

Macbeth

by William Shakespeare



Copyright Notice

©2006 eNotes.com LLC

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this work covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, Web distribution or information storage retrieval systems without the written permission of the publisher.

For complete copyright information, please see the online version of this work:
<http://www.enotes.com/macbeth-text>

Table of Contents

1. Dramatis Personae
2. Act I
3. Act II
4. Act III
5. Act IV
6. Act V

Dramatis Personae

Persons Represented

DUNCAN, King of Scotland.
MALCOLM, his Son.
DONALBAIN, his Son.
MACBETH, General in the King's Army.
BANQUO, General in the King's Army.
MACDUFF, Nobleman of Scotland.
LENNOX, Nobleman of Scotland.
ROSS, Nobleman of Scotland.
MENTEITH, Nobleman of Scotland.
ANGUS, Nobleman of Scotland.
CAITHNESS, Nobleman of Scotland.
FLEANCE, Son to Banquo.
SIWARD, Earl of Northumberland, General
of the English Forces.
YOUNG SIWARD, his Son.
SEYTON, an Officer attending on Macbeth.
BOY, Son to Macduff.
An English Doctor. A Scotch Doctor. A Soldier.

A Porter. An Old Man.

LADY MACBETH.

LADY MACDUFF.

Gentlewoman attending on Lady Macbeth.

HECATE, and three Witches.

Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers,
Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers.

The Ghost of Banquo and several other Apparitions.

SCENE: In the end of the Fourth Act, in England;
through the rest of the Play, in Scotland; and
chiefly at Macbeth's Castle.

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Act I

1. [Scene 1](#)
2. [Scene 2](#)
3. [Scene 3](#)
4. [Scene 4](#)
5. [Scene 5](#)
6. [Scene 6](#)
7. [Scene 7](#)

Scene 1

An open Place. Thunder and Lightning. 1.1 An open Place. Thunder and Lightning.

[Enter three Witches.]

[Enter three Witches.]

FIRST WITCH.

When shall we three meet again?

In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

FIRST WITCH.

When should the three of us meet again?

In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH.

When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

SECOND WITCH.

When all the uproar is over,
When the battle has been lost and won.

THIRD WITCH.

That will be ere the set of sun.

THIRD WITCH.

That will be before sunset.

FIRST WITCH.

Where the place?

FIRST WITCH.

Where should we meet?

SECOND WITCH.

Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH.

There to meet with Macbeth.

FIRST WITCH.

I come, Graymalkin!

ALL.

Paddock calls:—anon:—

Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

Hover through the fog and filthy air.

[Witches vanish.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

SECOND WITCH.

Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH.

That's where we'll meet with Macbeth.

FIRST WITCH.

I'm coming, you old she-cat!

ALL.

The old toad is calling me. In a minute!

Beautiful is disgustingly filthy, and disgustingly filthy is beautiful.

Let's float through the fog and filthy air.

[Witches vanish.]

Scene 2

A Camp near Forres.

[Alarum within. Enter King Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Soldier.]

DUNCAN.

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

MALCOLM.

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

SOLDIER.

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,
Show'd like a rebel's whore. But all's too weak;

1.2 A Camp near Forres.

[Alarms within. Enter King Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Soldier.]

DUNCAN.

What man is that with blood all over him?
From the looks of him, he can tell us the latest news
Of the revolt.

MALCOLM.

This is the sergeant
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
Against my being taken prisoner. Hail, brave friend!
Tell the king what you know about the battle
When you left it.

SOLDIER.

The outcome was doubtful;
Men fought like tired swimmers who cling together
And wind up choking. The merciless Macdonwald,
A worthy rebel, because
The multiple evils of nature
Are in him, has a supply of Irish foot soldiers and
Soldiers from the Irish chiefs in the Western islands,
And fortune, smiling on his damned quarrel,
Looked like a rebel's whore. Only they all lacked

For brave Macbeth,—well he deserves that name,—
Disdaining fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
Which smok'd with bloody execution,
Like valor's minion,
Carv'd out his passag tTill he fac'd the slave;
And ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN.

O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

SOLDIER.

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

DUNCAN.

Dismay'd not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

SOLDIER.

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

DUNCAN.

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

[Exit Soldier, attended.]

Who comes here?

MALCOLM.

courage,
Because brave Macbeth, well he deserves that name,
Outshining fortune, with his brandished sword,
Which was steaming with blood in the hot use of it,
Like power's hero,
Carved out his way through them until he faced
Macdonwald;
And he never shook hands, said goodbye to him,
Until he cut him in half, from his navel to his chin,
And put Macdonwald's head on top of our fort's wall.

DUNCAN.

O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!

SOLDIER.

Just as when the sun rises and
Shipwrecking storms and terrible thunder stop,
So from that man, who seemed to bring comfort,
Discomfort got worse. Listen, King of Scotland, listen.
No sooner had fairness, armed with courage,
Made these skipping foot soldiers start running,
Only the Norwegian lord, seeing his opportunity,
Began a fresh assault,
With loaded weapons and new supplies of men.

DUNCAN.

Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo,
Were not upset by this?

SOLDIER.

Yes;
As sparrows are by eagles, or the hare is by the lion.
If I say truth, I must report they were as upset
As cannons overcharged with double cracks.
So they doubly re-doubled strokes upon the enemy.
Whether they meant to bathe in fresh, bleeding wounds,
Or create another Crucifixion scene,
I cannot tell.
Only I am faint; my deep cuts need some help.

DUNCAN.

Your words suit you as your wounds do;
They both tell of honor. Go, get him surgeons.

[Exit Soldier, attended.]

Who's this coming here?

MALCOLM.

The worthy Baron of Ross.

The worthy Thane of Ross.

LENNOX.

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

[Enter Ross.]

ROSS.

God save the King!

DUNCAN.

Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

ROSS.

From Fife, great king;
Where the Norwegian banners flout the sky
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, lapp'd 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 disbursed, 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.

DUNCAN.

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

LENNOX.

He looks as though he's in a great hurry!
He look should look that way with so many strange
things
To say.

[Enter Ross.]

ROSS.

God save the King!

DUNCAN.

Where have you come from, worthy baron?

ROSS.

From Fife, great king;
Where the Norwegian banners insult the sky
And, like a fan, make our people cold.
The King of Norway himself, with terrible numbers of
men,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Baron of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict;
Until the goddess of war's bridegroom, disguised as
truth,
Confronted him with comparisons to himself, such as
How they were both rebellious and both armed alike,
Curbing his wild spirit. And, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

DUNCAN.

Great happiness!

ROSS.

Then
Sweno, Norwegian king, wanted a treaty;
We would not agree to the burial of his men
Until he paid us, at Saint Colme's island,
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

DUNCAN.

That Baron of Cawdor shall no longer betray
Matters close to our heart. Order his death immediately,
And, with the traitor's former title, greet Macbeth.

ROSS.

I'll see it is done.

DUNCAN.

What the traitor has lost, noble Macbeth has won.

[Exeunt.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 3

A heath.

[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 mounch'd, and mounch'd, and mounch'd:—"Give
me," quoth I:
"Aroint thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger:
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

SECOND WITCH.

I'll give thee a wind.

FIRST WITCH.

Thou art kind.

THIRD WITCH.

And I another.

FIRST WITCH.

I myself have all the other:
And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.
I will drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man forbid:
Weary seven-nights nine times nine

[Exeunt.]

1.3 A heath.

[Thunder. Enter the three Witches.]

FIRST WITCH.

Where have you been, sister?

SECOND WITCH.

Killing pigs.

THIRD WITCH.

Sister, where were you?

FIRST WITCH.

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munched, and munched, and munched. "Give
me," said I.
"Begone, witch!" the fat, sloppy woman cries.
Her husband has gone to see Aleppo, master of the
Tiger.
Only I'll sail there in a sieve,
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do harm, I'll do harm, and I'll do harm.

SECOND WITCH.

I'll give you a wind for your sail.

FIRST WITCH.

You are kind.

THIRD WITCH.

And I will give you another one.

FIRST WITCH.

I myself have all the other winds.
And they blow at all the ports.
They know all the quarters
On a sailor's compass.
I will drain him as dry as hay.
Sleep will not hang night or day
On the roof of his house;
He shall live like a man under a curse.

Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine:
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.—
Look what I have.

SECOND WITCH.
Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH.
Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come.

[Drum within.]

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

ALL.
The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine:—
Peace!—the charm's wound up.

[Enter Macbeth and Banquo.]

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

BANQUO.
How far is't call'd to Forres?—What are these
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the 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 chappy 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?

FIRST WITCH.
All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!

SECOND WITCH.
All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!

Worn out with fatigue for a week, and very cross,
He will waste away, droop in health and spirit .
Though his ship will not be lost,
It will be tossed about on the rough ocean.
Look what I have.

SECOND WITCH.
Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH.
I have a sea captain's thumb here,
Whose ship was wrecked as he was coming home.

[Drum within.]

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

ALL.
The three witches, hand in hand,
Messengers of the events on the sea and land,
In this way are scheming, scheming.
Three times to you, and three times to me,
And three times again, to make up nine.
Quiet! The charm's going to bring things to a head.

[Enter Macbeth and Banquo.]

MACBETH.
I have never seen a day that is so disgustingly filthy
and beautiful.

BANQUO.
How far is it to the town of Forres? What are these
things
With shrunken skin and wild clothes,
That don't look not like they live on earth,
Only are still on it? Are you alive? Or are you any
thing
That man may question? You seem to understand
me,
Since you each are laying a scrawny finger
Upon your skinny lips. You should be women,
Only since you have beards, I can't say
That you are women.

MACBETH.
Speak, if you can; what are you?

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' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal:—to me you speak not:
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow, and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favors nor your hate.

FIRST WITCH.

Hail!

SECOND WITCH.

Hail!

THIRD WITCH.

Hail!

FIRST WITCH.

Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

SECOND WITCH.

Not so happy, yet much happier.

THIRD WITCH.

Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:
So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

FIRST WITCH.

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH.

Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:
By Sinel's death I know I am Thane of Glamis;
But how of Cawdor? The Thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting?—Speak, I charge you.

[Witches vanish.]

FIRST WITCH.

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

SECOND WITCH.

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

THIRD WITCH.

All hail, Macbeth! That shall be king hereafter!

BANQUO.

Good sir, why are you startled, and seem afraid of
Things that sound so beautiful? In the name of truth,
Are you fantastic beings or indeed what
You look like? You greet my noble partner
With current grace and great predictions
Of having nobility and of the hope to be king,
that he seems carried away as well. Only you don't
speak to me.
If you can look into the future,
And say what will happen, and what will not,
Then speak to me, who doesn't beg or is afraid of
Your favors or your hateful spells.

FIRST WITCH.

Hail!

SECOND WITCH.

Hail!

THIRD WITCH.

Hail!

FIRST WITCH.

You will be less than Macbeth, and much greater.

SECOND WITCH.

Not as happy as Macbeth, only still much happier.

THIRD WITCH.

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

FIRST WITCH.

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH.

Wait, you incomplete speakers, tell me more.
By inheritance, I know I am Baron of Glamis;
Only how am I Baron of Cawdor? The Baron of

BANQUO.
The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them:—whither are they vanish'd?

MACBETH.
Into the air; and what seem'd corporal melted
As breath into the wind.—Would they had stay'd!

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

MACBETH.
Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO.
You shall be king.

MACBETH.
And Thane of Cawdor too; went it not so?

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

[Enter Ross and Angus.]

ROSS.
The king hath happily receiv'd, 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: silenc'd with that,
In viewing o'er the rest o' the self-same day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death. As thick as hail
Came post with post; and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defense,
And pour'd them down before him.

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

ROSS.
And, for an earnest of a greater honor,
He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor:

Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and for me to be king
Is beyond belief,
No more than to be Baron of Cawdor. Tell me
How you know these strange things? or why
You interrupt our journey on this blasted heath
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I command
you.

[Witches vanish.]

BANQUO.
The earth has bubbles, as boiling water has,
And these spirits are like that. Where did they
vanish'd to?

MACBETH.
Into the air; and what seemed solid melted
Like breath into the wind. I wish they had stayed!

BANQUO.
Are you sure we're talking about what we've seen
here?
Or have we eaten some plant root
That makes us hallucinate?

MACBETH.
Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO.
You shall be king.

MACBETH.
And Baron of Cawdor too; isn't that what they said?

BANQUO.
Yes, in just those words. Who's here?

[Enter Ross and Angus.]

ROSS.
Macbeth, the king has happily received
The news of your success. And when he heard about
Your personal venture into the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises don't fight over
What should be yours or his. Silenced with that
story,
And reviewing all the events of the day,
He found you in the stout Norwegian's ranks,
Not afraid of what you did or the

In which addition, hail, most worthy thane,
For it is thine.

BANQUO.
What, can the devil speak true?

MACBETH.
The Thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me
In borrow'd robes?

ANGUS.
Who was the Thane lives yet;
But under heavy judgement bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combin'd
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labour'd in his country's wreck, I know not;
But treasons capital, confess'd and proved,
Have overthrown him.

MACBETH.
[Aside.] Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor:
The greatest is behind.—Thanks for your pains.—
Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
When those that gave the Thane of Cawdor to me
Promis'd no less to them?

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

MACBETH.
[Aside.] Two truths are told,
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,
Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:

Strange images of death.
The reports came in As thick as hail and every one
of them sang
Your praises in your great defense of the kingdom,
And poured such praises down before the King.

ANGUS.
We are sent from our royal master,
To give you thanks;
Only to bring you, announced, into his sight,
Not just pay you for your brave deeds.

ROSS.
And, for as the first installment of a greater honor,
He ordered me, from him, to call you Baron of
Cawdor.
I was also ordered to add, hail, most worthy baron,
For the title of Baron of Cawdor is yours.

BANQUO.
What, can the devil speak the truth?

MACBETH.
The Baron of Cawdor lives. Why do you address me
By his name?

ANGUS.
The man who was the Baron still lives,
Only lives that life which he deserves to lose
Under the death penalty. I don't know whether he
combined
Forces with those of Norway, or aided the rebel
With hidden help and supplies, or that with both
He labored to overthrow his country's government,
Only his treasons, punishable by death, confessed
and proven,
have caused his downfall.

MACBETH.
[Aside.] Glamis, and Baron of Cawdor.
The greatest hurdle is behind me. Thanks for your
pains.
Don't you hope your children shall be kings,
When those things that gave the Baron of Cawdor to
me
Promised no less to your children?

BANQUO.
That, my best friend,
Might still inflame you with passion for the crown,

My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man, that function
Is smother'd in surmise; and nothing is
But what is not.

BANQUO.

Look, how our partner's rapt.

MACBETH.

[Aside.] If chance will have me king, why, chance may
crown me
Without my stir.

BANQUO.

New honors come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
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.

MACBETH.

Give me your favor:—my dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are register'd where every day I turn
The leaf to read them.—Let us toward the king.—
Think upon what hath chanc'd; and, at more time,
The interim having weigh'd it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

BANQUO.

Very gladly.

MACBETH.

Till then, enough.—Come, friends.

[Exeunt.]

In addition to the title of the Baron of Cawdor.
Only it 's strange. And often the instruments of
darkness

Tell us truths to win us over and so harm ourselves,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray his purposes
Of most serious results.

Cousins, a word, I beg you.

MACBETH.

[Aside.] Those creatures told two truths
As happy prologues to my ascending
The throne. I thank you, gentlemen.

[Aside.] This supernatural meeting
Can't be bad, only it can't be good either. If it's bad,
Why has it given me promise of success,
That began with a truth? I am Baron of Cawdor.

