut out

89. **instruments:** means; also legal **instruments** such as were often used to strip men of their property

92. To half a soul: i.e., even to a half-wit; a

notion: an understanding, a mind

98. **gospeled:** ruled by the Gospels' "love your enemies"

101. yours: your descendants

103. **catalogue:** list (of human types); **go for:** i.e., are counted as

106. **Shoughs:** rough-haired lapdogs; **water-rugs:** perhaps, water spaniels (See picture, below.) **demi-wolves:** crossbreeds of dog and wolf; **clept:** called

107. valued file: a list that evaluates each breed

109. housekeeper: watchdog

111. closed: enclosed



A water-rug, or water spaniel. (3.1.106) From Edward Topsell, *The historie of foure-footed beastes*...(1607).

Was it not yesterday we spoke t	cogether?	30
[MURDERERS]		
It was, so please your Highness		
MACBETH	Well then, now	
Have you considered of my spec	eches? Know	
That it was he, in the times pass	t, which held you	
So under fortune, which you th	ought had been 8	5
Our innocent self. This I made	good to you	
In our last conference, passed in	n probation with you	
How you were borne in hand, h	low crossed, the	
instruments,	e tillo oce andra stouto d	
Who wrought with them, and al	ll things else that 9	0
might	drift backer bywaite (150 t	
To half a soul and to a notion cr	razed	
Say "Thus did Banquo."		
	de it known to us.	
MACBETH		
I did so, and went further, which	h is now	5
Our point of second meeting. De	o you find	
Your patience so predominant i		
That you can let this go? Are you		
To pray for this good man and f		
Whose heavy hand hath bowed		0
And beggared yours forever?	Production When the real and	
FIRST MURDERER We	are men, my liege.	
MACBETH	and the state of t	
Ay, in the catalogue you go for n	nen,	
As hounds and greyhounds, mor	ngrels, spaniels,	
curs,	105	5
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-	wolves are clept	
All by the name of dogs. The val		
Distinguishes the swift, the slow		
The housekeeper, the hunter, eve	ery one	
According to the gift which boun)
Hath in him closed: whereby he		

112. Particular addition: a special name or title

112–13. from the bill...alike: in distinction from the catalogue that simply lists them all as dogs

114. **station:** position; **file:** wordplay on **file** as "list" (line 107) and as a "row of soldiers lined up one behind the other"

115. **rank:** wordplay on **rank** as "relative position" and as a "row of soldiers lined up abreast"

116. in your bosoms: into your care

117. Whose execution: the carrying out of which; takes...off: gets rid of your enemy

119. in his life: because Banquo is alive

120. were perfect: would be completely contented

126. tugged with: pulled about by

127. set: stake, venture; chance: eventuality

128. on 't: of it

132. **bloody:** portending bloodshed; **distance:** hostility, discord (**Distance** is also a technical term in fencing. The image thus suggested of the two in a potentially fatal duel is sustained in the word **thrusts,** line 133.)

134. my near'st of life: i.e., (1) the part most essential to life—the heart; (2) my most vital spot

136. bid my will avouch it: offer my desire for Banquo's death as sufficient justification for killing him

137. For: because of

138. but wail: i.e., but I must, instead, bewail

140. to ... make love: court your help

Particular addition, from the bill That writes them all alike. And so of men. Now, if you have a station in the file,	
Not i' 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,	115
Which in his death were perfect. SECOND MURDERER I am one, my liege, Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world Hath so incensed that I am reckless what I do to spite the world.	120
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. Both of you	125
Know Banquo was your enemy. 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	130
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	135
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.	140
FIRST MURDERER Though our lives—	145

146. spirits: courage, vital powers

149. **perfect spy o' th' time:** perhaps, exact information about when the deed should be done (This puzzling line has no agreed-upon meaning.)

150. on 't: of it

151. **something from:** somewhat away from; **always thought:** it being **always** understood

152. I require a clearness: I must be kept clear

153. rubs nor botches: flaws or defects

155. **absence:** i.e., removal, death; **material:** important

157. **Resolve yourselves apart:** make up your minds in private

160. straight: straightway, immediately

161. concluded: settled, determined

3.2 Both Lady Macbeth and Macbeth express their unhappiness. Macbeth speaks of his fear of Banquo especially. He refers to a dreadful deed that will happen that night but does not confide his plan for Banquo's murder to Lady Macbeth.

^{3.} **attend his leisure:** The phrase "**attend** someone's **leisure**" means to wait until he or she is unoccupied.

^{6.} spent: used up, exhausted

^{9.} doubtful: apprehensive

150

	CE		

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.

| Murderers | We are resolved, my lord.
| Macbeth |

I'll call upon you straight. Abide within.

[Murderers exit]

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

THe exits.

Scene 2

Enter Macbeth's Lady and a Servant.

LADY MACBETH IS Banquo gone from court?

Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.

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

SERVANT Madam, I will.

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. He exits.

5

11. sorriest: most wretched

12. Using: entertaining, harboring

13. without: beyond; all: any

15. **scorched:** slashed (from *score*, to slash as with a knife)

16. close: come back together, heal

16–17. **our poor malice / Remains:** i.e., I, who have committed a malicious act (which now seems weak and ineffective), remain (**Our** may be instead a simple plural, though elsewhere in the speech—e.g., lines 18–22—Macbeth clearly uses the royal plural.) **poor:** weak, ineffective **malice:** malicious act

17. **her former tooth:** i.e., the snake's **tooth** (her poisoned fang) as it was before she was **scorched**

18. frame: structure; disjoint: come apart

- 18–19. **both the worlds suffer:** (let) heaven and Earth perish
- 25. **In restless ecstasy:** in a frenzy of sleeplessness
 - 27. his: its; nor...nor: neither...nor
- 28. **Malice domestic:** civil ill will; **foreign levy:** armies from abroad

30. gentle my lord: my noble lord

- 31. **Sleek o'er:** smooth over; **rugged looks:** i.e., furrowed brows
- 35–36. **present...tongue:** give him special honor by look and speech
- 36. **unsafe the while that:** (you and I) are **unsafe** during this time in which
 - 37. lave our honors: wash our reputations
 - 38. vizards: masks, visors
 - 40. leave this: stop talking and thinking this way

Enter Macbeth.

Enter Macbein.	
How now, my lord, why do you keep alone, Of sorriest fancies your companions making, Using those thoughts which should indeed have died With them they think on? Things without all remedy Should be without regard. What's done is done.	10
ACBETH	
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,	15
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep	20
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.	25
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.	
ADY MACBETH Come on, gentle my lord,	30
Sleek o'er your rugged looks. Be bright and jovial	
Among your guests tonight.	
So shall I, love,	
And so I pray be you. Let your remembrance	
Apply to Banquo; present him eminence	35
Both with eye and tongue: unsafe the while that we	
Must lave our honors in these flattering streams	
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,	
Disguising what they are.	
ADY MACBETH You must leave this.	40

MACBETH

0, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife! Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance lives. 43. **nature's copy's not eterne:** i.e., they have not been granted eternal life **copy:** perhaps, copyhold tenure (a lease held by the lord of the manor); or, the individual copied from **nature's** mold

45-46. **flown...flight:** i.e., emerged (at twilight) from the secluded caves and dark corners where

bats sleep during the day

46. **Hecate:** a powerful goddess and the patron of witches

47. shard-born: born in dung (See longer note,

page 195.)

48. rung night's yawning peal: i.e., finished announcing, with its hums, the coming of sleepy night (The image is of the pealing of the curfew bell.)

52. **seeling night:** i.e., **night** that blinds the eyes (The image is of the sewing together of the eyelids of the falcon to keep it temporarily in darkness.)

53. Scarf up: blindfold; pitiful: compassionate

55. **Cancel...bond:** i.e., remove Banquo and Fleance (See longer note, page 195.)

57. rooky: i.e., filled with rooks

3.3 A third man joins the two whom Macbeth has already sent to kill Banquo and Fleance. The three assassins manage to kill Banquo. Fleance escapes.

3. He: i.e., the third murderer; delivers: reports

4. offices: duties

5. **To the direction just:** exactly according to (our) instructions (from Macbeth)

IADY 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-born beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH

What's to be done?

50

45

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 th' rooky wood.

Good things of day begin to droop and drowse, Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.—

60

55

Thou marvel'st at my words, but hold thee still. Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill. So prithee go with me.

They exit.

Scene 3

Enter three Murderers.

FIRST MURDERER

But who did bid thee join with us?

HIRD MURDERER Macbeth.

He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers
Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.