If it's good, why do I give in to that suggestion
Whose horrid image makes my hair stand on end,
And makes my heart pound so hard they knock at
my ribs,

Against my will to stay calm? My current fears
Are less than horrible imaginings.

My thought, whose murder is still only a fantastic
idea,

So shakes my manhood, that functioning like a man
Is smothered in unfounded allegations; and nothing
is

Only what is not.

BANQUO.

Look, how our partner's in such deep thought.

MACBETH.

[Aside.] If luck wants me to be king, luck may
crown me

Without my doing anything at all.

BANQUO.

New honors are given to him,
And are like new clothes that do not fit when new,
Only after they are worn awhile.

MACBETH.

[Aside.] Let whatever's going to happen, happen.
Time and happiness can run through the roughest
day.

BANQUO.

Worthy Macbeth, we are waiting for you.

MACBETH.

Give me a minute. My tired brain was going over
Things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, every day I turn
The page, your pains are registered where I can read
them.

Let's go see the King.

Let's think about what has happened; and, later,
When we've had a chance to think, let's about
these things openly each to other.

BANQUO.

Very gladly.

MACBETH.

Until then, enough. Come, friends.

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 4

Forres. A Room in the Palace.

[Flourish. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain,
Lennox, and
Attendants.]

DUNCAN.

Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission yet return'd?

MALCOLM.

My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die: who did report,
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons;
Implor'd 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 ow'd
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

1.4 Forres. A Room in the Palace.

[Flourish. Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox,
and
Attendants.]

DUNCAN.

Is the execution of Cawdor carried out? Haven't
Those in charge of it returned yet?

MALCOLM.

My King,
They haven't come back yet. Only I have spoke
With someone who saw him die, and he reported
That he confessed his treasons very frankly;
He begged your highness for pardon; and he seemed
Very sorry. Nothing he did in his life
Became him so much like the leaving it; he died
As someone one who had studied his own death,
To throw away the dearest thing he owned
As it were a careless trifle.

DUNCAN.

There's no art
In finding what the mind's thinking in someone's 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 deserv'd;
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.

DUNCAN.

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

BANQUO.

There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.

DUNCAN.

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

MACBETH.

The rest is labor, which is not us'd for you:

An absolute trust.

[Enter Macbeth, Banquo, Ross, and Angus.]

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. You are so far ahead
That swiftest way of repaying is slow
To overtake you. I wish you had deserved less,
Then the greater proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been my! I can only say that
You are due more than all of us can ever pay.

MACBETH.

In doing the service and the loyalty I owe you,
I am well paid. Your highness' role as King
Is to receive our duties. and our duties
Are to your throne and state, children and servants,
Who only do what they should, by doing everything
Loyal to your love and honor.

DUNCAN.

Welcome here.
I have begun to nurture your career, and will labor
To make the most of yourself. Noble Banquo,
Who has deserved no less, and must not be known
To have done less than Macbeth, let me infold you
In my arms and stop you to my heart.

BANQUO.

If I grow here in your favor,
The harvest is yours.

DUNCAN.

My generous welcomes,
Childishly cruel in being so perfect, seek to hide
themselves
In tears. Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you who are in line for the throne know that
We will declare that the throne belongs to
Our eldest son, Malcolm; whom we name from this point
forward
The Prince of Cumberland, an honor that is
Not enough to make him a king.
Only he also needs signs of nobleness, like stars, that will
shine
On all those who deserve to be king. We will go from here
to Inverness,
And then we will bind us further to you.

I'll be myself the harbinger, and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach;
So, humbly take my leave.

DUNCAN.
My worthy Cawdor!

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

[Exit.]

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

[Flourish. Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 5

Inverness. A Room in Macbeth's Castle.

[Enter Lady Macbeth, reading a letter.]

LADY MACBETH.
"They met me in the day of success; and I have
learned by the perfectest report they have more in them
than
mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question
them
further, they made themselves air, into which they
vanished.
Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, came missives
from
the king, who all-hailed me, 'Thane of Cawdor'; by which
title,

MACBETH.
The rest is work which you're not used to.
I'll be your host myself, and make my wife
Joyful with the news that you're coming;
So, humbly I leave you.

DUNCAN.
My worthy Cawdor!

MACBETH.
[Aside.] The Prince of Cumberland!
I must fall down on that Step, or jump over it,
For it's in my way. Stars, put out your light!
Don't let anyone see my black and deep desires.
It could happen in an instant Yet let that go,
That thing that the eye is afraid to see when it is done.

[Exit.]

DUNCAN.
True, worthy Banquo! He is so full of courage,
And his commendations are food for me,
A banquet to me. Let's go after the man
Whose has gone before us to bid us welcome.
He is a relative without equal.

[Flourish. Exeunt.]

1.5 Inverness. A Room in Macbeth's Castle.

[Enter Lady Macbeth, reading a letter.]

LADY MACBETH.
"They met me on the day we won the battle, and I
have
learned by the most perfect report that they have
more in them than
mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to
question them
further, they made themselves vanish into thin air.
While I stood captivated in the wonder of it all
letters came from
the king, who all-hailed me, 'Baron 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 I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness; that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

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

[Enter an Attendant.]

What is your tidings?

ATTENDANT.
The king comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH.
Thou'rt mad to say it:
Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,
Would have inform'd for preparation.

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

LADY MACBETH.
Give him tending;
He brings great news.

these weird sisters had just saluted me, and referred me to the future, with 'Hail, king that shall be!' I thought was good news to deliver you, my dearest partner in this greatness, that you might not lose a moment's happiness by being ignorant of what greatness is promised you. Lay it to your heart, and farewell."

You are Baron of Glamis and of Cawdor and you shall be
What the weird sisters have promised you. Only I'm afraid your nature;
It is too full of the milk of human kindness
To a shortcut to power. You could be great;
You are not without ambition, only without
The drive should usually goes with it.
While you want to be king, you also want to act like a priest;
You wouldn't play the game falsely, only you'd cheat to win. Great Glamis,
you'd have that which cries, "This is what you must do to be king.
And if you are afraid to do what you must,
Then wish it should be undone." Hurry and get here,
So I can pour my spirits into your ear
And with the courage of my tongue, scold you for
All that keeps you from the crown, the same crown
That luck and supernatural forces seem
To want you to have.

[Enter an Attendant.]

What news do you have?

ATTENDANT.
The king comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH.
You're crazy to say that!
Isn't your master with him? If he is, he
Would have let me know so we can be ready.

ATTENDANT.
Please, it's true. Our baron is coming.
One of my friends traveled with him,

[Exit Attendant.]

The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here;
And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top–full
Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood,
Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry, "Hold, hold!"

[Enter Macbeth.]

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

MACBETH.
My dearest love,
Duncan comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH.
And when goes hence?

MACBETH.
To–morrow,—as he purposes.

LADY MACBETH.
O, never
Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters:—to beguile the time,
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue: look like the 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 despatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
breath
To deliver his message.

LADY MACBETH.
See to his needs;
He brings great news.

[Exit Attendant.]

The raven himself is hoarse
With croaking about the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my castle walls. Come, you spirits
That hear mortal thoughts, take away my
womanhood;
And fill me, from my head to my toes, full
Of most terrible cruelty! Make my blood thick,
Stop up the ways remorse can get into and leave
my body,
That no feelings of guilt
Keep me from what I intend to do, or put guilt
between
The consequences and the deed! Come to my
woman's breasts,
And make my milk poisonous, you murdering
ministers,
Wherever in your blind shadows
You wait on human mischief! Come, thick night,
And rot in the most gloomy smoke of hell so
That my sharp knife doesn't see the wound it
makes
Or that heaven peeps through the blanket of the
dark
To cry, "Stop, stop!"

[Enter Macbeth.]

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

MACBETH.
My dearest love,
Duncan comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH.
And when does he leave?

MACBETH.
We will speak further.

LADY MACBETH.
Only look up clear;
To alter favor ever is to fear:
Leave all the rest to me.

[Exeunt.]

MACBETH.
Tomorrow, as he intends.

LADY MACBETH.
O, the sun shall never
See that tomorrow!
Your face, my baron, is like a book where men
May read strange matters. To divert attention from
the time
Look like the time; have welcome in your eyes,
Your hands, your tongue. Look like the innocent
flower,
Only be the serpent underneath it. The king
Must be provided for. And you shall put
This night's great business into my care,
Which shall give kingly power and mastery alone
To all our nights and days to come.

MACBETH.
We'll have to speak more.

LADY MACBETH.
Only look up clear;
To disturb favor is to fear favor.
Leave all the rest to me.

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 6

The same. Before the Castle.

[Hautboys. Servants of Macbeth attending.]

[Enter 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.

BANQUO.
This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve

1.6 The same. Before the Castle.

[Hautboys. Servants of Macbeth attending.]

[Enter Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Banquo,
Lennox, Macduff, Ross,
Angus, and Attendants.]

DUNCAN.
This castle is a pleasant place to live. The air
Smells light and sweet
To our gentle senses.

BANQUO.
The temple-haunting martlet, this bird of summer,
Approves this place by his loved dwelling places,

By his lov'd mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze, buttress,
Nor coigne of vantage, but this bird hath made
His pendant bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd
The air is delicate.

[Enter Lady Macbeth.]

DUNCAN.

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

LADY MACBETH.

All our service
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honours deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.

DUNCAN.

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

LADY MACBETH.

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

DUNCAN.

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

[Exeunt.]

That heaven's breath smells wooingly here.
There isn't an embankment, painted decoration,
support,
Or quarters for rich guests where this bird hasn't made
His loose hanging bed and cradle for its young.
I have observed that the air is delicate
In areas where they frequently breed and visit.

[Enter Lady Macbeth.]

DUNCAN.

See, see, our honored hostess!
The love that follows us sometimes is our trouble,
Which are still grateful for as love. Herein I will teach
you
How you shall bid God to reward us for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

LADY MACBETH.

All our service,
If done twice in every point, and then done double,
Would be poor and single business to compete
With those honors deep and broad that
Your majesty heaps upon our house. For those of old,
And the recent titles heaped on them,
We remain your hermits.

DUNCAN.

Where's the Baron of Cawdor?
We followed him close to his heels and wanted
To be his provider of necessary things. Only he rides
well,
And his great love of us, as sharp as his spur, has
helped him
To get to his home before us. Beautiful and noble
hostess,
We are your guests tonight.

LADY MACBETH.

Your servants always
Have their necessities, themselves, and what they
own, in elegance,
To make their reckoning of accounts at your highness'
pleasure,
Still to return your own goods.

DUNCAN.

Give me your hand;
Take me to my host. We love him highly,
And shall continue our graces towards him.

With your permission, hostess.

[Exeunt]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 7

The same. A Lobby in the Castle.

[Hautboys and torches. Enter, and pass over, a Sewer and divers Servants with dishes and service. Then enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly. If the assassination
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
With his surcease, success; that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all—here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,—
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
We still have judgement here; that we but teach
Bloody instructions, which being taught, return
To plague the inventor: this even-handed justice
Commends the ingredients of our poison'd
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 new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, hors'd
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.—I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself,
And falls on the other.

[Enter Lady Macbeth.]

1.7 The same. A Lobby in the Castle.

[Hautboys and torches. Enter, and pass over, a Sewer and divers Servants with dishes and service. Then enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

If this deed were done when it is done, then it would be
better
If it were done quickly. If the assassination of the King
Could be entangled with the consequences, then I could,
With his murder, be a success. If only this blow
Could be the be-all and the end-all right here,
Only here, upon this bank and shallows of time,
We'd risk it for the life to come. Only in these things,
We are always punished here because we teach others
How to murder, and once they learn, they come back
To murder us. This balanced justice
Returns the ingredients of the gold cup we poisoned
To our own lips. Duncan is here in double trust.
First, he is here because I am his relative and his subject,
Both Strong reasons against the deed. Secondly, as his
host,
I should shut the door against his murderer,
Not carry the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Has very humble in the use of his power, has been
So confident in his great duty, that his virtues
Will pray like angels, as loud as trumpets, against
The deep damnation of his murder.
And sorrow, like a naked newborn baby,
Moving in spite of the outburst, or heaven's archangels,
supported
By the invisible messengers of the air,
Shall everyone about the horrid deed,
And tears shall drown out the noisy wind. I don't have any
Valid reasons for killing him, only
Ambition that can leap over anything, even itself,
And it falls on the other reasons.

[Enter Lady Macbeth.]

How now! what news?

LADY MACBETH.

He has almost supped: why have you left the chamber?

MACBETH.

Hath he ask'd for me?

LADY MACBETH.

Know you not he has?

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afraid
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem;
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat i' the adage?

MACBETH.

Pr'ythee, peace!
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH.

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

Hello! What news?

LADY MACBETH.

He has almost finished supper. Why did you leave the dining hall?

MACBETH.

Has he asked for me?

LADY MACBETH.

Don't you know he has?

MACBETH.

We will proceed no further in this business.
He has recently honored me, and I now have the
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which I want to enjoy for a bit longer, and
Not cast them aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH.

Was the hope you dressed yourself in
Drunk? Did it go to sleep it off?
And does it wake up now, hung over
From what it so freely committed to? I will calculate your
love
From this time forward. Are you afraid
To be the same man in reality
As the one you wish to be? Would you have the crown
Which you believe to be the ornament of life,
And yet live like a coward in your own self-esteem,
Letting "I shouldn't" wait for "I would,"
Like the poor cat in the proverb?

MACBETH.

Pray you, peace!
I dare to do all that may become a man;
Who dares to do more is not a man.

LADY MACBETH.

What beast was it, then,
That made you tell me about this plan?
When you "dared" to do it, then you were a man;
And, in order to be more than what you are, you would
Be so much more the man. Time and place
Were not in agreement, and yet you want to control both.
They have made themselves agree, and that agreement
now
Doesn't agree with you. I have nursed a baby, and know
How tender it is to love the baby that drinks my milk.
I would have, while it was smiling in my face,

And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

MACBETH.

If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH.

We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep,—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him, his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason
A limbec only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers; who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?

MACBETH.

Bring forth men—children only;
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be receiv'd,
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy
two
Of his own chamber, and us'd their very daggers,
That they have don't?

LADY MACBETH.

Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar
Upon his death?

MACBETH.

I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth
know.

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Plucked my nipple from his boneless gums
And dashed out his brains, if I had sworn to do this
As you have.

MACBETH.

If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH.

We fail!

Only dig deep for your courage,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep,
Which should be soon since he is very tired
From his day's hard journey, I will go to his two
chamberlains
With wine and carousing so
Their memory, the guardian of the brain,
Will be a wisp of smoke, and the tired brain won't
Be able to think clearly. When their drenched bodies
Sleep like pigs, almost like death,
Is there anything that we can't do to
The unguarded Duncan? Anything we can't put off on
His officers who are like sponges? Who will bear the guilt
For our great slaughter?

MACBETH.

Only give birth to male children,
For your unconquered spirit should be passed on
Only to males. Won't it be understood,
When we have marked those sleepy two
Of his own chamber with blood, and used their very own
daggers,
That they have done it?

LADY MACBETH.

Who dares to understand any other way,
Since we will cry and scream so loudly
At the news of his death?

MACBETH.

I'm convinced, and I commit
Every part of my body to this terrible event.
Let's go and pass the time by pretending to be happy.
False faces must hide what the false heart knows.

[Exeunt.]

Act II

1. Scene 1
2. Scene 2
3. Scene 3
4. Scene 4

Scene 1

Inverness. Court within the Castle.

[Enter Banquo, preceded by Fleance with a torch.]