5

8. lated: belated, tardy

9. timely: opportune, welcome

10. **The subject of our watch:** the person we are waiting for

12 SD. within: offstage

14. within the note of expectation: i.e., included in the list of expected guests

16. **go about:** perhaps, are being led to the stables or away from the **palace gate** (line 18)



A Scottish thane killed in ambush. (3.3.24–26) From Raphael Holinshed, *The historie of Scotland* (1577).

They exit.

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, \(\text{and} \) near approaches	
The subject of our watch.	10
MURDERER Hark, I hear horses.	
anouo, 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.	15
FIRST MURDERER His horses go about.	
THIRD MURDERER	
Almost a mile; but he does usually	
(So all men do) from hence to th' palace gate	
Make it their walk.	
Enter Banquo and Fleance, with a torch.	
SECOND MURDERER A light, a light!	20
THIRD MURDERER 'Tis he.	
FIRST MURDERER Stand to 't.	
BANQUO, To Fleance It will be rain tonight.	
FIRST MURDERER Let it come down!	
The three Murderers attack.	
BANQUO	
O treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!	25
Thou mayst revenge—O slave!	
THe dies. Fleance exits.	
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.	30
SECOND MURDERER We have lost best half of our	
affair.	
FIRST MURDERER	
Well, let's away and say how much is done.	

- 3.4 As Macbeth's banquet begins, one of Banquo's murderers appears at the door to tell Macbeth of Banquo's death and Fleance's escape. Returning to the table, Macbeth is confronted by Banquo's ghost, invisible to all but Macbeth. While Lady Macbeth is able to dismiss as a momentary fit Macbeth's expressions of horror at the ghost's first appearance, the reappearance of the ghost and Macbeth's outcries in response to it force Lady Macbeth to send all the guests away. Alone with Lady Macbeth, Macbeth resolves to meet the witches again. He foresees a future marked by further violence.
- 1. **degrees:** relative status (and hence where you are entitled to sit)
 - 1-2. At first / And last: to all in whatever degree
- 6. **keeps her state:** remains on her throne; **in best time:** at the most proper moment
 - 7. require: request
- 10. **encounter thee:** respond to your welcome (perhaps with low bows as they take their places)
- 11. **Both sides are even:** perhaps, there are equal numbers on **both sides** of the table
- 12. large: liberal, unrestrained; Anon: soon; measure: i.e., a toast
 - 21. the nonpareil: without equal
- 23. I...perfect: I otherwise would have been fully secure, complete

5

10

15

20

Scene 4

Ranquet 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. 「Thev sit. [¬]

IORDS 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.

IADY MACBETH

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

Enter First Murderer \(\text{to the door.} \)

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. The approaches the Murderer. There's

blood upon thy face. MURDERER 'Tis Banquo's then.

MACBETH

'Tis better thee without than he within.

Is he dispatched?

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.

If thou didst it, thou art the nonpareil.

MURDERER

Most royal sir, Fleance is 'scaped.

MACBETH, [aside]

Then comes my fit again. I had else been perfect,

- 24. founded: rooted, stable
- 25. broad: free; casing: surrounding, enclosing
- 26. **cabined, cribbed:** closed in, cramped (as in a cabin or hovel)
 - 27. saucy: insolent; safe: unable to do harm
 - 28. bides: remains; waits
- 30. **The least a death to nature:** the smallest one of which would have been fatal
 - 32. worm: i.e., young serpent
 - 35. hear ourselves: talk
- 37. **give the cheer:** i.e., entertain your guests properly; **sold:** i.e., as opposed to **given** (line 39), as if the host were an innkeeper (Lines 37–39 say that a feast is no better than a meal in an inn if the host does not keep assuring his guests of their welcome.)
- 39. To feed...home: mere eating is best done at home
- 40. **From thence:** i.e., (when one is) away from home; **meat:** food; **ceremony:** the practice of courtesy
 - 41. Meeting were: social gatherings would be
- 41 SD. Enter the Ghost: The ghost is not observed by Macbeth until line 54. (See longer note, page 196.)
 - 43. wait on: serve, and therefore follow upon
- 46. **our country's honor roofed:** i.e., all the nobility of the country under one roof
- 48–49. **Who...mischance:** whom I hope I should blame for unkindly staying away rather than pity for some accident that has happened to him
- 51. **Lays... promise:** i.e., calls into question **his promise** (to be here)

M

1A

Whole as the marble, founded as the rock, As broad and general as the casing air. But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in To saucy doubts and fears.—But Banquo's safe? **CURDERER**	2:
Ay, my good lord. Safe in a ditch he bides, With twenty trenchèd gashes on his head, The least a death to nature. ACBETH Thanks for that. There the grown serpent lies. The worm that's fled Hath nature that in time will venom breed,	31
No teeth for th' present. Get thee gone. Tomorrow We'll hear ourselves again. Murderer exits. ADY 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;	3.
Meeting were bare without it. Enter the Ghost of Banquo, and sits in Macbeth's place. MACBETH, To Lady Macbeth Now, good digestion wait on appetite And health on both!	
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.	4.
Lays blame upon his promise. Please 't your Highness To grace us with your royal company?	5

The table's full.

MACBETH

57. moves: disturbs

66. upon a thought: in a moment

67. note: pay attention to

68. passion: disturbed state

75. air-drawn: made of air, airy

76. flaws and starts: outbursts

77. **to:** in comparison to; **well become:** be very appropriate for

78. woman's story: i.e., "old wives' tale" (See pic-

ture, below.)

79. **Authorized by:** vouched for, with a sense also of "authored by"; **Shame itself!:** i.e., for **shame!**



A woman "at a winter's fire." (3.4.78) From Jacob Cats, Alle de werken . . . (1657–59)

LENNOX Here is a place reserved, sir.	55
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?	60
MACBETH, To the Ghost	
Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake	
Thy gory locks at me.	
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.	65
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. \(\bar{Drawing Macbeth aside.} \)	
Are you a man?	70
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	75
Led you to Duncan. O, 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!	
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,	80
You look but on a stool.	
MACBETH	
Prithee, see there. Behold, look! \(\bar{To the Ghost.} \) Lo, how say you?	

85. **charnel houses:** vaults or small buildings for the bones of the dead (See picture, below.)

86–87. our monuments...kites: i.e., our only burial vaults (monuments) will be the stomachs (maws) of birds of prey (kites) See picture, page 106.

92. humane: civil, kindly; purged the gentle weal: cleansed the commonwealth of violence and made it gentle

97. crowns: heads

101. lack you: miss your company

107 SD. **Enter Ghost:** The ghost is not observed by Macbeth until line 113. See longer note on 3.4.41 SD.

110. **him we thirst: (to) him we** wish or long for (i.e., Banquo)

113. Avaunt: begone; quit: leave



A charnel house. (3.4.85) From *Todten-Tantz* . . . (1696).

Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too .-If charnel houses and our graves must send 85 Those that we bury back, our monuments shall be the maws of kites. Ghost exits. LADY MACBETH What, quite unmanned in folly? MACBETH If I stand here, I saw him. ADY MACBETH Fie. for shame! 90 MACBETH Blood hath been shed ere now, i' th' olden time. Fre humane statute purged the gentle weal: Av and since too, murders have been performed Too terrible for the ear. The stime has been That, when the brains were out, the man would die. 95 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 ADY MACBETH My worthy lord. 100 Your noble friends do lack you. I do forget.-MACBETH 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 105 all. Then I'll sit down.—Give me some wine. Fill full. Enter Ghost. I drink to th' 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. 110 And all to all. Our duties, and the pledge. IORDS They raise their drinking cups. MACBETH, To the Ghost

Avaunt, and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee. Thy bones are marrowless; thy blood is cold;

115. speculation: ability to see

119. a thing of custom: something customary

123. **Hyrcan:** from Hyrcania, a part of the Roman Empire located on the Caspian Sea (In the *Aeneid*, Hyrcania is associated with tigers.)

124. nerves: sinews

126. desert: (any) uninhabited place

127. **If trembling I inhabit then:** perhaps, if **I then** tremble; **protest me:** proclaim me

128. The baby of a girl: i.e., a baby girl

129. **mock'ry:** illusion (with perhaps the sense, also, of "that which mocks me")

130. being gone: i.e., it being gone

134. admired: amazing

137–38. **strange...owe:** i.e., feel like a stranger to my own nature **owe:** own

146. **Stand not...going:** i.e., don't insist on leaving in ceremonial rank **order**



A kite. (3.4.87; 4.3.256) From Konrad Gesner, . . . Historiae animalium . . . (1585–1604).