BANQUO.
How goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE.
The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

BANQUO.
And she goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE.
I take't, 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO.
Hold, take my sword.—There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out:—take thee that too.—
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep:—merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!—Give me my sword.
Who's there?

[Enter Macbeth, and a Servant with a torch.]

MACBETH.
A friend.

BANQUO.
What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure and
Sent forth great largess to your officers:
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up
In measureless content.

2.1 Inverness. Court within the Castle.

[Enter Banquo, preceded by Fleance with a torch.]

BANQUO.
How's your night going, boy?

FLEANCE.
The moon's down. I haven't heard the clock chime.

BANQUO.
The moon goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE.
I think it's later than that, sir.

BANQUO.
Stop, take my sword. They are saving light in heaven.
Their candles are all out. You take that, too.
A serious calling lies on me like lead,
And still I couldn't sleep. Merciful powers,
Hold me back from the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to when we sleep! Give me my sword.
Who's there?

[Enter Macbeth, and a Servant with a torch.]

MACBETH.
A friend.

BANQUO.
What, sir, not in bed yet? The king's in bed.
He has been unusually pleased and
Sent great generous gifts to your officers.
He greets your wife with this diamond, calling her
By the name of "most kind hostess," and he went to bed
Contented beyond measure.

MACBETH.

MACBETH.
Being unprepar'd,
Our will became the servant to defect;
Which else should free have wrought.

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

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

BANQUO.
At your kind'st leisure.

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

BANQUO.
So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchis'd, and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsell'd.

MACBETH.
Good repose the while!

BANQUO.
Thanks, sir: the like to you!

[Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.]

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

[Exit Servant.]

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me
clutch thee:—
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but

Being unprepared,
Our wishes became the servants to what we lacked,
Which has worked out very well.

BANQUO.
All's well.
Last night, I dreamed about the three weird sisters.
They have shown some truth to you.

MACBETH.
I don't think about them.
Yet, when we can find an hour we're both free,
We should talk about that business,
If you can spare the time.

BANQUO.
Whenever you like.

MACBETH.
If you agree with my opinion, when it is time,
It'll be more honor for you.

BANQUO.
So I don't lose any honor
In seeking to make my honor grow, only if I can still keep
My heart free and allegiance clear,
I'll come to a decision.

MACBETH.
Good rest in the meantime!

BANQUO.
Thanks, sir. The same to you!

[Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.]

MACBETH.
Go tell your mistress that, when my drink is ready,
She should ring the bell. Get to bed.

[Exit Servant.]

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle pointed toward my hand? Come, let me clutch
you.
I don't hold you, and yet I still see you!
Are you, fatal vision, as insensitive
To feeling as you are to sight? Or are you only
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the brain oppressed by heat?

A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still;
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before.—There's no such
thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes.—Now o'er the one
half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep; now witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings; and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy
pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his
design
Moves like a ghost.—Thou sure and firm-set
earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my 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.
Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

[Exit.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 2

The same (Court of Macbeth's Castle)

[Enter Lady Macbeth.]

LADY MACBETH.

I still see you, in form as evident to my touch
As the one I now draw.
You guide me on the way that I was going,
And show me the instrument I was to use.
My eyes are made the fools of by the other senses,
Or else my eyes are worth all the rest. I still see you,
And I see great, large clots of blood on your blade,
Which were not there before. There's no such thing.
It is the bloody business I've planned that makes
Me see you. Now, over the one half-world
Sleep makes people seem dead, and wicked dreams abuse
Their sleep in beds with curtains. Now witchcraft
celebrates
Offerings to the pale goddess of magic. And decayed
murder,
Alarmed by his watchman, the wolf,
Who howls as he watches, and in this sneaky way,
With ravishing strides like Tarquin, the ancient king,
moves like a ghost
Towards his target. Sure and firm-set earth,
Don't hear my steps, which ever way they walk, for fear
Your very stones disclose my whereabouts,
And take the current horror from the time,
Which now suits it. While I threaten, he lives;
Words give breath to the heat of deeds that are too cold.

[A bell rings.]

I go, and it's done; the bell invites me.
Don't hear it, Duncan, for it is a sorrowful omen of death
That summons you to heaven or to hell.

[Exit.]

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 shriek'd, 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 drugg'd their
possets
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH.

[Within.] Who's there?—what, ho!

LADY MACBETH.

Alack! I am afraid they have awak'd,
And 'tis not done: the 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.—My husband!

[Re-enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH.

When?

LADY MACBETH.

Now.

MACBETH.

As I descended?

LADY MACBETH.

Ay.

MACBETH.

Hark!—

Who lies i' the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH.

Donalbain.

MACBETH.

The wine that has made them drunk has made me
bold.

What has quenched their thirst has given me fire.

Listen! Peace!

It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal bellman,
That gives even the worst dispositions a good night.
He's doing it.

The doors are open; and the grooms, filled to
excess,

Defy their duty with snores. I have drugged their hot
milk and wine

So that death and sleep argue about them, to decide
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH.

[Within.] Who's there? What, hello!

LADY MACBETH.

For shame! I am afraid they have gotten up,
And the deed's not done. The attempt, and not the
deed,

Confuses us. Listen! I laid their daggers ready.

He couldn't have missed them. If the King hadn't
resembled

My father as he slept, I would've done it. My
husband!

[Re-enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

I have done the deed. Didn't you hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH.

I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

Didn't you speak?

MACBETH.

When?

LADY MACBETH.

Now.

MACBETH.

As I came down?

LADY MACBETH.

Yes.

MACBETH.

Listen!

This is a sorry sight.

[Looking on his hands.]

LADY MACBETH.

A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH.

There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried,
"Murder!"

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:
But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH.

There are two lodg'd together.

MACBETH.

One cried, "God bless us!" and, "Amen," the other;
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen,"
When they did say, "God bless us."

LADY MACBETH.

Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH.

But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?
I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH.

These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH.

I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep,"—the innocent sleep;
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast.

LADY MACBETH.

What do you mean?

MACBETH.

Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more,—Macbeth shall sleep no more!"

Who's in the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH.

Donalbain.

MACBETH.

This is a sorry sight.

[Looking on his hands.]

LADY MACBETH.

A foolish thought, to say "a sorry sight."

MACBETH.

There's one who laughed in his sleep, and one cried,
"Murder!"

So they woke each other up. I stood and heard them.
Only they said their prayers, and went back
To sleep again.

LADY MACBETH.

There are two in the same room.

MACBETH.

One cried, "God bless us!" and the other, "Amen."
As if they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
Listening to their fear, I couldn't say "Amen,"
When they said, "God bless us."

LADY MACBETH.

Don't think about it so deeply.

MACBETH.

Only why couldn't I say, "Amen"?
I really needed blessing, and the "Amen"
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH.

These deeds must not be thought
About like this. If we think this way, it'll make us
crazy.

MACBETH.

I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!
Macbeth murders sleep," the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, the bath of serious
work,
First aid for hurt minds, great nature's second
course,

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

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

[Exit. Knocking within.]

MACBETH.

Whence is that knocking?
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? Ha, they pluck out mine eyes!
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

[Re-enter Lady Macbeth.]

LADY MACBETH.

My hands are of your color, but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [Knocking within.] I hear
knocking
At the south entry:—retire we to our chamber.
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended.—[Knocking within.] 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.

Chief nourisher in life's feast.

LADY MACBETH.

What do you mean?

MACBETH.

Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the house.
"Glamis has murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more. Macbeth shall sleep no more!"

LADY MACBETH.

Who was it that cried in this way? Why, worthy
baron,
You weaken your noble strength to think
About things in such a crazy way. Go get some
water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hands.
Why did you bring these daggers from the room?
They must lie there. Go carry them, and smear
The sleepy guards with blood.

MACBETH.

I'm not going back.
I am afraid to think about what I have done.
I don't dare look on it again.

LADY MACBETH.

Weak of purpose!
Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead
Are only like pictures. It is the eye of childhood
That's afraid of a painted devil. If he bleeds,
I'll smear the faces of the grooms with it,
Because it must seem that they are guilty.

[Exit. Knocking within.]

MACBETH.

Who is that knocking?
What's wrong with me, that every noise makes me
jump?
What kind of hands are these? Ha, they pluck out
my eyes!
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, my hand will rather
Redden the many seas,
Making the green one red.

[Re-enter Lady Macbeth.]

LADY MACBETH.

To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.
[Knocking within.]
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

[Exeunt.]

My hands are the same color as yours, only I would
be ashamed
To have such a white heart. [Knocking within.] I
hear knocking

At the south entrance. Let's go to our bedroom.
A little water cleans us of this deed.
How easy it is then! Your fortitude
Has left you alone. [Knocking within.] Listen, more
knocking.
Get on your nightgown, in case we are called by
chance
And it shows us to be watchers. Don't be lost
So badly in your thoughts.

MACBETH.

To know my deed, it's best not know myself.
[Knocking within.]
Wake Duncan with your knocking! I wish you
could!

[Exeunt.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 3

The same (Court of Macbeth's Castle)

[Enter a Porter. Knocking within.]

PORTER.

Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of
hell-gate, he
should have old turning the key. [Knocking.]
Knock, knock, knock.
Who's there, i' the name of Belzebub? Here's a
farmer that hanged
himself on the expectation of plenty: come in time;
have napkins
enow about you; here you'll sweat
for't.—[Knocking.] Knock,
knock! Who's there, in the 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.

2.3 The same (Court of Macbeth's Castle)

[Enter a Porter. Knocking within.]

PORTER.

Here's loud knocking indeed! If a man were answering
the doors of hell, he
would grow old turning the key. [Knocking.] Knock,
knock, knock.
Who's there, in the name of the Devil? It must be a
farmer that hanged
himself on the expectation of a large crop. I'm coming,
and I have napkins
enough about you, but here you'll sweat for it.
[Knocking.] Knock,
knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name? Truly, it
must be a
liar who could swear on both sides of the scale against
either
side, who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet
couldn't
lie to heaven. O, come in, liar. [Knocking.] Knock,

[Knocking.] 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.— [Knocking.] Knock, knock: never at quiet! What are you?—But this place is too cold for hell.

I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire. [Knocking.] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter.

[Opens the gate.]

[Enter Macduff and Lennox.]

MACDUFF.

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

PORTER.

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

MACDUFF.

What three things does drink especially provoke?

PORTER.

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

knock, knock! Who's there? Truly, it must be an English
tailor sent here
for skimping on the fabric for a pair of a French hose.
Come in, tailor; here
you may roast your goose. [Knocking.] Knock, knock.
Never
quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell.
I'll be a devil-porter no further. I had thought to have let
in
some of all professions that go the primrose way to the
everlasting bonfire. [Knocking.] In a minute, in a minute!
I beg you, remember
the porter.

[Opens the gate.]

[Enter Macduff and Lennox.]

MACDUFF.

Was it so late, friend, before you went to bed,
That you overslept?

PORTER.

Faith, sir, we were carousing until about three o'clock.
And
drink, sir, is a great instigator of three things.

MACDUFF.

What three things does drink especially instigate?

PORTER.

By Mary, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lust, sir,
it instigates and un-instigates. It instigates the desire,
only it
takes away the performance. Therefore much drink may
be said to
be a liar to 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 put up with pain, and not put
up with pain. In
conclusion, lies him into a sleep, and giving him the lie,
leaves him.

MACDUFF.

I believe drink gave you the lie last night.

PORTER.

That it did, sir, in the very throat of me; only I paid him
back
for his lie; and, I think, being too strong for him,

MACDUFF.
I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

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

MACDUFF.
Is thy master stirring?--
Our knocking has awak'd him; here he comes.

[Enter Macbeth.]

LENNOX.
Good morrow, noble sir!

MACBETH.
Good morrow, both!

MACDUFF.
Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH.
Not yet.

MACDUFF.
He did command me to call timely on him:
I have almost slipp'd the hour.

MACBETH.
I'll bring you to him.

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

MACBETH.
The labour we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.

MACDUFF.
I'll make so bold to call.
For 'tis my limited service.

[Exit Macduff.]

though he knocked me off my feet a few times, I still made a joke to throw him off.

MACDUFF.
Is your master awake yet?
Our knocking has awakened him. Here he comes.

[Enter Macbeth.]

LENNOX.
Good morning, noble sir!

MACBETH.
Good morning to you both!

MACDUFF.
Is the king awake yet, worthy baron?

MACBETH.
Not yet.

MACDUFF.
He commanded me to call him early.
I almost missed the hour.

MACBETH.
I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF.
I know this is a joyful trouble to you,
It is still only one.

MACBETH.
The labor we delight in cures pain.
This is the door.

MACDUFF.
I'll make so bold to call,
Because it is my limited service.

[Exit Macduff.]

LENNOX.
Does the king leave here today?

MACBETH.
He does. He did decide so.

LENNOX.

LENNOX.
Goes the king hence to-day?

MACBETH.
He does: he did appoint so.

LENNOX.
The night has been unruly: where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down: and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air, strange screams of
death;
And prophesying, with accents terrible,
Of dire combustion and confus'd events,
New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird
Clamour'd the live-long night; some say the earth
Was feverous, and did shake.

MACBETH.
'Twas a rough night.

LENNOX.
My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

[Re-enter Macduff.]

MACDUFF.
O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!

MACBETH, LENNOX.
What's the matter?

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

MACBETH.
What is't you say? the life?

LENNOX.
Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF.
Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon:—do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.

The night has been unruly. Where we were sleeping,
Our chimneys were blown down. And, as they say,
Cries were heard in the air, strange screams of death;
And speaking in tongues, with terrible accents,
Of dreadful confusion and confused events,
Newly born into the terrible age. The hidden bird
Screamed all night long; some say the earth
Was feverish, and shook.

MACBETH.
It was a rough night.

LENNOX.
I can't remember there being another
Like it.

[Re-enter Macduff.]

MACDUFF.
O horror, horror, horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot comprehend or name you!

MACBETH, LENNOX.
What's the matter?

MACDUFF.
Confusion has now made his masterpiece!
Most unholy murder has broken open
The Lord's anointed temple, and then stolen
The life of the building.

MACBETH.
What are you saying? The life?

LENNOX.
Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF.
Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new monster to turn you to stone. Don't ask me
to speak.
See, and then speak for yourselves.

[Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.]

Awake, awake!
Ring the alarms bell. Murder and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! Awake!
Shake off this soft sleep, death's disguise,
And look on death itself! Go up, go up, and see

[Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.]

Awake, awake!—
Ring the alarum bell:—murder and treason!
Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! up, up, and see
The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites
To countenance this horror!

[Alarum—bell rings.]

[Re—enter Lady Macbeth.]

LADY MACBETH.
What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!

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

[Re—enter Banquo.]

O Banquo, Banquo!
Our royal master's murder'd!

LADY MACBETH.
Woe, alas!
What, in our house?

BANQUO.
Too cruel any where.—
Dear Duff, I pr'ythee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

[Re—enter Macbeth and Lennox, with Ross.]

MACBETH.
Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had liv'd 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.

The great destruction's image! Malcolm! Banquo!
Rise up as you would from your graves, and walk like
spirits
To see this horror!

[Alarm—bells ring.]

[Re—enter Lady Macbeth.]

LADY MACBETH.
What's happened,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to summon
The sleepers of the house? Speak, speak!

MACDUFF.
O gentle lady,
It is not for you to hear what I can speak.
The repetition, in a woman's ear,
Would murder you as you heard it.

[Re—enter Banquo.]

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

LADY MACBETH.
Woe, alas!
What, in our house?