Thou hast no speculation in those eyes Which thou dost glare with.	115
ADY MACBETH Think of this, good	
peers,	
But as a thing of custom. 'Tis no other;	
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.	120
MACBETH, sto the Ghost What man dare, I dare.	120
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	125
And dare me to the desert with thy sword.	123
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me	
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!	
Unreal mock'ry, hence! Ghost exits.	
Why so, being gone,	130
I am a man again.—Pray you sit still.	
ADY MACBETH	
You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting	
With most admired disorder.	
MACBETH Can such things be	135
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	140
When mine is blanched with fear.	
What sights, my	
lord?	
LADY MACBETH	
I pray you, speak not. He grows worse and worse.	
Question enrages him. At once, good night.	145
Stand not upon the order of your going,	143
But go at once.	
Good night, and better health	
Attend his Majesty.	
Aucha majesty.	

154. Augurs: i.e., auguries, predictions; understood relations: comprehended reports

155. **By maggot pies and choughs:** i.e., by means of magpies and jackdaws

155–56. **brought forth:** revealed

157. man of blood: murderer; What is the night?: what time of night is it?

164. fee'd: paid (to spy)

165. betimes: early

166. bent: determined

169. no more: no further

171. will to hand: demand to be carried out

172. scanned: thought about carefully

173. **season:** seasoning (i.e., that which preserves and gives flavor or zest)

174. **strange and self-abuse:** remarkable self-delusion

175. **initiate fear:** i.e., **fear** felt by a beginner, an initiate; **wants:** lacks, needs; **hard use:** practice that hardens one; or, vigorous usage

LADY MACBETH A kind good night to all. Lords and all but Macbeth and Lady Macbeth exit.	150
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 maggot pies and choughs and rooks brought forth	155
The secret'st man of blood.—What is the night?	
LADY MACBETH	
Almost at odds with morning, which is which.	
MACBETH	
How say'st thou that Macduff denies his person	
At our great bidding?	160
IADY 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	
(And betimes I will) to the Weird Sisters.	165
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.	170
Strange things I have in head that will to hand,	
Which must be acted ere they may be scanned.	
IADY 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.	175
We are yet but young in deed.	

They exit.

- **3.5** The presentation of the witches in this scene (as in 4.1.38 SD-43 and 141-48) differs from their presentation in the rest of the play. Most editors and scholars believe that neither this scene nor the passages in 4.1 were written by Shakespeare.
 - 2. beldams: hags
 - 7. close: secret
- 15. **Acheron:** a river in the underworld, in Greek mythology
 - 24. profound: of deep significance
 - 27. artificial: deceitful; skilled in artifice
 - 29. confusion: destruction



Fortune turning mortals on her wheel. (3.1.126–28) From Gregor Reisch, *Margarita philosophica* ... (1503).

Scene 5

Thunder, Enter the three Witches, meeting Hecate.

FIRST WITCH

Why, how now, Hecate? You look angerly.

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 th' 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.

5

10

15

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25

30

32. security: too much self-confidence

35 SD. **Come away:** This song is from Thomas Middleton's play *The Witch* (Act 3, scene 3). The first two lines read "Come away! Come away! / Hecate, Hecate, come away!" Most scholars think that *Macbeth* 3.5, as well as parts of 4.1, were written by Middleton, perhaps for a revival of the play later in James's reign. Some attribute even more of the play to Middleton.

3.6 Lennox and an unnamed lord discuss politics in Scotland. Lennox comments sarcastically upon Macbeth's "official" versions of the many recent violent deaths. The nameless lord responds with news of Macduff's flight to England to seek help in overthrowing Macbeth.

1. **but hit your thoughts:** merely agreed with what you were already thinking

2. **interpret farther:** i.e., go on to draw further conclusions

3. borne: managed, conducted

5. **of:** by; **marry:** a mild oath (originally an oath on the name of Mary, mother of Jesus)

9. want the thought: help thinking

11. fact: deed, crime

12. straight: immediately

13. delinquents: offenders

14. slaves of drink: i.e., in a drunken stupor; thralls: slaves

20. an 't: if it

And you all know, security Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

Music and a song.

Hark! I am called. My little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me. [Hecate exits.]
Sing within "Come away, come away," etc.

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FIRST WITCH

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

They exit.

Sugu

Scene 6

Enter Lennox and another Lord.

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

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.

23. from broad words: as a result of plain speaking

28. son of Duncan: i.e., Malcolm

- 29. holds: withholds; due of birth: birthright
- 31. **Of:** by; **Edward: Edward** the Confessor, king of England from 1042 to 1066

32-33. nothing / Takes: does not detract

- 33. **his high respect:** the **high respect** granted Malcolm
 - 34. upon his aid: on Malcolm's behalf

37. ratify: sanction

40. free honors: honors freely given

- 45. **an absolute . . . I:** i.e., Macduff had answered Macbeth's order to appear with a peremptory **"Sir, not I"**
 - 46. cloudy: unhappy, gloomy; turns me: i.e., turns

48. clogs: burdens

50. him: i.e., Macduff

52. unfold: reveal

54-55. our ... accursed: i.e., our country, suffering under an accursed hand



A hermit. (1.6.24) From August Casimir Redel, Apophtegmata symbolica (n.d.).

They exit.

But peace. For from broad words, and 'cause he failed	
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear	25
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell	
Where he bestows himself?	
ORD The \(\sigma \) of Duncan	
(From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth)	
Lives in the English court and is received	30
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	35
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,	40
All which we pine for now. And this report	
Hath so exasperate the King that he	
Prepares for some attempt of war.	
ENNOX Sent he to Macduff?	
ORD	
He did, and with an absolute "Sir, not I,"	45
The cloudy messenger turns me his back	
And hums, as who should say "You'll rue the time	
That clogs me with this answer."	
ENNOX And that well might	
Advise him to a caution [t' hold] what distance	50
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	
Under a hand accursed.	55
OPD I'll send my prayers with him	

The Tragedy of

MACBETH

ACT 4

4.1 Macbeth approaches the witches to learn how to make his kingship secure. In response they summon for him three apparitions: an armed head, a bloody child, and finally a child crowned, with a tree in his hand. These apparitions instruct Macbeth to beware Macduff but reassure him that no man born of woman can harm him and that he will not be overthrown until Birnam Wood moves to Dunsinane. Macbeth is greatly reassured, but his confidence in the future is shaken when the witches show him a line of kings all in the image of Banquo. After the witches disappear, Macbeth discovers that Macduff has fled to England and decides to kill Macduff's family immediately.

1. brinded: brindled, striped

2. hedge-pig: hedgehog

3. Harpier: perhaps the Third Witch's familiar

6-9. Toad...pot: i.e., first boil the toad that has sweated venom for thirty-one days and nights under a cold stone Sweltered: exuded

12. Fillet: slice; fenny: i.e., living in a fen or swamp

ACT 4

Scene 1

Thunder, Enter 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 i' th' charmèd pot.
The Witches circle th
ALL

e cauldron.

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 blindworm's sting,

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17. howlet: owlet, small owl

23. mummy: mummified human flesh; maw and gulf: voracious belly

24. ravined: perhaps, ravenous; or, glutted

30. birth-strangled: i.e., killed as soon as born

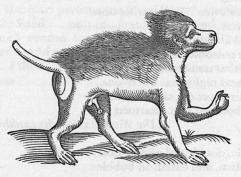
31. drab: whore

32. thick and slab: viscous

33. chaudron: entrails

37. baboon's: accented on first syllable

39–43. **O...in:** These lines (and the stage direction preceding them) are thought by most scholars to be by another author. Since the song that the witches sing, "Black Spirits," is from Middleton's play *The Witch*, the lines may have been written by Middleton.



A baboon. (4.1.37)
From Edward Topsell, *The historie of foure-footed beastes* . . . (1607).

Lizard's leg and howlet's wing, For a charm of powerful trouble, Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf, Witch's mummy, maw and gulf of the rayined salt-sea shark.

Root of hemlock digged i' th' dark, Liver of blaspheming Jew,

Gall of goat and slips of yew Slivered in the moon's eclipse, Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,

Nose of Turk and Tartar's fips, Finger of birth-strangled babe Ditch-delivered by a drab.

Make the gruel thick and slab.

Add thereto a tiger's chaudron For th' ingredience of our cauldron.

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 \(\text{to} \) the other three Witches.

HECATE

O, well done! I commend your pains,
And everyone shall share i'th' gains.
And now about the cauldron sing
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

Music and a song: "Black Spirits," etc. [Hecate exits.]

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51. conjure: command, adjure

54. yeasty: foamy, frothy (See picture, below.)

55. Confound: destroy; navigation: i.e., ships

56. **bladed corn:** wheat not yet fully ripe; **lodged:** beaten down by wind

58. warders': watchmen's

59. slope: perhaps, bend, or let fall

62. **nature's germens:** the seeds from which everything springs

63. sicken: becomes nauseated (at its own destructiveness)

72. farrow: young pigs; sweaten: sweated



Winds and "yeasty waves." (4.1.53–55) From Lodovico Dolce, *Imprese nobili* . . . (1583).