BANQUO.
Too cruel any where.
Dear Duff, I beg you, contradict yourself,
And say it is not so.

[Re—enter Macbeth and Lennox, with Ross.]

MACBETH.
If I had only died an hour before this event,
I would have lived a blessed life, because, from this
instant,
There's nothing serious in mortality.
Everything is only toys. Renown and grace are dead;
The wine of life is spilled, and the mere dregs
Are all that is left for this empty pit to brag of.

[Enter Malcolm and Donalbain.]

DONALBAIN.
What's wrong?

[Enter Malcolm and Donalbain.]

DONALBAIN.
What is amiss?

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

MACDUFF.
Your royal father's murder'd.

MALCOLM.
O, by whom?

LENNOX.
Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't:
Their hands and faces were all badg'd with blood;
So were their daggers, which, unwip'd, we found
Upon their pillows:
They star'd, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.

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

MACDUFF.
Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH.
Who can be wise, amaz'd, temperate, and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore: who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make's love known?

LADY MACBETH.
Help me hence, ho!

MACDUFF.
Look to the lady.

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

MACDUFF.
Your royal father's murdered.

MALCOLM.
O, by whom?

LENNOX.
Those of his chamber, as it seems, had done it.
Their hands and faces were all covered with blood;
So were their daggers, which we found, unwiped,
Upon their pillows.
They stared, and were distracted; no man's life
Was to be trusted with them.

MACBETH.
O, I'm sorry I was so angry
That I did kill them.

MACDUFF.
Why did you it?

MACBETH.
Who can be wise, amazed, temperate, and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.
The speedy execution of my violent love
Outran the thinking that should have stopped me. There
was Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood;
And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature
For ruin to make a wasteful entrance. There, the
murderers,
Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers
Improperly covered with gore. Who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make his love known?

LADY MACBETH.
Help me here, hello!

MACDUFF.
Look to the lady.

MALCOLM.
Why do we stop talking,
That most may claim we did this?

MALCOLM.
Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?

DONALBAIN.
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 brew'd.

MALCOLM.
Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

BANQUO.
Look to the lady:—

[Lady Macbeth is carried out.]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand; and thence,
Against the undivulg'd pretense I fight
Of treasonous malice.

MACDUFF.
And so do I.

ALL.
So all.

MACBETH.
Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
And meet i' the hall together.

ALL.
Well contented.

[Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.]

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

DONALBAIN.
To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,

DONALBAIN.
What should we say her, where our fate,
Hidden in a very small carpenter's hole, may rush up and
seize us?

Let's get away.
Our tears are not yet ready to be cried.

MALCOLM.
Nor our strong sorrow
Ready to be revealed.

BANQUO.
Look to the lady.

[Lady Macbeth is carried out.]

And when we have changed out of our night clothes,
That are not right in public, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work
To know the details. Fears and scruples shake us.
In the great hand of God I stand; and then,
I fight against the unknown lie
Of treasonous malice.

MACDUFF.
And so do I.

ALL.
So do we all.

MACBETH.
Let's briefly put on our manly clothes,
And meet in the hall together.

ALL.
That will be fine.

[Exeunt all only Malcolm and Donalbain.]

MALCOLM.
What will you do? Let's not stay with them.
To show an unfelt sorrow is something
That the false man does easily. I'll go to England.

DONALBAIN.
I'll go to Ireland. Our separate journeys
Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are now,
There are daggers in men's smiles. The nearer in blood,
The nearer bloody.

There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

MALCOLM.

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

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 4

Outside Macbeth's Castle

[Enter Ross and an old Man.]

OLD 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.

ROSS.

Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's
act,
Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp;
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?

OLD MAN.

'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

ROSS.

And Duncan's horses,—a thing most strange and
certain,—
Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,

MALCOLM.

This murderous arrow that's been shot
Has not yet hit its target, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, get to your horse,
And let us not be too dainty in saying goodbye,
But only sneak away. There's protection in the theft
That steals itself when there's no mercy left.

[Exeunt.]

2.4 Outside Macbeth's Castle

[Enter Ross and an old Man.]

OLD MAN.

I can remember seventy years well.
Within that time, I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange. Only this painful night
Has made all those things trivial.

ROSS.

Ah, good father,
You see the heavens, troubled with man's acting,
Threaten his bloody stage. By the clock, it is day,
And yet dark night puts the lamp we travel with out;
Is it night's superior influence, or the day's shame,
That darkness buries the face of earth,
When living light should kiss it?

OLD MAN.

It's unnatural,
Even like the deed that's been done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,
Was hawked at and killed by an owl that usually eats
mice.

ROSS.

And Duncan's horses, a thing most strange and certain,
Beautiful and swift, the darlings of their race,
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flew out,
Rebelling against obeying their masters, as if they would

Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out, make
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would
make
War with mankind.

OLD MAN.
'Tis said they eat each other.

ROSS.
They did so; to the amazement of mine eyes,
That look'd upon't.
Here comes the good Macduff.

[Enter Macduff.]

How goes the world, sir, now?

MACDUFF.
Why, see you not?

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

MACDUFF.
Those that Macbeth hath slain.

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

MACDUFF.
They were suborn'd:
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled; which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.

ROSS.
'Gainst nature still:
Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up
Thine own life's means!—Then 'tis most like,
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

MACDUFF.
He is already nam'd; and gone to Scone
To be invested.

ROSS.
Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFF.

War with mankind.

OLD MAN.
It is said they ate each other.

ROSS.
They did, to the amazement of my eyes,
That saw it.
Here comes the good Macduff.

[Enter Macduff.]

How is the world going now, sir?

MACDUFF.
Why, don't you see it?

ROSS.
Is it known who did this more than bloody deed?

MACDUFF.
Those guards that Macbeth has slain.

ROSS.
Alas, the day!
What good could they claim?

MACDUFF.
They were counterfeit.
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stolen away and fled; which puts them under
Suspicion of murder.

ROSS.
Also against nature.
Thriftless ambition, that will plunder
Your own life's means! Then it is most likely that
The crown will fall upon Macbeth.

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

ROSS.
Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFF.
Carried to Colme creek,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,

Carried to Colme-kill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

ROSS.
Will you to Scone?

MACDUFF.
No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

ROSS.
Well, I will thither.

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

ROSS.
Farewell, father.

OLD MAN.
God's benison go with you; and with those
That would make good of bad, and friends of
foes!

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Act III

1. [Scene 1](#)
2. [Scene 2](#)
3. [Scene 3](#)
4. [Scene 4](#)
5. [Scene 5](#)
6. [Scene 6](#)

Scene 1

Forres. A Room in the Palace.

[Enter Banquo.]

BANQUO.
Thou hast it now,—king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,

And guardian of their bones.

ROSS.
Will you be going to Scone?

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

ROSS.
Well, I'll there.

MACDUFF.
Well, I hope you see things are done well there, adieu!
In case our old uniforms fit better than our new ones!

ROSS.
Farewell, father.

OLD MAN.
God's blessings go with you; and with those
That would make a good situation out of a bad one and
friends of foes!

[Exeunt.]

Forres. A Room in the Palace.

[Enter Banquo.]

BANQUO.
You have it now, King, Cawdor, Glamis, all,

As the weird women promis'd; and, I fear,
Thou play'dst 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 as Queen; Lennox, Ross, Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.]

MACBETH.
Here's our chief guest.

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

MACBETH.
To—night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

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

MACBETH.
Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO.
Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH.
We should have else desir'd your good advice,—
Which still hath been both grave and
prosperous,—
In this day's council; but we'll take to—morrow.
Is't far you ride?

BANQUO.
As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper: go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night,

As the weird women promised; and, I'm afraid,
You played most foully for it. Still it was said
It would not be passed to your children,
Only that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If they told the truth,
As their speeches shine on you, Macbeth,
Why, by the truths made good on you,
Might they not be my prophecies as well,
And set up my hopes? But I'll be quiet; no more.

[Trumpets sounded. Enter Macbeth as King, Lady Macbeth as Queen; Lennox, Ross, Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.]

MACBETH.
Here's our chief guest.

LADY MACBETH.
If he had been forgotten,
It would have been a gap in our great feast,
And unbecoming to us.

MACBETH.
Tonight we host a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

BANQUO.
Let your highness
Command me, to whom my duties
Are joined forever with a most
unbreakable tie.

MACBETH.
Are you going riding you this afternoon?

BANQUO.
Yes, my good lord.

MACBETH.
We would have desired your good advice,
Which still has been both serious and favorable,
In this day's council, but we'll do it tomorrow.
Are you riding far?

BANQUO.
As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
between this meeting and supper. If my horse doesn't ride
better,
I must become a borrower of the night,
For a dark hour or two.

For a dark hour or twain.

MACBETH.
Fail not our feast.

BANQUO.
My lord, I will not.

MACBETH.
We hear our bloody cousins are bestow'd
In England and in Ireland; not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention: but of that to-morrow;
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?

BANQUO.
Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon's.

MACBETH.
I wish your horses swift and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell.--

[Exit Banquo.]

Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night; to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper time alone: while then, God be with
you!

[Exeunt Lady Macbeth, Lords, Ladies, &c.]

Sirrah, a word with you: attend those men
Our pleasure?

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

MACBETH.
Bring them before us.

[Exit Attendant.]

To be thus is nothing;
But to be safely thus:—our fears in Banquo.
Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be fear'd: 'tis much he

MACBETH.
Don't forget to come to our feast.

BANQUO.
My lord, I won't.

MACBETH.
We hear our bloody cousins are living
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel murder of their father, only filling their
hearers
With strange lies. But more of that tomorrow,
When together with that matter, we will have political
issues
That need us jointly. Go get your horse. Adieu,
Until you return tonight. Is Fleance going with you?

BANQUO.
Yes, my good lord. It's time we were going.

MACBETH.
I wish your horses are swift and sure of foot,
And so go on for your ride.
Farewell.

[Exit Banquo.]

You all have free time
Until seven tonight. So that we can give you
A sweeter welcome, we will keep our self
Alone until supper time. Until then, God be with you!

[Exeunt Lady Macbeth, Lords, Ladies, etc.]

Servant, a word with you. Are those men
Waiting for us?

ATTENDANT.
They are, my lord, outside the palace gate.

MACBETH.
Bring them before us.

[Exit Attendant.]

To be king in this way is nothing,
Only to be safely king in this way matters. Our fears of
Banquo
Stick deep, and there's a lot to be afraid of
in the royalty of his nature. He has the courage to do a lot,

dares;
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear: and under him,
My genius is rebuk'd; as, it is said,
Mark Antony's was by Caesar. He chid the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him; then, prophet-like,
They hail'd him father to a line of kings:
Upon my head they plac'd a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I fil'd my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come, fate, into the list,
And champion me to the utterance!—Who's
there?—

[Re—enter Attendant, with two Murderers.]

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

[Exit Attendant.]

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

FIRST MURDERER.

It was, so please your highness.

MACBETH.

Well then, now

Have you consider'd of my speeches? Know
That it was he, in the times past, which held you
So under fortune; which you thought had been
Our innocent self: this I made good to you
In our last conference, pass'd in probation with
you
How you were borne in hand, how cross'd, the
instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that
might
To half a soul and to a notion craz'd
Say, "Thus did Banquo."

And, in that unconquerable temper of his mind,
He has a wisdom that guides his courage
To act in safety. He is the only one
Whose being I fear. And, under him,
My natural ability is despised as, they say,
Mark Antony's was by Caesar. Banquo scolded the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And asked them speak to him; then, like a prophecy,
They hailed him father to a line of kings.
Upon my head, they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren scepter in my grip,
Which will be wrench'd from my hand,
Since I have no son to succeed me. If the prophecy is true,
I have defiled my soul for Banquo's sons;
I have murdered the gracious Duncan for them,
Put doubts and bitter feelings into my mind
Only for them, and I have given my soul
To the common enemy of man, just
To make them kings, the sons of Banquo kings!
Rather than see that happen, come, Fate, into the arena,
And fight for me to the death! Who's there?

[Re—enter Attendant, with two Murderers.]

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

[Exit Attendant.]

Wasn't it yesterday we spoke together?

FIRST MURDERER.

It was, so please your highness.

MACBETH.

Well then, now.

Have you considered what I said? You know
He was the one, in the times past, who held you
back from promotion, and you thought it was
our innocent self. I gave you proof
when we last met, demonstrated to you how he dealt with
you,
how he crossed you, the documents he used,
how he used them, and everything else that might say
to a person with half a soul or someone crazed,
"This is what Banquo did."

FIRST MURDERER.

You made it known to us.

MACBETH.

FIRST MURDERER.
You made it known to us.

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

FIRST MURDERER.
We are men, my liege.

MACBETH.
Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels,
curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are cleft
All by the name of dogs: the valu'd file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The house-keeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him clos'd; whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike: and so of men.
Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say it;
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off;
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

SECOND MURDERER.
I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incens'd that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER.
And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugg'd with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on't.

MACBETH.
Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

I did so, and I went even further, which is now
the point of our second meeting. Are you
so patient
that you can let this go? Are you such believers in the
gospel
that you would pray for this good man and for his
children,
the same man whose heavy hand has led you to death, and
made your families beggars?

FIRST MURDERER.
We are men, my liege.

MACBETH.
Yes, you certainly could pass for men,
In the same way that hounds, and greyhounds, mongrels,
spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are
All the names of dogs. There is a long list that
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The house-keeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which generous nature
Has given him, whereby he receives
A special mark of distinction, from the inventory
That describes them as all alike. And the same is true of
men.
Now, if you have a place on the list,
In the worst line-up of men, say it;
And I will put, in your bosoms, such business
That, if you carry it out, it will eliminate your enemy,
Take hold of you to the heart and love of us,
Who wears our office with sickness as long as he lives,
But which would be perfect if he were dead.

SECOND MURDERER.
I am one, my liege,
Whom has been so angered by the vile blows and
beatings of the world
That I am reckless in what
I would do to spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER.
And I am another one,
So weary with disasters, so unlucky,
That I gamble my life on any chance I can get,
Either to make it better or end it.

MACBETH.
Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS.

True, my lord.

MACBETH.

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

SECOND MURDERER.

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

FIRST MURDERER.

Though our lives—

MACBETH.

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

BOTH MURDERERS.

We are resolv'd, my lord.

MACBETH.

I'll call upon you straight: abide within.

[Exeunt Murderers.]

It is concluded:—Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night.

[Exit.]

Act III

BOTH MURDERERS.

True, my lord.

MACBETH.

And he's mine too, and to a such bloody degree,
That every minute of his being puts
A big knot in my stomach; and though I could
Sweep him from my sight with barefaced power,
And bid my will guarantee it, I can't do it,
Because certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not lose, would only protest his fall
Who I myself struck down. And so it is
That I ask see your assistance. I must
Hide this business from ordinary eyes
For sundry weighty reasons.

SECOND MURDERER.

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

FIRST MURDERER.

Though our lives —

MACBETH.

Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most,
I will advise you where to plant yourselves;
Acquaint you with the perfect time to do it,
The moment to do it; for it must be done tonight
And away from the palace, always remembering
That I must be clear of this event. And with Banquo's
death,
There cannot be any impediments or botches in the work.
Fleance, his son, who keeps him company,
Whose existence is no less important to me
Than his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Decide among yourselves in private.
I'll come to you in a minute.

BOTH MURDERERS.

We are resolved, my lord.

MACBETH.

I'll call upon you in a minute. Stay within.

[Exeunt Murderers.]

The problem is solved. Banquo, your soul's flight,
If it finds heaven, must find it tonight.

[Exit.]

42

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 2

The same. Another Room in the Palace.