By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes. Open, locks, Whoever knocks.	45
Enter Macbeth.	
HOW now, you secret, black, and midnight hags? What is 't you do? A deed without a name. HOGGETH	50
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,	55
Though palaces and pyramids do slope Their heads to their foundations, though the treasure Of nature's 「germens tumble fall together Even till destruction sicken, answer me To what I ask you.	60
RST WITCH Speak.	65
Demand. We'll answer.	
Say if th' hadst rather hear it from our mouths Or from our masters'. Call 'em. Let me see 'em.	70
Pour in sow's blood that hath eaten Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten	70

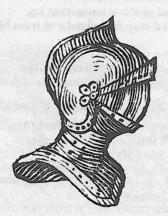
76. office: function, duty

76 SD. Armed Head: a helmeted head (See picture, below.)

84. harped: sounded, guessed (as in touching the

right string on a harp)

95. **take a bond of fate:** bind **fate** by a contract, get a guarantee from **fate** (i.e., make doubly sure that Macbeth will not be harmed)



"... an Armed Head." (4.1.76 SD)
From Louis de Gaya, Traité des armes ... (1678).

n the murderers' gibbet throw the flame. Come high or low; self and office deftly show.	75
Thunder. First Apparition, an Armed Head.	
me, thou unknown power— He knows thy	
ought. r his speech but say thou naught. pparition	80
beth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff! vare the Thane of Fife! Dismiss me. Enough. He descends.	
TH ate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks. bu hast harped my fear aright. But one word hore— WITCH will not be commanded. Here's another	85
re potent than the first.	
Thunder. Second Apparition, a Bloody Child.	
ID APPARITION Macbeth! Macbeth!— ETH Had I three ears, I'd hear thee. ID APPARITION	
bloody, bold, and resolute. Laugh to scorn power of man, for none of woman born all harm Macbeth. He descends.	90
en live, Macduff; what need I fear of thee? t yet I'll make assurance double sure d take a bond of fate. Thou shalt not live,	95
at I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,	

99. **like the issue of a king:** in the shape of an heir to a throne

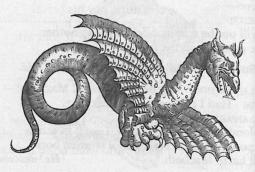
100-101. round ... sovereignty: royal crown

104. chafes: becomes irritated

109. **impress:** conscript, draft, compel into service

110. his: its; bodements: prophecies

- 111. **Rebellious dead:** perhaps in reference t_0 Banquo, who rebelled against death by appearing t_0 Macbeth
- 113. live the lease of nature: i.e., live out his natural life
 - 114. mortal custom: normal (customary) death
- 126. **shadows:** apparitions, illusions (The word could also mean "actors," appropriate for **a show** [line 126 SD].)



A dragon. (4.1.22)
From Ulisse Aldrovandi, . . . Serpentum, et draconum
historiae libri duo . . . (1640 [1639]).

flunder. 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?

100

Listen but speak not to 't.

HIRD APPARITION

Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are. Macbeth shall never vanquished be until Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill Shall come against him.

[He] descends.

105

110

115

120

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

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?

Seek to know no more.

MACBETH

ALL

I will be satisfied. Deny me this,

And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know! 「Cauldron sinks. Thautboys.

Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise is this?

SECOND WITCH Show.

THIRD WITCH Show.

ALL

Show his eyes and grieve his heart. Come like shadows; so depart. 125

126 SD. **show:** (1) spectacle, dumb **show** (stage action without dialogue); (2) manifestation, vision; **eight kings: eight kings** of Scotland, including James VI (a supposed descendant of Banquo), who in 1603 also became James I of England; **glass:** magic mirror or crystal

127–39. **Thou art...for his:** Macbeth speaks as the figures walk across the stage one by one, with

Banquo appearing last, at line 137.

129. other: i.e., second

131. Start: i.e., burst from your sockets

132. th' crack of doom: perhaps, the thunder crash of judgment day; or, the blast of the arch-

angel's trumpet announcing judgment day

136. **twofold:** double (signifying England and Scotland); **treble:** The reference here is probably to King James's title of "King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland," assumed by him in 1604.

138. blood-boltered: i.e., having his hair matted

with blood

139. for his: as his descendants

141–48. **Ay...pay:** lines regarded by most scholars as written by another author

142. amazedly: as in a trance

143. sprites: spirits

146. antic round: fantastic dance

150. ave: forever

151. without there: i.e., you who are outside

A show of eight kings, ^{\(\gamma\)} the eighth king \(\gamma\) with a glass in his hand, and Banquo last.

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.

The Apparitions disappear. ™
What, is this so? 140

145

150

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 the 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 vanish.

MACBETH

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

Enter Lennox.

What's your Grace's will?

LENNOX

159. horse: horses or horsemen

164. anticipat'st: prevent, forestall; dread: dreadful

165-66. **The flighty purpose...with it:** i.e., purposes are so fleeting that they escape unless accompanied by acts that fulfill them

167. firstlings: firstborn

171. surprise: seize suddenly

174. trace him in his line: i.e., are his descendants

176. sights: hallucinations



A yew tree. (4.1.27) From John Gerard, The herball or generall historie of plantes . . . (1597).

They exit.

The second secon	
MACBETH	
Saw you the Weird Sisters?	
LENNOX No, my lord.	
MACBETH	
Came they not by you?	155
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?	
LENNOX	
'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word	160
Macduff is fled to England.	
MACBETH Fled to England?	
LENNOX Ay, my good lord.	
MACBETH, [aside]	
Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits.	
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook	16
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:	170
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.	17
But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?	
Come bring me where they are.	

- **4.2** Ross visits Lady Macduff and tries to justify to her Macduff's flight to England, a flight that leaves his family defenseless. After Ross leaves, a messenger arrives to warn Lady Macduff to flee. Before she can do so, Macbeth's men attack her and her son.
- 5. Our fears do make us traitors: perhaps, (Macduff's) fear, leading to his flight, makes him a traitor (to his family? to his country?)

11. He wants the natural touch: he lacks the natural instinct (to protect his children)

13. Her young ones in her nest: i.e., when her voung are in the nest

17. coz: cousin, kinswoman

18. school: control; for: as for

20. **The fits o' th' season:** the violent disturbances in (Scotland's political) climate

- 22-23. we are traitors...ourselves: we are considered traitors while being unaware of our treason
- 23–24. hold rumor / From what we fear: perhaps, believe what our fears dictate; or judge rumors according to what we fear may happen

27. Shall not be long but: i.e., the time will not

be long before

Scene 2

Enter Macduff's Wife, her Son, and Ross.

MACDUFF	Y	M	ACE	UFF
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hat had he done to make him fly the land?

ou must have patience, madam. He had none.

Y MACDUFF

lis flight was madness. When our actions do not, our fears do make us traitors.

You know not

Vhether it was his wisdom or his fear.

Y MACDUFF

Visdom? To leave his wife, to leave his babes,

lis mansion and his titles in a place

rom whence himself does fly? He loves us not; le 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. My dearest coz, SS

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 move-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.

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32-33. **should...discomfort:** i.e., if **I should stay longer**, (my tears) **would** disgrace me and make you uncomfortable

37. As birds do: See Matthew 6.26: "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap...; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them."

40–41. **the net nor lime,** / **The pitfall nor the gin:** traps for catching birds **lime:** birdlime **gin:** snare (literally, "engine") (See picture, below.)

42–43. **Poor birds...set for:** i.e., people don't set traps for *poor* birds (birds of little worth)—wordplay on Lady Macduff's **Poor bird** (bird that is pitiable or unfortunate), line 40

49. wit: intelligence

50. for thee: for a child

54. **swears and lies:** Lady Macduff defines a traitor as **one** who **swears** an oath of loyalty to a sovereign and then breaks it; the oath, then, is a lie. Her son seems to take "swearing and lying" as general use of profanity and failing to tell the truth.



Birds caught in a "gin" or trap. (4.2.40–41) From Henry Parrot, *Laquei ridiculosi*... (1613).

55

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. Ross exits. 1ADY MACDUFF Sirrah, your father's dead. 35 And what will you do now? How will you live? SON As birds do, mother. What, with worms and flies? LADY MACDUFF SON With what I get, I mean; and so do they. IADY MACDUFF Poor bird, thou'dst never fear the net nor lime, 40 The pitfall nor the gin. SON Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set My father is not dead, for all your saying. LADY MACDUFF Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for a father? 45 SON Nay, how will you do for a husband? I ADY MACDUFF Why. I can buy me twenty at any market. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again. IADY MACDUFF Thou speak'st with all thy wit, And yet, i' faith, with wit enough for thee. 50 son Was my father a traitor, mother? LADY MACDUFF Ay, that he was. son What is a traitor?

must be hanged.

son And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

LADY MACDUFF Every one that does so is a traitor and

LADY MACDUFF Why, one that swears and lies.

son And be all traitors that do so?