[Enter Lady Macbeth and a Servant.]

LADY MACBETH.
Is Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT.
Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

LADY MACBETH.
Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words.

SERVANT.
Madam, I will.

[Exit.]

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

[Enter Macbeth.]

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.

MACBETH.
We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it;
She'll close, and be herself; whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint,
Both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly: better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,

The same. Another Room in the Palace.

[Enter Lady Macbeth and a Servant.]

LADY MACBETH.
Has Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT.
Yes, madam, only to return again tonight.

LADY MACBETH.
Tell the king that I wish to speak with him,
For a few words.

SERVANT.
Madam, I will.

[Exit.]

LADY MACBETH.
Nothing's ours, all's been spent,
Where we got what we wanted, but without content.
It is safer to be what we destroy,
Rather than, by destruction, live in uncertain joy.

[Enter Macbeth.]

How are you, my lord! Why do you keep to yourself,
Making the worst imaginings your companions,
Thinking those thoughts which should indeed have died
With the dead ones you're thinking about? Problems
with no solutions
Should not be thought about. What's done is done.

MACBETH.
We have crushed the snake, but we haven't killed it;
She'll recover, and be herself, while our poor
evil-doing
Remains in danger of her poisonous bite.
Only let the order of the universe be disrupted,
Both the real and spiritual worlds suffer,
Before we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep

Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.

LADY MACBETH.

Come on;
Gently my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;
Be bright and jovial 'mong your guests to-night.

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

You must leave this.

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH.

There's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund: ere the bat hath flown
His cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons,
The shard-borne 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?

MACBETH.

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

In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That wake us up nightly. It's better to be with the
dead,
Whom we have sent to their peace to gain our peace,
Than to lie on a bed, torturing of the mind
In a restless frenzy. Duncan is in his grave.
After the disease of his life is over, he sleeps well.;
Treason has done his worst. Not steel, or poison,
Malice in his country, attacks from foreigners,
nothing,
Can touch him further.

LADY MACBETH.

Come on.
Gently my lord, put on a different face.
Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight.

MACBETH.

I will, love, and you should too.
Devote your remembrance to Banquo;
Give him respect, both with eye and tongue.
As long as we are insecure, we
Must wash our crowns in these streams of flattery,
And let our faces hide our hearts like masks,
Disguising what they really are.

LADY MACBETH.

You must stop this.

MACBETH.

O, my mind is full of scorpions, dear wife!
You know that Banquo and his son, Fleance, live.

LADY MACBETH.

Only in them, nature's copy is not eternal.

MACBETH.

There's comfort in that. They can be attacked.
Then, you be happy. Before the bat has flown
His hidden flight, before black Hecate's summons are
heard,
Before the dung beetle, with his drowsy hums,
Rings the bell to end the night, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH.

What's to be done?

MACBETH.

I don't want you to know, dearest sweetheart,

Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.—
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still;
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill:
So, pr'ythee, go with me.

[Exeunt.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 3

The same. A Park or Lawn, with a gate leading to the Palace.

[Enter three Murderers.]

FIRST MURDERER.
But who did bid thee join with us?

THIRD MURDERER.
Macbeth.

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

FIRST MURDERER.
Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated traveller apace,
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

THIRD MURDERER.
Hark! I hear horses.

BANQUO.
[Within.] Give us a light there, ho!

Until you can applaud the deed. Come, night that
closes the eyes,
Cover the tender eye of pitiful day;
And, with your bloody and invisible hand,
Cancel and tear to pieces that great deed
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens, and the crow
Flies to his roost to the wood.
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
While night's black agents awake to seek their prey.
You marvel at my words. Only stop for a minute.
Things that are bad make strong themselves by ill.
So, I beg you, go with me.

[Exeunt.]

3.3 The same. A Park or Lawn, with a gate leading to the Palace.

[Enter three Murderers.]

FIRST MURDERER.
But who asked you to join us?

THIRD MURDERER.
Macbeth.

SECOND MURDERER.
He doesn't need our mistrust; since he tells us
Our duties and the directions for
what we have to do.

FIRST MURDERER.
Then stand with us.
There are still some streaks of day in the west.
Now is the time that the late traveler speeds up his
pace,
So that he can get to an inn, and here comes
The person we're waiting for.

THIRD MURDERER.
Listen! I hear horses.

BANQUO.
[Within.] Give us a light there, hello!

SECOND MURDERER.
Then 'tis he; the rest
That are within the note of expectation
Already are i' the court.

FIRST MURDERER.
His horses go about.

THIRD MURDERER.
Almost a mile; but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

SECOND MURDERER.
A light, a light!

THIRD MURDERER.
'Tis he.

FIRST MURDERER.
Stand to't.

[Enter Banquo, and Fleance with a torch.]

BANQUO.
It will be rain to-night.

FIRST MURDERER.
Let it come down.

[Assaults Banquo.]

BANQUO.
O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou mayst revenge.—O slave!

[Dies. Fleance escapes.]

THIRD MURDERER.
Who did strike out the light?

FIRST MURDERER.
Was't not the way?

THIRD MURDERER.
There's but one down: the son is fled.

SECOND MURDERER.
We have lost best half of our affair.

SECOND MURDERER.
Then it is he; the rest
That are nobles
Are already in the court.

FIRST MURDERER.
He is cooling off his horses.

THIRD MURDERER.
Almost a mile, but he usually does that,
Just as all men do. They cool them off
From here to the palace gate.

SECOND MURDERER.
A light, a light!

THIRD MURDERER.
It is he.

FIRST MURDERER.
Let's do it.

[Enter Banquo, and Fleance with a torch.]

BANQUO.
There will be rain tonight.

FIRST MURDERER.
Let it come down.

[Assaults Banquo.]

BANQUO.
O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
You'll get revenge later. O slave!

[Dies. Fleance escapes.]

THIRD MURDERER.
Who put out the light?

FIRST MURDERER.
Wasn't that what we were supposed to do?

THIRD MURDERER.
There's only one down. The son has fled.

SECOND MURDERER.
We have lost best half of our attack.

FIRST MURDERER.
Well, let's away, and say how much is done.

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 4

The same. A Room of state in the Palace. A banquet prepared.

[Enter Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, Lords, and Attendants.]

MACBETH.

You know your own degrees: sit down. At first
And last the hearty welcome.

LORDS.

Thanks to your majesty.

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH.

See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.—
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst:

[Enter first Murderer to the door.]

Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round.—There's blood upon thy face.

MURDERER.

'Tis Banquo's then.

MACBETH.

'Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he despatch'd?

MURDERER.

FIRST MURDERER.
Well, let's go, and tell Macbeth how much we did.

[Exeunt.]

The same. A Room of state in the Palace. A banquet prepared.

[Enter Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, Lords, and Attendants.]

MACBETH.

You know the seating order according to your
titles. Sit down. To the first
And the last, a hearty welcome.

LORDS.

Thank you, your majesty.

MACBETH.

We will mingle with these people,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess sits in her chair of state, but, when it's
time,
We will require her welcome.

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH.

See, they greet you with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even. Here I'll sit in the middle.

[Enter first Murderer to the door.]

Be very cheerful; in a minute, we'll drink a
measure
Around the table. There's blood upon your face.

MURDERER.

Then it's Banquo's.

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

MACBETH.

Thou art the best o' the cut-throats; yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.

MURDERER.

Most royal sir,
Fleance is 'scap'd.

MACBETH.

Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect;
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock;
As broad and general as the casing air:
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

MURDERER.

Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.

MACBETH.

Thanks for that:
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present.—Get thee gone; to-morrow
We'll hear, ourselves, again.

[Exit Murderer.]

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH.

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

LENNOX.

May't please your highness sit.

[The Ghost of Banquo rises, and sits in Macbeth's place.]

MACBETH.

It is better with you out here than he inside the
hall.
Is he dead?

MURDERER.

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

MACBETH.

You are the best of the cut-throats; yet he's a good
man
That also cut Fleance's throat. If you did it,
You are without equal.

MURDERER.

Most royal sir,
Fleance escaped.

MACBETH.

Then my fears come again. I would have been
perfect,
Whole as the marble found as a rock;
As broad and general as the air around us.
But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound
To impudent doubts and fears. But Banquo's
dead?

MURDERER.

Yes, my good lord. He lives in a ditch,
With twenty deep gashes on his head,
Any one of them would have killed him.

MACBETH.

Thanks for that.
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that has
fled
Has a nature that in time will breed venom,
But he has no fangs now. Get going. Tomorrow
We'll speak among ourselves, again.

[Exit Murderer.]

LADY MACBETH.

My royal lord,
You don't give the toast. A good dinner for guests
is more like
One that's bought rather than given, if the host
doesn't make frequent toasts.
With no toasts, you might as well stay home,
because

MACBETH.
Here had we now our country's honor roof'd,
Were the grac'd person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance!

ROSS.
His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company?

MACBETH.
The table's full.

LENNOX.
Here is a place reserv'd, sir.

MACBETH.
Where?

LENNOX.
Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?

MACBETH.
Which of you have done this?

LORDS.
What, my good lord?

MACBETH.
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;
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.—Are you a man?

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

LADY MACBETH.
O proper stuff!

Away from home, ceremony is the sauce to meat,
Getting together would be bare without it.

MACBETH.
Sweet remembrancer!
Now, may good digestion follow your appetites,
And health on both!

LENNOX.
May it please your highness, sit.

[The Ghost of Banquo rises, and sits in Macbeth's
place.]

MACBETH.
Here we would now have our country's honor
under one roof,
If the graced person of our Banquo were present.
Who I might challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance!

ROSS.
His absence, sir,
Means he didn't keep his promise. Will your
highness
Please grace us with your royal company?

MACBETH.
The table's full.

LENNOX.
Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH.
Where?

LENNOX.
Here, my good lord. What upsets you, your
highness?

MACBETH.
Which one of you have done this?

LORDS.
Done what, my good lord?

MACBETH.
You cannot say I did it. Never shake
Your gory hair at me.

ROSS.

This is the very painting of your fear:
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
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,
Authoriz'd by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

MACBETH.

Pr'ythee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?—
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.—
If charnel houses and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites.

[Ghost disappears.]

LADY MACBETH.

What, quite unmann'd in folly?

MACBETH.

If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH.

Fie, for shame!

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

MACBETH.

I do forget:—
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then I'll sit down.—Give me some wine, fill full.—
I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss:

Gentlemen, rise. His highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH.

Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often this way,
And has been from his youth. I beg you, stay
seated.

The fit is momentary; in a minute,
He will again be well. If pay attention to him,
You shall offend him, and embarrass him.
Eat and ignore him. Are you a man?

MACBETH.

Yes, and a bold one, that has the courage to look
on
A sight which might shock the devil.

LADY MACBETH.

O complete and utter nonsense!
This is the very image of your fear.
This is same as the air-drawn dagger which, you
said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these outbursts and jerky
shaking,
Impostors of true fear, would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Confirmed by her grandmother. Shame on you!
Why do you make such faces? When it's all over,
You only look at an empty stool.

MACBETH.

I beg you, see there! Behold! Look! Lo! What do
you say?
Why, what do I care? If you can nod, speak too.
If mortuaries and our graves must send
Those that we bury back, our tombs
Shall be the stomachs of birds.

[Ghost disappears.]

LADY MACBETH.

What, are you made weak by this "vision?"

MACBETH.

As I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH.

For shame, for shame!

MACBETH.

Blood has been shed before now, in the old days,

Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.

LORDS.
Our duties, and the pledge.

[Ghost rises again.]

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

LADY MACBETH.
Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other,
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

MACBETH.
What man dare, I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence!

[Ghost disappears.]

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

LADY MACBETH.
You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admir'd disorder.

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

ROSS.
What sights, my lord?

Before laws cleaned up the commonwealth.
Yes, and since then too, murders have been
performed
Too terrible to hear. The time has been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would
die,
And that was the end of it. But now they rise
again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools. This ghost is more
strange
Than such a murder is.

LADY MACBETH.
My worthy lord,
Your noble friends are missing you.

MACBETH.
I forgot.
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends.
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to
all;
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine, fill my
cup full.
I drink to the general joy of the whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss.
Would he were here! To all, and to him we miss,
And all to all.

LORDS.
Our duties and the pledge.

[Ghost rises again.]

MACBETH.
Begone! And get out of my sight! Let the earth
hide you!
There is no marrow in your bones; your blood is
cold.
You have no sight in those eyes
That you stare with!

LADY MACBETH.
Think of this, good peers,
Only as a common occurrence. It's nothing else,
Except it spoils our good time.

MACBETH.
What man has courage to do, I have courage to do.

LADY MACBETH.
I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;
Question enrages him: at once, good-night:—
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.

LENNOX.
Good-night; and better health
Attend his majesty!

LADY MACBETH.
A kind good-night to all!

[Exeunt all Lords and Attendants.]

MACBETH.
It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood:
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;
Augurs, and understood relations, have
By magot-pies, and choughs, and rooks, brought forth
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?

LADY MACBETH.
Did you send to him, sir?

MACBETH.
I hear it by the way; but I will send:
There's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,
(And betimes I will) to the weird sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Step't in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.

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

MACBETH.
Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse

You can approach me like the rugged Russian
bear,
The armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger.
Take any shape but this one, and my steady nerves
Will never shake again. Or be alive again,
And challenge me to fight you in the desert with
your sword.
If I have the habit of shaking, then proclaim that I
am
The doll of a girl. Here, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, here!

[Ghost disappears.]

Why, so; Since you've gone,
I am a man again. I beg you, sit still.

LADY MACBETH.
You have disrupted the fun, broken up a good
party,
With very admirable chaos.

MACBETH.
Can such things be, that
Can overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without puzzling us? You treat me like a stranger
Unlike my usual self,
When I wonder now how you can behold such
sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine are blanched with fear.

ROSS.
What sights, my lord?

LADY MACBETH.
I beg you, don't speak. He grows worse and
worse;
Questions enrage him. Now, good-night.
Don't worry about leaving by rank.
Only go at once.

LENNOX.
Good-night; and better health
Attend his majesty!

LADY MACBETH.
A kind good-night to all!

[Exeunt all Lords and Attendants.]

Is the initiate fear that wants hard use:---
We are yet but young in deed.

[Exeunt.]

MACBETH.

It will have blood. They say blood will have
blood.
Stones have been known to move, and trees to
speak.
Predictions and relationships understood, have
brought forth
Even the most perfect murder,
By magpies and crows and black birds. What time
is it?

LADY MACBETH.

Almost the middle of the night.

MACBETH.

What do you think about Macduff's refusing to be
At our great bidding?

LADY MACBETH.

Did you invite him, sir?

MACBETH.

I was told so, But I will send.
There's not one of them, except for his house
I don't keep a bribed servant. I will go tomorrow,
(And I will go early in the morning) to the weird
sisters.
They shall speak more, for now I am determined
to know
The worst by the worst means. For my own good,
All other problems will have to wait. I am now so
far
Stepped in blood that, if I don't wade in it any
more,
It doesn't matter if I am getting out of it or going
over it.
I have strange things in my head that need to be
figured out,
Which must be done quickly before others look at
them closely.

LADY MACBETH.

You need to sleep.

MACBETH.

Come, we'll get some sleep. My unexplainable
violation of
Who and what I am is only the fear of someone
new to these things.
We are still only youngsters in what we're doing.

[Exeunt.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 5

The heath.

[Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting Hecate.]

FIRST WITCH.

Why, how now, Hecate? you look angrily.

HECATE.

Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd 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' the morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny.
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms, and everything beside.
I am for the air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end.
Great business must be wrought ere noon:
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:
And that, distill'd by magic sleights,
Shall raise such artificial sprites,
As, by the strength of their illusion,
Shall draw him on to his confusion:
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear:
And you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

[Music and song within, "Come away, come away" &c.]

3.5 The heath.

[Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting Hecate.]

FIRST WITCH.

Why, how are you, Hecate? You look angry.

HECATE.

Don't I have reason, hags that you are,
Impudent and overbold? How dare you
Trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The secret contriver of all harms,
Was never called to offer my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Has been only for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But you can make amends now. Get going,
And, at the sunken place by the river Acheron,
Meet me in the morning. There he
Will come to know his destiny.
Provide your vessels and your spells,
Your charms, and everything else beside.
I am going into the air. I'll use this night
For an evil and a deadly end.
Great work must be done before noon.
A vaporous, profound drop hangs
On the corner of the moon.
I'll catch it before it hits the ground.
And that drop, distilled by magic tricks,
Shall raise such unnatural spirits,
That, by the strength of their deception,
Shall add to his confusion.
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes above wisdom, grace, and fear.
And you all know, security
Is the major enemy of humans.

Hark! I am call'd; my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me.

[Exit.]

FIRST WITCH.

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

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 6

Forres. A Room in the Palace.

[Enter Lennox and another Lord.]

LENNOX.

My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret further: only, I say,
Thing's have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth:—marry, he was dead:—
And the right valiant Banquo walk'd too late;
Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,
For Fleance fled. Men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? damned fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight,
In pious rage, the two delinquents tear
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive,
To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well: and I do think,
That had he Duncan's sons under his key,—
As, an't please heaven, he shall not,—they should find
What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.
But, peace!—for from broad words, and 'cause he fail'd
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear,
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?

LORD.

[Music and song within, "Come away, come
away" etc.]

Listen! I am being called. See, my little spirit
Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me.

[Exit.]

FIRST WITCH.

Come, let's hurry up. She'll be back again soon.

[Exeunt.]

3.6 Forres. A Room in the Palace.

[Enter Lennox and another Lord.]

LENNOX.

The things I said before have only agreed your
thoughts,
Which can explain more. I only say that this
Thing has been strangely endured. The gracious
Duncan
Was lamented by Macbeth. By Mary, he was
dead.
And the right valiant Banquo was out too late,
Whom, you may say, if it please you, was killed
by Fleance,
Because Fleance fled. Men must not walk too
late.
Who cannot think how monstrous
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? Damned fact!
How it grieved Macbeth! Didn't he, right away,
In pious rage, kill the two delinquents
That were the slaves of drink and in the thralls of
sleep?
Wasn't that nobly done? Yes, and wisely too;
Because it would have angered any heart alive,
To hear the men deny it. So I say,
He has put up with all things well, and I think
That, if he had Duncan's sons in his prison,
As, if it please heaven, he shall not, they should
find

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

LENNOX.
Sent he to Macduff?

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

LENNOX.
And that well might
Advise him to a caution, to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England, and unfold
His message ere he come; that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accurs'd!

LORD.
I'll send my prayers with him.

[Exeunt.]

What it meant to kill a father. The same for
Fleance.
Only, peace! Because from his bold words, and
because he didn't
Go to the tyrant's feast, I hear,
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
Where he is?

LORD.
Malcolm, Duncan's son,
From whom Macbeth withholds his birthright,
Lives in the English court and is received
By the most pious King Edward with such grace
That the evil twist of fate takes nothing
From his high respect. There Macduff
Has gone to beg the holy king to send his aid
To support Northumberland and warlike Siward.
That, by the help of these two, together with Him
above
To ratify the work, we may again
Put meat on our tables, and sleep through our
nights,
Free from bloody knives at our feasts and
banquets.
We give "faithful" homage and receive free
titles,
Which we pine for now. And this report
Has so exasperated the king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

LENNOX.
Did he ask Macduff?

LORD.
He did, and Macduff with an absolute "Sir, not
I."
The frowning messenger turns his back to me,
And mumbles under his breath, as if someone
should say,
"You'll regret the time that burdens me with this
answer."

LENNOX.
And that well might
Make him take precautions, to stop at a point
That his wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England, and unfold
His message before he comes so that a swift
blessing
May soon return to our country that suffers

Under a cursed hand!

LORD.
I'll send my prayers with him.

[Exeunt.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Act IV

1. [Scene 1](#)
2. [Scene 2](#)
3. [Scene 3](#)

Scene 1

A dark Cave. In the middle, a Caldron Boiling.

[Thunder. Enter the three Witches.]

FIRST WITCH.
Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

SECOND WITCH.
Thrice; and once the hedge-pig whin'd.

THIRD WITCH.
Harpier cries:—"tis time, 'tis time.

FIRST WITCH.
Round about the caldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.—
Toad, that under cold stone,
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot!

ALL.
Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and caldron, bubble.

SECOND WITCH.
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,

4.1 A dark Cave. In the middle, a Caldron Boiling.

[Thunder. Enter the three Witches.]

FIRST WITCH.
The cat with the streaked fur has meowed three times.

SECOND WITCH.
Three times, and the hedgehog whined once.

THIRD WITCH.
The god Harpier cries. It is time, it is time.

FIRST WITCH.
Round about the caldron go;
In the poisoned entrails throw.
Toad, that has spent
Thirty one days and nights under cold stone,
From whose sweat a sleeping venom was gotten,
Boil you first in the charmed pot!

ALL.
Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and caldron, bubble.

SECOND WITCH.
Fillet of a snake that lived in a bog,
In the caldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,

Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and howlet's wing,—
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL.

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

THIRD WITCH.

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witch's mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangl'd babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,—
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our caldron.

ALL.

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

SECOND WITCH.

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

[Enter Hecate.]

HECATE.

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

Song.

Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray;
Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may.

[Exit Hecate.]

SECOND WITCH.

By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes:—

A black snake's forked tongue, and its cousin's sting,
Lizard's leg, and owlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth, boil and bubble.

ALL.

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

THIRD WITCH.

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witch's mummy, a gulf-like stomach,
Of the rough sea salt glisten,
Root of poison hemlock dug up in the dark,
Liver of Christians not baptized,
Gall bladder of goat, and slips of pine trees
Cut off the tree when the moon eclipsed,
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips,
Finger of a baby born dead
Delivered in a ditch by a prostitute,
Make the gruel thick and gooey.
Also add a tiger's guts,
For the ingredients of our caldron.

ALL.

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

SECOND WITCH.

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

[Enter Hecate.]

HECATE.

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

Song.

Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray;
Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may.

[Exit Hecate.]

SECOND WITCH.

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

Open, locks, whoever knocks!

[Enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?

ALL.

A deed without a name.

MACBETH.

I conjure you, by that which you profess,—
Howe'er you come to know it,—answer me:
Though you untie the winds, and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodg'd, and trees blown
down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the
treasure
Of nature's germins tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken,—answer me
To what I ask you.

FIRST WITCH.

Speak.

SECOND WITCH.

Demand.

THIRD WITCH.

We'll answer.

FIRST WITCH.

Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters'?

MACBETH.

Call 'em, let me see 'em.

FIRST WITCH.

Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

ALL.

Open, locks, to whoever knocks!

[Enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What are you doing?

ALL.

A deed without a name.

MACBETH.

I beg you, by that religion which you believe in,
However, you come to know the answers, answer me.
Though you untie the winds, and let them fight
Against the churches, though the roaring waves
Confuse sailors and sink ships,
Though corn on the cob be torn from its stalks, and trees
blown down,
Though castles topple on their guards' heads,
Though palaces and pyramids bend
Their heads to their foundations, though the treasure
Of nature's buds tumble all together,
Even until destruction makes everything sick, answer
The questions I ask you.

FIRST WITCH.

Speak.

SECOND WITCH.

Demand.

THIRD WITCH.

We'll answer.

FIRST WITCH.

Say, if you would rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters'?

MACBETH.

Call them. Let me see them.

FIRST WITCH.

Pour in the blood of a female pig that has eaten
Her nine piglets, and throw it into the flame
With fat that has dripped
From a murderer's gallows.

ALL.

Come, high or low;

Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

[Thunder. An Apparition of an armed Head rises.]

MACBETH.
Tell me, thou unknown power,—

FIRST WITCH.
He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou naught.

APPARITION.
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff;
Beware the Thane of Fife.—Dismiss
me:—enough.

[Descends.]

MACBETH.
Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright:—but one word
more,—

FIRST WITCH.
He will not be commanded: here's another,
More potent than the first.

[Thunder. An Apparition of a bloody Child rises.]

APPARITION.—
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

MACBETH.
Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

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

[Descends.]

MACBETH.
Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.—What is this,

[Thunder. An Apparition of a Child crowned, with

yourself and duties skillfully show!

[Thunder. An Apparition of an armed Head rises.]

MACBETH.
Tell me, you unknown power.

FIRST WITCH.
He knows your thought.
Hear his speech, but you don't say anything.

APPARITION.
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff;
Beware the Baron of Fife. Send me away. Enough.

[Descends.]

MACBETH.
Whatever you are, for your good warning, thanks;
You have helped my fear with your music. Only one
word more.

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

[Thunder. An Apparition of a bloody Child rises.]

APPARITION.
Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

MACBETH.
If I had three ears, I'd still hear you.

APPARITION.
Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The power of man, for no one given birth to by a woman
Shall harm Macbeth.

[Descends.]

MACBETH.
Then live, Macduff. Why should I be afraid of you?
But I'll still make doubly sure,
And take a bond of luck. You shall not live,
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it is a liar,
And sleep in spite of thunder. What is this

[Thunder. An Apparition of a Child crowned, with a tree
in his
hand, rises.]

a tree in his
hand, rises.]

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

ALL.
Listen, but speak not to't.

APPARITION.
Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be, until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.

[Descends.]

MACBETH.
That will never be:
Who can impress the forest; bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements,
good!
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-plac'd Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom.—Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me,—if your art
Can tell so much,—shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

ALL.
Seek to know no more.

MACBETH.
I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know:—
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this?

[Hautboys.]

FIRST WITCH.
Show!

SECOND WITCH.
Show!

THIRD WITCH.
Show!

That rises like the heirs of a king,
And wears upon his baby brow the
Golden crown of a king?

ALL.
Listen, but don't speak to it.

APPARITION.
Be brave like a lion, proud; and take no care
Who annoys, who worries, or where conspirators are.
Macbeth shall never be defeated, until
Great Birnam wood shall come to
High Dunsinane hill against him.

[Descends.]

MACBETH.
That will never be.
Who can move the forest, bid the tree
To walk away from his earth-bound root? Sweet
predictions, good!
Rebellion's head will never rise until the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live until his dying day, the death of
His own time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing. Tell me, if you are a spirit
That can tell me, shall Banquo's children ever
Reign in this kingdom?

ALL.
Do not ask to know any more.

MACBETH.
I will be satisfied or shamed. Deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.
Why does that cauldron sink? And what noise is this?

[Hautboys.]

FIRST WITCH.
Show!

SECOND WITCH.
Show!

THIRD WITCH.
Show!

ALL.
Show his eyes, and grieve his heart!

ALL.
Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!

[Eight kings appear, and pass over in order, the last with a glass in his hand; Banquo following.]

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 the crack of doom?
Another yet!—A seventh!—I'll see no more:—
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That twofold balls and treble sceptres carry:
Horrible sight!—Now I see 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his.—What! is this so?

FIRST WITCH.
Ay, sir, all this is so:—but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?—
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights;
I'll charm 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 then vanish.]

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

[Enter Lennox.]

LENNOX.
What's your grace's will?

MACBETH.
Saw you the weird sisters?

Come like shadows, so depart!

[Eight kings appear, and pass over in order, the last with a glass in his hand; Banquo following.]

MACBETH.
You are too like the spirit of Banquo. Down!
Your crown burns my eyeballs. And your hair,
Your other gold-bound brow, is like the first;
A third is like the one before. Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Come out of your sockets, eyes!
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more.
And yet the eighth appears, who bears the mirror
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That carry twice the amount of gold balls and three times
the scepters.
Horrible sight! Now I see it is true,
Because Banquo, with his hair matted with blood smiles
upon me,
And points at them for his. What! Is this so?

FIRST WITCH.
Yes, sir, all this is so. Only why
Stands Macbeth in this way amazedly?
Come, sisters, let's cheer him up,
And show him 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 then vanish.]

MACBETH.
Where are they? Gone? Let this evil hour
Stand forever cursed in the calendar!
Come in, who ever is out there!

[Enter Lennox.]

LENNOX.
What's your grace's will?

MACBETH.
Did you see the weird sisters?

LENNOX.

LENNOX.
No, my lord.

MACBETH.
Came they not by you?

LENNOX.
No indeed, my lord.

MACBETH.
Infected be the air whereon they ride;
And damn'd 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
Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH.
Fled to England!

LENNOX.
Ay, my good lord.

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

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 2

Fife. A Room in Macduff's Castle.

No, my lord.

MACBETH.
They didn't come by you?

LENNOX.
No indeed, my lord.

MACBETH.
Let the air they ride on be infected
And let all those that trust them be damned! I heard
The galloping of horse. Who was it that came by?

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

MACBETH.
Fled to England!

LENNOX.
Yes, my good lord.

MACBETH.
Time, you anticipate my dread deeds.
The flighty purpose never is understood
Unless the deed goes with it. From this moment
The very first wishes of my heart shall be
The first actions of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, let be it thought and
done.
I will surprise the castle of Macduff,
Seize Fife, kill, by the sword,
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That are related to him. No boasting like a fool,
This deed I'll do before I change my mind.
Only no more visions! Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me to where they are.

[Exeunt.]

4.2 Fife. A Room in Macduff's Castle.

[Enter Lady Macduff, her Son, and Ross.]

LADY MACDUFF.

What had he done, to make him fly the land?

ROSS.

You must have patience, madam.

LADY MACDUFF.

He had none:

His flight was madness: when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.

ROSS.

You know not

Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

LADY MACDUFF.

Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not:
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear, and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

ROSS.

My dearest coz,

I pray you, school yourself: but, for your husband,
He is noble, wise, Judicious, and best knows
The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much further:
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors,
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumour
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!

LADY MACDUFF.

Father'd 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.

[Enter Lady Macduff, her Son, and Ross.]

LADY MACDUFF.

What had he done to make him fly the land?

ROSS.

You must have patience, madam.

LADY MACDUFF.

He had none.

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

ROSS.

You don't know

Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

LADY MACDUFF.

Wisdom! To leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his titles, in a place
That he himself flies from? He doesn't love us.
He lacks any feeling of what it means to act
naturally,
Because the poor wren, the most diminutive of
birds,
Will fight to defend her young ones in her nest
against the owl.
All his actions are from the fear, and nothing is
from the love.
Just as there is little wisdom, where the flight
So runs is against all reason.

ROSS.

My dearest cousin,

I beg you, have patience yourself. Your husband,
Is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
What to do in these times. I don't dare speak much
further.
Only the times are cruel when we are traitors
And don't know ourselves, when we stop rumor
From what we fear and don't know what we fear,
Only float upon a wild and violent sea
Tossed each way. I take my leave of you.
It won't be long until I'll be here again.
Things at the worst will cease, or else return
To the way they were before. My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!

LADY MACDUFF.

[Exit.]

LADY MACDUFF.

Sirrah, your father's dead;
And what will you do now? How will you live?

SON.

As birds do, mother.

LADY MACDUFF.

What, with worms and flies?

SON.

With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

LADY MACDUFF.

Poor bird! thou'dst never fear the net nor lime,
The pit-fall nor the gin.