72. **in your state of honor I am perfect:** I know you well as a noble lady

73. doubt: fear; nearly: very soon; very near

74. homely: plain

77. do worse: i.e., physically abuse you; fell: terrible

78. Which is too nigh: i.e., such savage cruelty is all too near



An earthquake. (2.3.68–69) From Conrad Lycosthenes, *Prodigiorum* (1557).

19:	
ADY MACDUFF Every one. Who must hang them?	60
ADY MACDUFF Why, the honest men. 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.	6!
LADY MACDUFF Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!	70
Enter a 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	7:
you! I dare abide no longer. Messenger exits. 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	80
Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas, Do I put up that womanly defense To say I have done no harm?	8.

Enter Murderers.

What are these faces?

MURDERER Where is your husband?

93. **shag-eared:** changed by many editors to "shag-haired"

94. egg: term of contempt for a child

95. fry: offspring, progeny

- 4.3 Macduff finds Malcolm at the English court and urges him to attack Macbeth at once. Malcolm suspects that Macduff is Macbeth's agent sent to lure Malcolm to his destruction in Scotland. After Malcolm tests Macduff and finds him sincere, Malcolm reveals that Edward, king of England, has provided a commander (Siward) and ten thousand troops for the invasion of Scotland. Ross then arrives with the news of the slaughter of Macduff's entire household. At first grief-stricken, Macduff follows Malcolm's advice and converts his grief into a desire to avenge himself on Macbeth.
- 4. mortal: deadly; good men: i.e., strong fighting men
- 5. **Bestride...birthdom:** i.e., fight to protect our prostrated country (The image is that of a soldier straddling a felled comrade and fighting off the comrade's attackers.)
 - 7. that: i.e., so that
- 9. Like syllable: the same (or a comparable) sound
- 12. **the time to friend:** an opportune (friendly) **time**
 - 14. sole: mere
 - 15. honest: honorable

LADY MACDUFF

I hope in no place so unsanctified

Where such as thou mayst find him.

He's a traitor. MURDERER

SON

Thou liest, thou shag-eared villain!

MURDERER What, you egg?

Stabbing him. Young fry of treachery!

He has killed SON

me, mother.

Run away, I pray you.

[Lady Macduff] exits, crying "Murder!" [followed by the Murderers bearing the Son's body.

Scene 3

Enter Malcolm and Macduff.

MALCOLM

Let us seek out some desolate shade and there Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Let us rather MACDUFF

Hold fast the mortal sword and, like good men. Bestride 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

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18. and wisdom: i.e., and consider it wisdom

23–24. recoil / In an imperial charge: The general sense is "give way under pressure from a king." recoil: fall back, degenerate charge: mandate, order

26. **That...transpose:** i.e., **my thoughts** (no matter how negative) **cannot** change you into something different from what **you are**

27. **the brightest:** i.e., Lucifer, brightest of the angels, cast from heaven for rebelling against God

- 28–30. **Though...so:** i.e., even though **foul things** wear, when they can, the look of those in a state **of grace**, those really in a state **of grace** nevertheless continue to **look** gracious
 - 32. even there: in the very place
 - 33. rawness: vulnerability, unprotectedness
- 34. **motives:** (1) incitements (to his protective instinct); (2) arguments (for his protection)
- 36–37. Let ... safeties: i.e., don't assume that my suspicions cast doubts on your honor, but see them as measures taken for my own safety jealousies: suspicions
 - 37. rightly just: perfectly honorable
 - 40. basis: foundation; sure: securely, safely
 - 41. check: restrain, reprove, curb
- 41–42. **Wear thou thy wrongs:** i.e., carry (as an heraldic device on your shield) that which you have won through your crimes
- 43. The title is affected: i.e., Macbeth's title to the crown is confirmed (affected)
 - 48. absolute fear: complete mistrust
 - 51. withal: as well, at the same time

You may ^r deserve ⁷ of him through me, and wisdom To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb	
T' appease an angry god.	2
ACDUFF	_
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.	2
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.	
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, lay thou thy basis sure,	
For goodness dare not check thee. Wear thou thy	
wrongs;	
The title is affeered.—Fare thee well, 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	

- 53. gracious England: the gracious king of England
 - 58. More suffer: shall suffer more
 - 59. succeed: i.e., succeed to the throne
- 62. particulars: various kinds; grafted: implanted, engrafted
 - 63. opened: exposed; or, unfolded like a flower
 - 66. confineless: unbounded
 - 69. top: surpass
 - 70. bloody: bloodthirsty
 - 71. Luxurious: lecherous
 - 72. Sudden: rash
 - 75. maids: virgins
 - 77. continent: chaste; also, restraining
 - 78. will: lust, carnal appetite
 - 83. yet: nevertheless
- 85. **Convey...plenty:** secretly conduct **your pleasures** on a large scale **Convey:** manage **spacious:** ample
- 86. **cold:** chaste; or, indifferent; **hoodwink:** delude, blindfold

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.	55
MACDUFF What should he be?	60
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, and the poor state	
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared	65
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,	70
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	75
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	80
In nature is a tyranny. It hath been	
Th' 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	85
And yet seem cold—the time you may so hoodwink.	

92. affection: disposition

93. stanchless: insatiable

94. cut off: destroy. kill

95. his jewels: the jewels of one subject

102. summer-seeming: i.e., summer-beseeming, suitable for the summer of one's youth; or, summerlike and therefore of short duration

103. The sword . . . kings: i.e., the cause of the death of our slain kings

104. foisons: plentiful supplies

105. Of your mere own: from your royal property alone; portable: bearable, supportable

106. With ... weighed: balanced against other

qualities that are virtuous

108. As: such as

109. lowliness: humility

111. relish of: taste for: trace of

112. division: variation, modulation (as if each crime were a piece of music to be played); several: distinct

115. confound: destroy

le have willing dames enough. There cannot be	
hat vulture in you to devour so many	
s will to greatness dedicate themselves,	-
inding it so inclined.	90
With this there grows	
n my most ill-composed affection such	
stanchless avarice that, were I king,	
should cut off the nobles for their lands,	44
lesire his jewels, and this other's house;	95
nd my more-having would be as a sauce	
o make me hunger more, that I should forge	
Puarrels unjust against the good and loyal,	
Destroying them for wealth.	
This avarice	100
sticks deeper grows with more pernicious root	
than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been	
the sword of our slain kings. Yet do not lear.	
Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will	
Of your mere own. All these are portable,	105
With other graces weighed.	
I COLM	
But I have none. The king-becoming graces,	
As justice, verity, temp'rance, stableness,	
Bounty perseverance, mercy, lowliness,	
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,	110
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	115
All unity on earth.	
ACDUFF O Scotland, Scotland!	
ALCOLM .	
If such a one be fit to govern, speak.	
I am as I have spoken.	
Et to govern)	120
ACDUFF FIL to govern:	

122. untitled: i.e., unentitled, usurping

124. **truest issue of thy throne:** heir with the most right to the **throne**

125. interdiction: i.e., censure

126. **blaspheme his breed:** defame his family line (through his scandalous behavior)

129. **Died...lived: died** to the world (mortified her flesh through penances and religious exercises) **every day** of her life

133. passion: display of feelings

137. **trains:** wiles, stratagems (such as Macduff's visit seemed to be); **win:** capture, seize

138. modest wisdom: wise moderation, prudent

caution; plucks me: pulls me back

142. mine own detraction: my detraction of myself

144. For: as

145. **Unknown to woman:** i.e., a virgin (rather than the lascivious beast that I presented myself as being); **never was forsworn:** have **never** deliberately broken my oath

150. upon: about

153. warlike: equipped for battle

154. at a point: in readiness

155–56. **we'll...quarrel:** i.e., we will travel **together**, and may our success be as good as our cause is just **chance of goodness:** success **warranted:** justified **quarrel:** ground for action

No, not to live.—O nation miserable,	
With an untitled tyrant bloody-sceptered,	
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,	Lua I
Since that the truest issue of thy throne	
By his own interdiction stands faccursed	125
And does blaspheme his breed?—Thy royal father	
Was a most sainted king. The queen that bore the	
Oft'ner upon her knees than on her feet,	auer I
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well.	
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself	130
Hath banished me from Scotland.—O my breast,	
Thy hope ends here!	
Macduff, this noble passion,	
Child of integrity, hath from my soul	
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts	135
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	ada II.
Deal between thee and me, for even now	140
I put myself to thy direction and	
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,	145
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,	
At no time broke my faith, would not betray	
The devil to his fellow, and delight	
No less in truth than life. My first false speaking	
Was this upon myself. What I am truly	150
Is thine and my poor country's to command—	
Whither indeed, before fthy 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	155
Be like our warranted quarrel. Why are you silent	?