SON.

Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.

LADY MACDUFF.

Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for father?

SON.

Nay, how will you do for a husband?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

SON.

Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

LADY MACDUFF.

Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, i' faith,
With wit enough for thee.

SON.

Was my father a traitor, mother?

LADY MACDUFF.

Ay, that he was.

SON.

What is a traitor?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, one that swears and lies.

He has a father, and yet he's fatherless.

ROSS.

I am so much a fool, that if I stayed longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.
I leave you at once.

[Exit.]

LADY MACDUFF.

Son, your father's dead,
And what will you do now? How will you live?

SON.

As birds do, mother.

LADY MACDUFF.

What, with worms and flies?

SON.

With what I get, I mean, as they do.

LADY MACDUFF.

Poor bird! You would never fear being caught or
dying,
The mistakes nor the tricks.

SON.

Why should I, mother? Poor birds do not fall
down.
My father is not dead, is all you're saying.

LADY MACDUFF.

Yes, he is dead. How will you do for a father?

SON.

No, how will you do for a husband?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

SON.

Then you'll buy them to sell again.

LADY MACDUFF.

You speak with all your wit, and yet, in faith,
With wit enough for you.

SON.

Was my father a traitor, mother?

SON.

And be all traitors that do so?

LADY MACDUFF.

Everyone that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

SON.

And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

LADY MACDUFF.

Every one.

SON.

Who must hang them?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, the honest men.

SON.

Then the liars and swearers are fools: for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

LADY MACDUFF.

Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?

SON.

If he were dead, you'd weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

LADY MACDUFF.

Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

[Enter a Messenger.]

MESSENGER.

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

[Exit.]

LADY MACDUFF.

LADY MACDUFF.

Yes, that he was.

SON.

What is a traitor?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, one that swears and lies.

SON.

And are all traitors like that?

LADY MACDUFF.

Everyone that does so is a traitor and must be hanged.

SON.

And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

LADY MACDUFF.

Every one.

SON.

Who must hang them?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, the honest men.

SON.

Then the liars and swearers are fools, because there are liars and swearers enough to beat the honest men and hang up them.

LADY MACDUFF.

Now, God help you, poor monkey! Only how will you do for a father?

SON.

If he were dead, you would weep for him. If you would not weep, then it is a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

LADY MACDUFF.

Poor prattler, how you talk!

[Enter a Messenger.]

MESSENGER.

Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world; where to do harm
Is often laudable; to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly: why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm?—What are these faces?

[Enter Murderers.]

FIRST MURDERER.
Where is your husband?

LADY MACDUFF.
I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.

FIRST MURDERER.
He's a traitor.

SON.
Thou liest, thou shag-haar'd villain!

FIRST MURDERER.
What, you egg!

[Stabbing him.]

Young fry of treachery!

SON.
He has kill'd me, mother:
Run away, I pray you!

[Dies. Exit Lady Macduff, crying Murder, and pursued
by the
Murderers.]

Bless you, beautiful dame! You don't know me,
But I know you though in your state of honor.
I know that some danger approaches you nearby.
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Don't be found here, here, with your little ones.
To frighten you in this way, I think I am too
savage.

To do worse to you would be awful cruelty,
Which is too near your person. Heaven preserve
you!

I cannot stay any longer.

[Exit.]

LADY MACDUFF.
Where should I fly?
I have done no harm. Only I remember now that
I am in this earthly world, where to do harm
Is often praiseworthy, to do good sometime
Is a dangerous mistake. Why then, for pity's sake,
Do I put up that womanly defense,
To say I have done no harm? What are these
faces?

[Enter Murderers.]

FIRST MURDERER.
Where is your husband?

LADY MACDUFF.
I hope, in no place so unsanctified or shamed as
Where such as you may find him.

FIRST MURDERER.
He's a traitor.

SON.
You lie, you shag-haired villain!

FIRST MURDERER.
What, you egg!

[Stabbing him.]

Young child of treachery!

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

[Dies. Exit Lady Macduff, crying Murder, and pursued by the Murderers.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 3

England. Before the King's Palace.

[Enter Malcolm and Macduff.]

MALCOLM.

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

MACDUFF.

Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and, like good men,
Bestride our down-fall'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 yell'd out
Like syllable of dolour.

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 touch'd you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve of him through me; and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

MACDUFF.

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM.

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

4.3 England. Before the King's Palace.

[Enter Malcolm and Macduff.]

MALCOLM.

Let's look for some desolate shade and there
Cry our hearts out.

MACDUFF.

Let us rather
Stop the mortal sword quickly, and, like good
men,
Climb over our down-fallen country. Each new
morning,
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new
sorrows
Strike heaven on the face so that it echoes
As if it felt Scotland's pain, and yelled out
Like a sigh of sorrow.

MALCOLM.

For what I believe, I'll wail.
What I know, believe, and what I can put right
again,
As I shall find the time to be my friend, I will.
What you have spoken may be so perhaps.
This tyrant, whose only name blisters our
tongues,
Was once thought honest. You have loved him
well;
He hasn't touched you yet. I am young, only
something
You may deserve of him through me, and
wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

MACDUFF.

I am not treacherous.

MACDUFF.
I have lost my hopes.

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

MACDUFF.
Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee! wear thou thy wrongs,
The title is affeer'd.—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,
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here, from gracious England, have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before;
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF.
What should he be?

MALCOLM.
It is myself I mean: in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow; and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compar'd
With my confineless harms.

MACDUFF.
Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd

MALCOLM.
But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an charge by a king. But I shall crave your
pardon.
My thoughts cannot change which you are.
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell.
Though all things disgustingly filthy would look
like grace,
Yet grace must still look that way.

MACDUFF.
I have lost my hopes.

MALCOLM.
Perhaps even there, where I did find my doubts.
Why did you leave wife and child in that
rawness,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of
love,
Without leave-taking? I beg you,
Don't let my jealousies be your dishonors,
Only my own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

MACDUFF.
Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay your foundation solid,
Because goodness dare not challenge you! Wear
your wrongs,
The title is settled. Fare you well, lord.
I do not wish to be the villain that you may
think,
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp
And the rich East to boot.

MALCOLM.
Don't be offended.
I don't speak in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day, another
gash
Is added to her wounds. I also think that
There would be hands uplifted in my defense,
And here, from gracious England, I have the
offer
Of goodly thousands. Only, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, my poor country
Shall still have more vices than it had before,

In evils to top Macbeth.

MALCOLM.

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

MACDUFF.

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

MALCOLM.

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

MACDUFF.

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

MALCOLM.

But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,

More suffer, and in more ways than ever before,
By the man who shall succeed the king.

MACDUFF.

Who would that be?

MALCOLM.

It is myself, I mean, in whom I know
All the particulars of vice are so grafted
That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Will respect him as a lamb, being compared
With my unlimited evils.

MACDUFF.

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

MALCOLM.

I will grant you he is bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name. Only there's no bottom, none,
In my own evils. Your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust, and my desire would
overcome
All international factions
That did oppose my will. Better Macbeth
Than such an one like me to reign over Scotland.

MACDUFF.

Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny. It has been
The untimely murder of Duncan,
And fall of many kings. Only don't be afraid
To take upon you what is yours. You may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so deceive.
We have willing dames enough, so there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will dedicate themselves to greatness,
Finding greatness so inclined.

MALCOLM.

With this there grows,
In my most ill-composed affection, such
A unbendable greed, that, if I were king,

Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them; but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

MACDUFF.
O Scotland, Scotland!

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

MACDUFF.
Fit to govern!
No, not to live!—O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accurs'd
And does blaspheme his breed?—Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king; the queen that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare—thee—well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland.—O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

MALCOLM.
Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black scruples, reconcil'd my thoughts
To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power; and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste: but God above
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeaking mine own detraction; here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman; never was forsworn;
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own;
At no time broke my faith; 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,

I should seize the nobles' lands,
Desire their jewels, and their houses,
And my wanting to have more would be as a
sauce
To make me hunger more, that I should start
Unfair quarrels against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

MACDUFF.
This sin of greediness
Digs in deeper; grows with a more dangerous
root
Than summer-seeming lust; and it has been
The sword of our slain kings. Still, don't be
afraid
Scotland has harvests enough to satisfy you,
Of your very own. All these are bearable,
When weighed against other graces.

MALCOLM.
But I have none. I have no knowledge
Of the king-becoming graces, such as justice,
verity,
Temperance, stableness, bounty, perseverance,
Mercy, lowliness, devotion, patience, courage,
fortitude,
But I only abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. No, if I had power, I
should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Disturb the universal peace, confuse
All unity on earth.

MACDUFF.
O Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLM.
If there is any one fit to govern, speak.
I am as I have spoken.

MACDUFF.
Fit to govern!
No, not to live! O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant holding a bloody scepter,
When shall you see your wholesome days again,
Since that the truest heir to your throne,
By his own admission, stands cursed
And blasphemes his heritage? Your royal father
Was a most sainted king, the queen that bore

Is thine and my poor country's to command:
Whither, indeed, before thy here—approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men
Already at a point, was setting forth:
Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

MACDUFF.

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

[Enter a Doctor.]

MALCOLM.

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

DOCTOR.

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

MALCOLM.

I thank you, doctor.

[Exit Doctor.]

MACDUFF.

What's the disease he means?

MALCOLM.

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

MACDUFF.

See, who comes here?

you,

Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare—you—well!
These evils you repeat upon yourself
Have banished me from Scotland. O my heart,
Your hope ends here!

MALCOLM.

Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, has wiped the
Black scruples from my soul, and reconciled my
thoughts
To your good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth
Has sought to win me into his power
By many of these thoughts, and modest wisdom
keeps me
From over—believing haste. Only God above
Deal between you and me! for even now
I put myself to your direction, and
Take back my own detraction of myself; here
renounce
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
As strangers to my nature. I am still
A virgin; I have never gone back on my word,
Scarcely have wanted what was my own,
At no time broke a promise, would not betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight
More in truth than life. My first lie ever
Was these things I said about myself. What I am,
truly,
Is your and my poor country's to command,
Where, indeed, before you came here,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men
Already at a point, was coming to.
Now we'll fight together, and the chance of
goodness
Will like our necessary quarrel! Why are you
silent?

MACDUFF.

Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
Are hard to reconcile.

[Enter a Doctor.]

MALCOLM.

Well, more in a minute. Is the king coming, I beg
you?

DOCTOR.

MALCOLM.
My countryman; but yet I know him not.

[Enter Ross.]

MACDUFF.
My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

MALCOLM.
I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!

ROSS.
Sir, amen.

MACDUFF.
Stands Scotland where it did?

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

MACDUFF.
O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!

MALCOLM.
What's the newest grief?

ROSS.
That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;
Each minute teems a new one.

MACDUFF.
How does my wife?

ROSS.
Why, well.

MACDUFF.
And all my children?

Yes, sir. There's a group of wretched souls
That wait for his healing touch. Their malady
overcomes
The best effort of art. They can only be cured
By his touch, such is the sanctity has heaven
given his hand.

MALCOLM.
I thank you, doctor.

[Exit Doctor.]

MACDUFF.
What's the disease he means?

MALCOLM.
It is called "the evil,"
A most miraculous work in this good king,
Which often, since my stay in England,
I have seen him do. How he prays for help from
heaven,
Only he knows best, because he cures strangers,
All swollen and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
And with no hope of surgery,
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on them with holy prayers, and, it is said,
He leaves the healing benediction.
To the succeeding royalty.
With this strange virtue,
He has a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And various blessings hang about his throne,
That say he is full of grace.

MACDUFF.
See, who comes here?

MALCOLM.
My countryman, but I still don't know him.

[Enter Ross.]

MACDUFF.
My ever-gentle cousin, welcome here.

MALCOLM.
Now I know him now. Good God, soon we'll
remove
The thing that makes us strangers!

ROSS.

ROSS.
Well too.

MACDUFF.
The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?

ROSS.
No; they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.

MACDUFF.
Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes't?

ROSS.
When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

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

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

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

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

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

ROSS.

Sir, amen.

MACDUFF.
Is the situation in Scotland the same?

ROSS.
Alas, poor country,
Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot
Be called our mother, only our grave. where
nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile,
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks, that tear at
the air,
Are made, not marked, where violent sorrow
seems
A modern ecstasy. No one hardly asks who
The dead man's knell is for, and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying before the flowers show signs of sickness.

MACDUFF.
O, kinsman
Too nice, and yet too true!

MALCOLM.
What's the newest grief?

ROSS.
The news accuses the speaker;
Each minute turns up a new one.

MACDUFF.
How is my wife?

ROSS.
Why, well.

MACDUFF.
And all my children?

ROSS.
Well too.

MACDUFF.
The tyrant has not taken action against them?

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

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

MACDUFF.
Humh! I guess at it.

ROSS.
Your castle is surpris'd; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.

MALCOLM.
Merciful heaven!—
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break.

MACDUFF.
My children too?

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

MACDUFF.
And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?

ROSS.
I have said.

MALCOLM.
Be comforted:
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

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

MALCOLM.
Dispute it like a man.

MACDUFF.
I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:

MACDUFF.
Don't mince words: how is it going?

ROSS.
When I came here to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumor
Of many worthy fellows that were in the field,
Which I know to be true by surmising the enemy
was marching,
because I saw Macbeth's men were marching.
Now is help is coming. Your person in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To take off their pitiful miseries.

MALCOLM.
Let it be their comfort that
We are coming there. Gracious England has
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men.
Christendom doesn't have
An older or a better soldier.

ROSS.
I wish I could answer
This comfort with a similar one! But I have
words
That would be howled out into the desert air,
Where hearing should not catch them.

MACDUFF.
What concern are they?
The general cause? Or is it a grief owned
Entirely by one person?

ROSS.
Only a mind that's honest
Could share some of this woe, although the main
part
Pertains to you alone.

MACDUFF.
If it's mine,
Don't keep it from me. Let me have it quickly.

ROSS.
Don't let your ears hate what I'm going to say
forever,
Which will hit them with the heaviest sound
That they have ever heard.

MACDUFF.

I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me.—Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls: heaven rest them now!

MALCOLM.

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

MACDUFF.

O, I could play the woman with mine eye,
And braggart with my tongue!—But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

MALCOLM.

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

[Exeunt.]

Hmm... I guess at it.

ROSS.

There's been a surprise attack on your castle.
Your wife and babies
Savagely slaughtered. To relate the details
Would be, on the numbers of these murdered
deer,
To add to your own death.

MALCOLM.

Merciful heaven!
What, man! Don't cover your face with only a
sad look.
Give your sorrow words. The grief that does not
speak
Builds up softly in the heart, and bids it break.

MACDUFF.

My children too?

ROSS.

Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

MACDUFF.

And I had to be away from home!
My wife killed too?

ROSS.

I have said it.

MALCOLM.

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

MACDUFF.

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

MALCOLM.

Revenge it like a man.

MACDUFF.

I shall do so;
Only I must also feel it as a man.
I cannot only remember such things that were,

That were most precious to me. Did heaven look
on
And would not take their side? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for you! Nothing that I am,
Not for their own sins, only for mine,
Cruel slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them
now!

MALCOLM.

Let this act be the stone that sharpens your
sword. Let grief
Convert to anger. Don't soothe the heart. Enrage
it.

MACDUFF.

O, I could cry like a woman with my eyes,
And brag with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all pauses in the action. Bring this
fiend of Scotland
And myself face to face;
Put him within my sword's length; if he escapes,
Heaven might forgive him too!

MALCOLM.