159. forth: i.e., out of his private rooms

162. stay: await

162-63. **convinces...art:** conquers (defeats) the efforts of (medical) science

165. presently: immediately

168. **the evil:** i.e., scrofula, or "**the** king's **evil**," so-called because the king was thought to have the power to heal it with his touch

172. strangely visited: i.e., afflicted by this

strange disease

174. mere: total, utter

175. **stamp:** a coin stamped with a particular impression

177–78. To the succeeding royalty... benediction: i.e., to the royal line that will succeed him he bequeaths the power of giving this curative blessing

178. With: along with; virtue: power

183. My...not: i.e., I can tell (by his clothing) that he is from Scotland, but I do not yet recognize him

MACDUFF

such welcome and unwelcome things at once 'Tis hard to reconcile.

Enter a Doctor.

Well, more anon. Comes the King forth, I pray you?

DOCTOR

Av. 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.

I thank you, doctor. MALCOLM

[Doctor] exits

165

175

180

MACDUFF

What's the disease he means?

'Tis called the evil: MALCOLM

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 eve.

The mere despair of surgery, he cures, Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,

Put on with holy prayers; and, 'tis spoken, 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 MALCOLM See who comes here.

My countryman, but yet I know him not.

185. betimes: soon

192. But who: except someone who; once: ever

193. rent: rend, tear

194. made, not marked: i.e., so common as not to be noted

195. **modern:** ordinary, commonplace; **ecstasy:** i.e., emotion

198. or ere they: before they ever

199. relation: report; nice: precisely spelled out

200. grief: wrong, injury

201. **doth hiss the speaker:** i.e., earns the teller of the injury only hisses because it is already an old story

202. teems: brings forth

204. well: When spoken of the dead, well meant "at peace." The proverb ran: "He is well since he is in Heaven." See Antony and Cleopatra 2.5.38–39: "we use / To say the dead are well"; Romeo and Juliet 5.1.18–19: "she is well . . . / Her body sleeps in Capels' monument."

209. niggard: miser

151	Macbein	ACT 4. SC. 3	
MACDUFF	Modern et amore	consisting 1515	
My ever-gentle cou	sin, welcome hithe	er.	
MALCOLM			
I know him now.—	Good God betimes	s remove	1
The means that ma	kes us strangers!		
ROSS	S	ir, amen.	
MACDUFF			
Stands Scotland w	here it did?		
ROSS	Alas, pe	oor country,	
Almost afraid to kr	now itself. It canno	t emistered trus	1
Be called our moth But who knows no Where sighs and gr Are made, not mar	thing is once seen coans and shrieks t ked; where violent	to smile; that rent the air sorrow seems	
A modern ecstasy. Is there scarce aske Expire before the f	ed for who, and go	od men's lives	1
Dying or ere they s	icken.		
MACDUFF	运动。第二年中心 DEMER		
O relation too nice			
MALCOLM What's the	newest grief?		2
ROSS	in constitutional property and		
That of an hour's a	ge doth hiss the sp	eaker.	
Each minute teems	s a new one.		
MACDUFF	How d	loes my wife?	
Ross Why, well.			
MACDUFF And all my	children?		2
Ross Well too.			
MACDUFF	H (1974)		
The tyrant has not	battered at their p	eace?	
ROSS		DV.	
No, they were well MACDUFF	at peace when I di	id leave 'em.	
Be not a niggard of	your speech. How	v goes 't?	
ROSS			
When I came hithe	r to transport the	tidings	2

212. out: i.e., in arms, in rebellion

213–14. witnessed the rather / For that: confirmed the more readily because

214. power: forces; afoot: mobilized

215. of: for; Your eye: i.e., Malcolm's person

217. doff: put off, get rid of

221–22. An older... gives out: i.e., there is no one in the Christian world reputed to be a more experienced or better soldier none: there is none gives out: proclaims

225. would: ought to

226. latch: catch the sound of

229–30. a fee-grief / Due to some single breast: a grief belonging to one particular person fee-grief: a term modeled on the term "fee-simple," an estate belonging to one man and his heirs forever Due to: belonging to

240. surprised: captured without warning

242. quarry: heap

	ily borne, there ran a rumor	
	llows that were out;	
	pelief witnessed the rather	
For that I saw the	tyrant's power afoot.	
Now is the time of	help. Your eye in Scotland	215
Would create soldi	ers, make our women fight	
To doff their dire d	istresses.	
MALCOLM	Be 't their comfort	
We are coming this	ther. Gracious England hath	
	rd and ten thousand men;	220
An older and a bett		
That Christendom		
	Would I could answer	
ROSS This comfort with	the like. But I have words	
	vled out in the desert air,	225
	ould not latch them.	225
	What concern	
MACDUFF	What concern	
they—	is it a few mainf	
The general cause,		226
Due to some single		230
ROSS	No mind that's honest	
	me woe, though the main part	
Pertains to you alo		
MACDUFF	If it be mine,	
Keep it not from m	ne. Quickly let me have it.	235
ROSS		
	lespise my tongue forever,	
	ss them with the heaviest sound	
That ever yet they	heard.	
MACDUFF	Hum! I guess at it.	
ROSS		
Your castle is surp	rised, your wife and babes	240
Savagely slaughter	ed. To relate the manner	
	y of these murdered deer	
To add the death o		
MALCOLM	Merciful heaven!—	

245. **pull...brows:** a conventional gesture of deep sorrow

246-47. The grief...break: Proverbial: "Grief pent up will break the heart." Whispers: whispers to o'erfraught: overburdened

250. from thence: away from there

255. **He has no children:** Usually taken to mean that Macbeth's lack of children explains his unspeakable cruelty, the words could mean that *Malcolm's* lack of children explains his rather callous attempts to cheer up Macduff.

256. hell-kite: evil bird of prey

259. Dispute: fight against

265. Naught that I am: i.e., wicked man that I am

270. play the woman with mine eyes: i.e., weep 272. intermission: delay; Front to front: i.e., face to face

Heaven forgive him too.

278. Our...leave: we lack nothing now except to take leave (of the king)

279. **powers:** (1) gods; (2) troops, armies, hosts 280. **Put on their instruments:** i.e., arm themselves for battle **instruments:** weapons



A knight in armor. (5.3.43–44, 59; 5.5.59) From Henry Peacham, *Minerua Britanna* (1612).

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.

280

The night is long that never finds the day.

They exit.

The Tragedy of MACBETH

ACT 5

5.1 A gentlewoman who waits on Lady Macbeth has seen her walking in her sleep and has asked a doctor's advice. Together they observe Lady Macbeth make the gestures of repeatedly washing her hands as she relives the horrors that she and Macbeth have carried out and experienced. The doctor concludes that she needs spiritual rather than medical aid.

0 SD. Physic: medicine

3. walked: i.e., walked in her sleep

5-6. nightgown: dressing gown

6. closet: cabinet

11-12. **do the effects of watching:** perform the actions of (someone) awake

17. meet: proper

21. very guise: usual behavior

22. close: hidden

ACT 5

Scene 1

Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting-Gentlewoman.

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

ENTLEWOMAN Since his Majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown 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.

5

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OCTOR A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching. In this slumb'ry 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 anyone, having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter Lady \(\text{Macbeth} \) with a taper.

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

30. accustomed: customary, usual

37. **One. Two.:** She is presumably remembering the clock striking 2 A.M. just before the murder.

43. mark: hear, notice

46. mar all: upset everything

47. this starting: these starts (i.e., sudden fits)

48. Go to: for shame

56-57. sorely charged: gravely burdened

59. dignity: worth

GI

30

35

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45

50

55

nOCTOR How came she by that light?

her continually. Tis her command.

MCTOR You see her eyes are open.

CENTLEWOMAN Ay, but their sense are shut.

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

SENTLEWOMAN 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.

IADY MACBETH Yet here's a spot.

poctor Hark, she speaks. I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more

strongly.

Why then, 'tis time to do 't. 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?

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.

the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. O, O, O!

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.

65-66. **nightgown:** dressing gown

67. on 's: of his

78. divine: minister or priest

80. annoyance: i.e., injuring herself

82. mated: stupefied; amazed: astounded

5.2 A Scottish force, in rebellion against Macbeth, marches toward Birnam Wood to join Malcolm and his English army.

0 SD. **Drum and Colors:** i.e., a drummer and men carrying banners



A Scottish castle with moat, drawbridge, and towers. (5.2.14) From Raphael Holinshed, *The historie of Scotland* (1577).

Control of the Contro		17000
R Well, well.	60	
EWOMAN Pray God it be, sir. R This disease is beyond my practice. Yet I have nown those which have walked in their sleep, who have died holily in their beds.		5
MACBETH Wash your hands. Put on your ingiterown. Look not so pale. I tell you yet again, Ban- uo's buried; he cannot come out on 's grave.	65	
DR Even so? MACBETH To bed, to bed. There's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come. Give me your nand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed. OR Will she go now to bed?	70	10
LEWOMAN Directly.		
or o	75	15
od, God forgive us all. Look after fiel. emove from her the means of all annoyance nd still keep eyes upon her. So, good night. Iv mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.	80	20
think but dare not speak. TLEWOMAN Good night, good doctor. They exit		:5
Scene 2		
rum and Colors. Enter Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, 「and Soldiers.		0
NTEITH led on by Malcolm.		
The English power is near, led on by Malcolm, His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.	and _	5

3. dear: deeply felt; also, grievous, dire

4-5. Would ... man: i.e., would quicken dead men to bloody and desperate attack alarm: call to fight Excite: quicken mortified: dead

9. file: list

11. unrough: unbearded, smooth-faced

12. **Protest:** assert; **their first of manhood:** the beginning of **their manhood**

17. distempered: diseased and swollen

21. **minutely:** i.e., every minute; **upbraid:** condemn; **faith-breach:** breach of his oath (to Duncan—or breach of all oaths and vows)

27. **pestered:** infested; obstructed; overcrowded; **to recoil and start:** to flinch in alarm

32. weal: state, commonwealth

33–34. **pour . . . us:** i.e., **pour** out every drop of our blood in purging (curing) our country

levenges burn in them, for their dear causes Vould to the bleeding and the grim alarm	5
Excite the mortified man. Near Birnam Wood	
SUS Near Birliam wood	
Shall we well meet them. That way are they coming. THNESS	
Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?	
For certain sir he is not. I have a file	
of all the gentry. There is Siward's soil	10
And many unrough youths that even now	
Protest their first of manhood.	
INTEITH What does the tyrant.	
ITHNESS Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.	
Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him	15
Do call it valiant fury. But for certain	
He cannot buckle his distempered cause	
He cannot buckle his distempered that	
Within the belt of rule. Now does he feel	
IGUS	20
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	25
Upon a dwarfish thief.	
Who, then, shall blame	
His pestered senses to recoil and start	
When all that is within him does condemn	
Itself for being there?	20
Well, march we on	30
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed.	
Most we the med'cine of the sickly Wear,	
And with him pour we in our country's purge	
Each drop of us.	
LENNOX Or so much as it needs	3.

- **5.3** Reports are brought to Macbeth of the Scottish and English forces massed against him. He seeks assurance in the apparitions' promise of safety for himself. But he is anxious about Lady Macbeth's condition and impatient with her doctor's inability to cure her.
 - 1. them fly all: i.e., the deserting thanes all flee
 - 3. taint: become tainted
- 5. **mortal consequences:** that which happens to humanity
- 9. **English epicures:** a Scottish taunt at **English** eating habits **epicures:** gluttons, or those devoted to luxury
 - 10. sway by: rule myself by
 - 12. loon: rogue
- 17. **over-red thy fear:** i.e., give color to your frightened face
- 18. **lily-livered:** white-livered (because bloodless), cowardly; **patch:** fool
 - 19. of thy: on your
- 20. Are counselors to fear: i.e., teach others to be frightened
 - 24. push: effort

10

15

20

To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds. Make we our march towards Birnam.

They exit marching.

Scene 3

Enter Macbeth, ^{「the]} 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.
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter Servant.

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 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 The English force, so please you.

MACBETH

Seyton!—I am sick at heart When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push

- 25. disseat: unseat, dethrone
- 27. the sere: the (condition of being) dry and withered
 - 29. As: such as
 - 30. look: expect
- 31. **mouth-honor:** honor from the tongue (rather than the heart); **breath:** voice (of support)
 - 32. fain: gladly
 - 42. Skirr: search quickly, scour
 - 52. Raze out: erase
 - 53. oblivious: i.e., causing oblivion
 - 54. stuffed: clogged



A warrior's armor. (5.3.39,43–44) From Wilhelm Dilich, ... Krieges-Schule ... (1689).

Will cheer me ever or Tdisseat 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.—	30
Seyton!	
Enter Seyton.	
EYTON	
What's your gracious pleasure?	35
MACBETH What news more?	
EYTON	
All is confirmed, my lord, which was reported.	
ACBETH	
I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hacked.	
Give me my armor.	
EYTON 'Tis not needed yet.	40
AACBETH 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?	45
остог 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,	50
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?	55

58. physic: medicine

62. dispatch: make haste (probably said to one of

his attendants who is arming him)

62-63. **cast / The water of my land:** i.e., diagnose the disease from which Scotland is suffering **cast the water:** examine the (patient's) urine to diagnose an illness

69. them: i.e., the English

73. bane: destruction

5.4 The rebel Scottish forces have joined Malcolm's army at Birnam Wood. Malcolm orders each soldier to cut down and carry a bough from the Wood so as to conceal their numbers from Macbeth.

1. Cousins: kinsmen

2. **chambers:** i.e., such rooms as bedchambers and dining rooms (See 1.7.31, where the dining hall of Inverness is called a **chamber.**)

	Mucbert	ACT 5. Sc. 4
TOR	There	in the patient
lust minister to hi	imself.	
BETH	And the state of t	or nervisitely and
hrow physic to th	e dogs. I'll none o	f it.—
ome, but mine ar	mor on. Give me	my staff.
	Attendants be	egin to arm nim.
	Doctor, the thane	es fly from 6
me.—	If they coulds	t doctor cast
lome, sir, dispatch	n.—If thou coulds	c, doctor, cast
the water of my la	and, find her disea	boolth
ind purge it to a s	ound and pristine	e neami,
would applaud th	nee to the very ect	10
that should appla	ud again.—Pull t	off, I say.—
What rhubarh ser	ina or what purg	ative arug
Would scour these them?	English hence? I	Hear'st thou of
CTOR		ration
Ay, my good lord. Makes us hear sor	Your royal prepar nething.	ation
CBETH	Bring it a	fter me.—
Lwill not be afraid	d of death and bar	ne
Till Birnam Fores	t come to Dunsina	ane.
octor, [aside]	inana asyasi and c	lear
Were I from Duns	sinane away and c	hara
Profit again shoul	ld hardly draw me	They exit.
	Scene 4	
Siward's son, Mente	Enter Malcolm, S eith, Caithness, An	Siward, Macduff, Igus, and Soldiers,

MALCOLM

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

- 3. nothing: not at all
- 7. shadow: conceal
- 8. host: army; discovery: i.e., Macbeth's scouts
- 11. no other but: nothing else but that
- 12. Keeps: remains
- 12-13. **endure...before** 't: not prevent our laying siege to it
- 15. **where . . . given:** i.e., wherever opportunity offers itself
 - 16. more and less: nobles and commoners
- 19–20. Let ... event: i.e., let us wait to judge until we see the outcome censures: judgments Attend: await true event: actual outcome
- 26. **certain issue strokes must arbitrate:** i.e., the definite outcome **must** be decided by blows



A castle under siege, with scaling ladders. (5.5.1–3) From [John Lydgate,] *The hystorye sege* and dystruccyon of Troye [1513].

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.

SOLDIER

It shall be done.

CIWARD

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.

The time approaches SIWARD

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.

They exit marching.

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- **5.5** Macbeth is confident that he can withstand any siege from Malcolm's forces. He is then told of Lady Macbeth's death and of the apparent movement of Birnam Wood toward Dunsinane Castle, where he waits. He desperately resolves to abandon the castle and give battle to Malcolm in the field.
 - 4. ague: pestilence (pronounced a-gue)
- 5. **forced:** reinforced; also, perhaps, stuffed ("farced")
- 5-6. **those that should be ours:** i.e., deserters from our ranks
- 7. met them: i.e., in the field, in open battle; dareful: boldly
 - 12. my ... cooled: I would have been chilled
 - 13. my fell of hair: i.e., the hair on my scalp
 - 14. dismal treatise: dreadful tale
 - 15. As: as if
 - 16. Direness: horror
 - 17. start: startle
 - 18. Wherefore: for what reason, why
- 20. **She should have died hereafter:** i.e., she would inevitably have died sometime; or, perhaps, she ought to have died at some future time
- 22–26. **Tomorrow...death:** Behind Macbeth's terrible reflections lie the images of "life as a story" and "life as light." (See, e.g., Matthew 5.16.)
 - 23. petty: slow, insignificant
 - 24. recorded time: i.e., recordable time
- 26. **dusty death:** See Genesis 3.19: "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

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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,

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. The exits. 10

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.
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!

- 27. **shadow:** image without substance; also, actor; **player:** actor
 - 38. anon: soon; methought: it seemed to me
- 46. **cling:** wither, shrink; **speech be sooth:** story is true
- 48. **pull in:** i.e., rein in; **resolution:** determination, steadfastness
 - 49. doubt: suspect
 - 54. nor...nor: neither...nor
- 56. **th' estate o' th' world:** perhaps, the settled order of the universe
 - 57. undone: destroyed



A sixteenth-century image of Brutus's suicide. (5.8.1-2) From Geoffrey Whitney, A choice of emblemes . . . (1586).

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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 com'st 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 't.

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

undone.-

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

Upon the next tree shall thou hang alive
Till famine cling thee. If thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.—
I pull in resolution and begin
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

- 58. **alarum bell:** the **bell** that calls soldiers to arms; **wrack:** ruin, destruction
 - 59. harness: i.e., armor
- **5.6** Malcolm arrives with his troops before Dunsinane Castle.
 - 2. uncle: addressed to Siward
- 4. **battle:** battalion, main body; **we:** Note that Malcolm here uses the royal "we."
 - 8. Do we but: i.e., if only we can; power: army
 - 11. harbingers: announcers, forerunners
- **5.7** On the battlefield Macbeth kills young Siward, the son of the English commander. After Macbeth exits, Macduff arrives in search of him. Dunsinane Castle has already been surrendered to Malcolm, whose forces have been strengthened by deserters from Macbeth's army.
- 1–2. **They have...course:** Macbeth here sees himself as a bear in a bearbaiting, tied **to a stake** and set upon by dogs. (See picture, page 182.) **course:** attack, encounter

Ring the alarum bell!—Blow wind, come wrack, At least we'll die with harness on our back.

They exit.

Scene 6

rum and Colors. Enter Malcolm. Siward, Macduff, and their army, with boughs.

ALCOLM.

Now near enough. 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 's what else remains to do. According to our order.

WARD

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.

They exit. Alarums continued.

Scene 7

Enter Macheth.

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?

5

10. title: name

12. fearful: frightening, terrifying

14. prove: challenge, test

21. still: always

22. **kerns:** i.e., hired soldiers (more specifically, Irish foot soldiers)

23. staves: weapons; Either thou: i.e., either I find you

25. undeeded: i.e., unused

26–27. **one...bruited:** someone of great reputation is proclaimed

29. gently rendered: surrendered without a fight



Bearbaiting. (5.7.1; 5.8.34) From [William Lily,] Antibossicon (1521).

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	m1 71.1 C 11.1
MACBETH	Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.
OUNG SIV	/ARD
No, tho	ough thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than a	ny is in hell.
MACBETH	My name's Macbeth.
OUNG SIV	VARD
The de	vil himself could not pronounce a title
	ateful to mine ear.
MACBETH	No, nor more fearful.
OUNG SIV	
Thou li	iest, abhorrèd tyrant. With my sword
	ve the lie thou speak'st.
In pro	They fight, and young Siward is slain.
CRETH	Thou wast born of

woman.

MACBETH

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

He exits.

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 greatest note Seems bruited. Let me find him, Fortune, He exits. Alarums. And more I beg not.

Enter Malcolm and Siward.

SIWARD

This way, my lord. The castle's gently rendered. The tyrant's people on both sides do fight,

32. itself professes: announces itself

35. **strike beside us:** i.e., fight on our side, side by side

- 5.8 Macduff finds Macbeth, who is reluctant to fight with him because Macbeth has already killed Macduff's whole family and is sure of killing Macduff too if they fight. When Macduff announces that he is not, strictly speaking, a man born of woman, having been ripped prematurely from his mother's womb, then Macbeth is afraid to fight. He fights with Macduff only when Macduff threatens to capture him and display him as a public spectacle. Macduff kills Macbeth, cuts off his head, and brings it to Malcolm. With Macbeth dead, Malcolm is now king and gives new titles to his loyal supporters.
- 1. **Roman:** associated here with approval of suicide (See picture, page 178.)
 - 2. lives: i.e., others living
 - 6. charged: burdened
- 10. Than terms can give thee out: i.e., than words can describe you
 - 12. intrenchant: invulnerable, unable to be cut
 - 13. impress: leave a mark on
 - 14. crests: heads
 - 18. angel: i.e., evil spirit; still: always
 - 20. Untimely: prematurely

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 That strike beside us.

That strike beside us

Enter, sir, the castle.

They exit. Alarum.

「Scene 87

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. Fight. Alarum.

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.

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22. my better part of man: the greater part of my manhood (i.e., perhaps, courage)

23. juggling: deceiving

24. palter...sense: trick us by using words ambiguously

28. show and gaze: that which is gazed at; spec-

tacle

- 30. Painted upon a pole: i.e., his picture painted and displayed on a pole, as for a sideshow; underwrit: written underneath
- 34. **baited:** attacked from all sides (as the bear is in a bearbaiting)

36. opposed: i.e., my opponent

38. Lay on: To lay on is to attack or assail vigor-

ously.

39 SD. They enter fighting, and Macbeth is slain: This Folio stage direction is omitted by many editors because they feel that it contradicts the stage direction that immediately precedes it in the Folio: "Exit fighting. Alarums." Although early printed texts such as the Folio sometimes include duplicatory or contradictory stage directions, it is certainly possible in this case to perform all the directions printed in the Folio and reprinted here. Retreat: trumpet call signaling the retreat of a defeated army or the pulling back of a victorious army flourish: fanfare of trumpets or horns

40. would: wish; miss: lack

41. **go off:** i.e., die; **by these:** to judge by those present

rsèd be that tongue that tells me so,	
it hath cowed my better part of man!	
be these juggling fiends no more believed	
be these jugging hends no more served	
t palter with us in a double sense,	25
t keep the word of promise to our ear	
break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.	
FF Then yield thee, coward,	
live to be the show and gaze o' th' time.	
Il have thee, as our rarer monsters are,	30
ated upon a pole, and underwrit	30
may you see the tyrant.	
Will not yield	
kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet	
1 to be baited with the rabbles curse.	35
such Rimam Wood be come to Dunsmane	33
I thou opposed, being of no woman born,	
T will try the last Before my body	
like chield Lay on Macuum,	
1 La Ling that first cries Hold: Lilough.	
They exit fighting. Alarums.	
y enter fighting, and Macbeth is slain. Macduff	
carrying off Macbeth's body. Retreat and flourish.	
er, with Drum and Colors, Malcolm, Siward, Ross,	
er, with Drum and Colors, Maccoln, Sivara, 2007,	
Thanes, and Soldiers.	
OLM Committeed	40
would the friends we miss were safe arrived.	40
RD.	
me must go off: and yet by these I see	
great a day as this is cheaply bought.	
COLM	
acduff is missing, and your noble son.	
A CONTROL OF THE RESIDENCE OF THE PROPERTY OF	
our son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt.	
le only lived but till he was a man,	4.
me () III v II v Cu Dut till xx	

46. **The which:** i.e., the fact that he had become a man (line 45)

47. **unshrinking station:** perhaps, unyielding stance; or, perhaps, steadfast refusal to give ground

53. before: on the front of his body

62. **score:** debt (the **soldier's debt** of line 44 and the death that one owes God or nature [Proverbial: "To pay one's debt to nature."])

67. compassed ... pearl: surrounded by the most

choice subjects of your kingdom

73–74. **reckon...even with you:** make an accounting of (also, take into account) the love each of you has shown, and discharge my debt to you



Fortune spinning her wheel. (5.7.27) From Charles de Bouelles, Que hoc volumine continentur [1510].

the which no sooner had his prowess confirmed in the unshrinking station where he fought, But like a man he died Then he is dead? WARD ROSS Av. and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow 50 Must not be measured by his worth, for then it hath no end Had he his burts before? WARD POSS Av, on the front. Why then, God's soldier be he! 55 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 60 him. MARD 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 65 Th' usurper's cursèd 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.

MALCOLM

Hail, King of Scotland!

Hail, King of Scotland!

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.

75

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Flourish

78. **Which . . . time:** which should be done immediately in this new era

79. **As:** such **as**

81. **Producing...ministers:** bringing forth (t_0 justice) the agents

83. self and violent hands: her own violent

hands

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 fiend-like 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.

Flourish, All exit.

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