Now you sound like a man.
Come, let's go to the king; our power is ready;
The only thing is missing is our leaving.
Macbeth
Is ready to fall, and the powers above
Show us the way. Receive what cheer you may.
Day follows night.

[Exeunt.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Act V

1. [Scene 1](#)
2. [Scene 2](#)
3. [Scene 3](#)
4. [Scene 4](#)
5. [Scene 5](#)
6. [Scene 6](#)
7. [Scene 7](#)
8. [Scene 8](#)

Scene 1

Dunsinane. A Room in the Castle.

[Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting–Gentlewoman.]

DOCTOR.

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

GENTLEWOMAN.

Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon it, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

DOCTOR.

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

GENTLEWOMAN.

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

DOCTOR.

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

GENTLEWOMAN.

Neither to you nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech. Lo you, here she comes!

[Enter Lady Macbeth, with a taper.]

This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

DOCTOR.

How came she by that light?

GENTLEWOMAN.

Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

DOCTOR.

You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN.

[Exeunt.] 5.1 Dunsinane. A Room in the Castle.

[Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting–Gentlewoman.]

DOCTOR.

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

GENTLEWOMAN.

Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take out paper, fold it, write upon it, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed. But all this she did while she was fast asleep.

DOCTOR.

A great disturbance in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do things as if awake. In this slumbry 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 about her.

DOCTOR.

You may to me, and it is most proper you should.

GENTLEWOMAN.

Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech. Look you, here she comes!

[Enter Lady Macbeth, with a taper.]

Ay, but their sense is shut.

DOCTOR.

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

GENTLEWOMAN.

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

LADY MACBETH.

Yet here's a spot.

DOCTOR.

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

LADY MACBETH.

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

DOCTOR.

Do you mark that?

LADY MACBETH.

The Thane of Fife had a wife; where is she now?—What, will these hands ne'er be clean? No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

DOCTOR.

Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

GENTLEWOMAN.

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

LADY MACBETH.

Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

DOCTOR.

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

GENTLEWOMAN.

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

This is her very disguise, and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

DOCTOR.

Where did she get that light?

GENTLEWOMAN.

Why, it stood by her. She has light by her continually; it is her command.

DOCTOR.

You see, her eyes are open.

GENTLEWOMAN.

Yes, only she doesn't see anything.

DOCTOR.

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

GENTLEWOMAN.

She's accustomed to it, to seem to washing her hands in this way. I have known her continue in this way for a quarter of an hour.

LADY MACBETH.

Still here's a spot.

DOCTOR.

Listen, she speaks. I will set down what she says, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

LADY MACBETH.

Out, damned spot! Out, I say! One; two; why, then it is time to do it. Hell is murky! For shame, my lord, for shame! A soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

DOCTOR.

Do you mark that?

DOCTOR.
Well, well, well,—

GENTLEWOMAN.
Pray God it be, sir.

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

LADY MACBETH.
Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so
pale:—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come
out on's grave.

DOCTOR.
Even so?

LADY MACBETH.
To bed, to bed; there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come,
come, give me your hand: what's done cannot be undone: to
bed, to
bed, to bed.

[Exit.]

DOCTOR.
Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN.
Directly.

DOCTOR.
Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.
More needs she the divine than the physician.—
God, God, forgive us all!—Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her:—so, good-night:
My mind she has mated, and amaz'd my sight:
I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN.
Good-night, good doctor.

[Exeunt.]

LADY MACBETH.
The Baron of Fife had a wife; where is she
now? What,
will these hands never be clean? No more of
that, my lord, no
more of that. You mar all with this starting.

DOCTOR.
O no! You have known what you should not.

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

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

DOCTOR.
What a sigh that is! The heart is sorely
perplexed.

GENTLEWOMAN.
I don't wish to have such a heart in my
bosom for the
dignity of the whole body.

DOCTOR.
Well, well, well,

GENTLEWOMAN.
Pray God it be, sir.

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

LADY MACBETH.
Wash your hands, put on your nightgown;
look not so
pale. I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he
cannot come
out on his grave.

DOCTOR.
Even so?

LADY MACBETH.
To bed, to bed; there's knocking at the gate.
Come, come, come,
come, give me your hand. What's done
cannot be undone. To bed, to
bed, to bed.

[Exit.]

DOCTOR.
Will she go now to bed?

GENTLEWOMAN.
Directly.

DOCTOR.
Disgustingly filthy rumors are circulating.
Unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles. Infected minds
Will tell their secrets to their deaf pillows.
She needs the divine more than she needs the
physician.
God, God, forgive us all! Look after her.
Take everything from her that she might use
to harm herself,
And still keep your eyes on her. So,
good-night.
She has stupefied my mind, and amazed my
sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN.
Good-night, good doctor.

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 2

The Country near Dunsinane.

[Enter. with drum and colours, Menteith, Caithness,
Angus,
Lennox, and Soldiers.]

5.2 The Country near Dunsinane.

[Enter. with drum and colours, Menteith, Caithness,
Angus,
Lennox, and Soldiers.]

MENTEITH.

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

ANGUS.

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

CAITHNESS.

Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

LENNOX.

For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son
And many unrough youths, that even now
Protest their first of manhood.

MENTEITH.

What does the tyrant?

CAITHNESS.

Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:
Some say he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule.

ANGUS.

Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely revolts upbraids his faith—breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

MENTEITH.

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

CAITHNESS.

Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly ow'd:
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal;
And with him pour we, in our country's purge,

MENTEITH.

The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.
Revenge burn in them, because their dear causes
Would excite a dead man
To the flowing of blood and the grim alarm.

ANGUS.

We'll meet them near Birnam wood
They are coming that way.

CAITHNESS.

Does any one know if Donalbain be with his brother?

LENNOX.

For certain, sir, he isn't. I have a list
Of all the gentry. There is Siward's son
And many youths without beards which now
Affirm they are beginning manhood.

MENTEITH.

What is the tyrant doing?

CAITHNESS.

He strongly fortifies great Dunsinane.
Some say he's crazy; others, that hate him less,
Call it valiant fury. But, for certain,
He cannot contained his sick government
Through control.

ANGUS.

Now he feels
His secret murders sticking on his hands.
Now the revolts in every minute reproaches his breach
of faith.
Those he commands move only because it's a
command,
Not because they love him. Now he feels his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

MENTEITH.

Who, then, shall blame him when
His own vexed senses begin to recoil and attack,
When all that is within him revolts against him?

CAITHNESS.

Well, we march on,
To give obedience where it is truly owed.

Each drop of us.

LENNOX.

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

[Exeunt, marching.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 3

Dunsinane. A Room in the Castle.

[Enter Macbeth, Doctor, and Attendants.]

MACBETH.

Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounc'd 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 a Servant.]

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac'd loon!
Where gott'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,

We give out the medicine for the sickly commonwealth,
And with him we pour, into our country's purge,
Each drop of us.

LENNOX.

Or so much as it needs,
To revive the flower of royalty and drown the weeds.
We march towards Birnam.

[Exeunt, marching.]

5.3 Dunsinane. A Room in the Castle.

[Enter Macbeth, Doctor, and Attendants.]

MACBETH.

Don't bring me any more reports. To hell with
them.
I won't be afraid
Until Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane. What
about the boy Malcolm?
Didn't a woman give birth to him? The spirits that
know
All mortal consequences have told me in this way,
"Fear not, Macbeth. No man that hasn't been given
birth to by a woman
Shall ever have power upon you." Then fly, false
barons,
And mingle with the English gluttons.
The mind I think with and the courage I have
Shall never sag with doubt or shake with fear.

[Enter a Servant.]

The devil damn you black, you cream-faced loon!
Where did you get that cowardly look?

SERVANT.

There is ten thousand.

MACBETH.

Geese, villain?

SERVANT.

Thou lily–liver'd boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey–face?

SERVANT.
The English force, so please you.

MACBETH.
Take thy face hence.

[Exit Servant.]

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

[Enter Seyton.]

SEYTON.
What's your gracious pleasure?

MACBETH.
What news more?

SEYTON.
All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

MACBETH.
I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.
Give me my armour.

SEYTON.
'Tis not needed yet.

MACBETH.
I'll put it on.
Send out more horses, skirr the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear.—Give me mine armour.—
How does your patient, doctor?

DOCTOR.
Not so sick, my lord,

Soldiers, sir.

MACBETH.
Go prick your face and hide your fear in a red face,
You lily–liver'd boy. What soldiers, servant?
Death of your soul! Those linen cheeks of your
Are counselors to fear. What soldiers, milk–face?

SERVANT.
The English force, so please you.

MACBETH.
Take your face out of here.

[Exit Servant.]

Seyton! I am sick at heart,
When I behold Seyton, I say!— This attack
Will give me the throne forever or unseat me now.
I have lived long enough. My way of life
Is fallen into the dry, withered yellow leaf,
And the things which should accompany old age,
Honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I think I'll have, but, instead of them, I'll have
Curses, not loud, only deep, mouth–honor, breath,
Which the poor heart would gladly deny, and dare not.
Seyton!

[Enter Seyton.]

SEYTON.
What's your gracious pleasure?

MACBETH.
What other news?

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

MACBETH.
I'll fight until my flesh is hacked from my bones.
Give me my amour.

SEYTON.
It is not needed yet.

MACBETH.
I'll put it on.
Send out more horses, scour the country all around.

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 diseas'd;
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow;
Raze out the written troubles of the brain;
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

DOCTOR.

Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.

MACBETH.

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

DOCTOR.

Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

MACBETH.

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

[Exeunt all except Doctor.]

DOCTOR.

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

[Exit.]

Hang those that talk of fear. Give me my amour.
How is your patient, doctor?

DOCTOR.

Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with a number of illusions,
That keep her from resting.

MACBETH.

Cure her of that.
Can't you minister to a diseased mind?
Pluck a rooted sorrow from the memory?
Wipe out the written troubles of the brain,
And cleanse the burdened heart of that dangerous
stuff
Which weighs upon the heart with some sweet
antidote
Which will make her oblivious to all those things?

DOCTOR.

That's where the patient
Must minister to himself.

MACBETH.

Throw medicine to the dogs, I'll have none of it.
Come, put my amour on. Give me my staff.
Seyton, send out. Doctor, the Barons desert me.
Come, sir, get going. If you could, doctor, analyze
The urine of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and former health,
I would praise you to the very echo,
That should praise again. You can do it, I say.
What rhubarb, senna, or other purgative drugs,
Would do keep these English here healthy? Have
you heard of them?

DOCTOR.

Yes, my good lord. Your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.

MACBETH.

Bring it after me.
I will not be afraid of death and ruin,
Until Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.

[Exeunt all except Doctor.]

DOCTOR.

If I were away and clear from Dunsinane.
Money would hardly draw me here again.

[Exit.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 4

Country near Dunsinane: a Wood in view.

[Enter, with drum and colours, Malcolm, old Siward and his Son, Macduff, Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, Ross, and Soldiers, marching.]

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

MENTEITH.
We doubt it nothing.

SIWARD.
What wood is this before us?

MENTEITH.
The wood of Birnam.

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

SOLDIERS.
It shall be done.

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

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

5.4 Country near Dunsinane. a Wood in view.

[Enter, with drum and colours, Malcolm, old Siward and his Son, Macduff, Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, Ross, and Soldiers, marching.]

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

MENTEITH.
We don't doubt it.

SIWARD.
What wood is this before us?

MENTEITH.
The wood of Birnam.

MALCOLM.
Let every soldier cut down a bough,
And hold it in front of him. That way, we shall
hide
The numbers of our host and make military
intelligence
Make an error in reporting our strength.

SOLDIERS.
It shall be done.

SIWARD.
We can only learn that the confident tyrant
Still stays in Dunsinane, and will put up with
Our settling down before it.

MALCOLM.
It is his only hope.
Both aristocrats and commoners have
Revolted against him.
And no one will serve with him with loyalty,

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

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

[Exeunt, marching.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 5

Dunsinane. Within the castle.

[Enter with drum and colours, Macbeth, Seyton, and Soldiers.]

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 forc'd with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.

[A cry of women within.]

What is that noise?

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

[Exit.]

MACBETH.
I have almost forgot the taste of fears:
The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir

Who do not have hearts.

MACDUFF.
Let a true evaluation of the military situation
Wait until we have won the battle.

SIWARD.
The time approaches.
That will make us know, with true decision,
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Speculation only tells about their unsure hopes;
Only a certain outcome must settle
Which direction the war will take.

[Exeunt, marching.]

5.5 Dunsinane. Within the castle.

[Enter with drum and colours, Macbeth, Seyton, and Soldiers.]

MACBETH.
Hang our banners out on the outward walls.
The cry is still, "They come." Our castle's strength
Will make a mockery of a siege. Here let them lie
Until famine and the plague eat them up.
If they were not reinforced by those troops that should
be ours,
We might have met them boldly, beard to beard,
And beat them backward where they came from.

[A cry of women within.]

What's that noise?

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

[Exit.]

MACBETH.
I have almost forgotten the taste of fears.
There was a time when my senses would have cooled
To hear a night-shriek, and my head of hair

As life were in't: I have supp'd full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaught'rous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.

[Re-enter Seyton.]

Wherefore was that cry?

SEYTON.

The queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH.

She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.--
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

[Enter a Messenger.]

Thou 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 it.

MACBETH.

Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER.

As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

MACBETH.

Liar, and slave!

[Striking him.]

MESSENGER.

Let me endure your wrath, if't be not so.
Within this three mile may you see it coming;

Would rouse and stir, at a dismal treatise,
As if it were alive. I have had dinner with horrors;
Horror, familiar to my murderous thoughts,
Cannot once startle me.

[Re-enter Seyton.]

Why was that cry?

SEYTON.

The queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH.

She should have died later.
There would have been a time for such a word.
Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this trivial pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time.
And all our yesterdays have lighted
The way to dusty death for fools. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's only a walking shadow; a bad actor,
That struts and worries about his hour onstage,
And then is not heard from again. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

[Enter a Messenger.]

You came to use your tongue. Tell your story quickly.

MESSENGER.

Gracious my lord,
I would report what I say I saw,
Only I don't know how to do it.

MACBETH.

Well, just say it, sir.

MESSENGER.

As I was standing my watch upon the hill,
I looked toward Birnam, and in a minute, I thought,
The wood began to move.

MACBETH.

Liar, and slave!

[Striking him.]

MESSENGER.

Let me suffer your anger if it isn't so.

I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH.

If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling thee: if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.—
I pull in resolution; and begin
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth. "Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane;" and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane.—Arm, arm, and out!—
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I 'gin to be a—weary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now
undone.—
Ring the alarum bell!—Blow, wind! come, wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back.

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 6

The same. A Plain before the Castle.

[Enter, with drum and colours, Malcolm, old Siward,
Macduff, &c.,
and their Army, with boughs.]

MALCOLM.

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.

SIWARD.

Fare you well.—
Do we but find the tyrant's power to—night,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

MACDUFF.

Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,

Within these three miles, you can see it coming,
I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH.

If you speak falsely,
You shall hang alive on the next tree,
Until you die from hunger. If your speech is true,
I don't care if you do as much for me.
I reign in my resolution and begin
To doubt the lie of the fiend
That lies the same as telling the truth. "Fear not, until
Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane;" and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and attack!
If this which he swears does appear,
There is no flying from here or wasting time here.
I begin to be weary of the sun,
And I wish the order the world were now destroyed.
Ring the alarms bell! Blow, wind! come, ruin!
At least we'll die with armor on our back.

[Exeunt.]

5.6 The same. A Plain before the Castle.

[Enter, with drum and colours, Malcolm, old
Siward, Macduff, etc.,
and their Army, with boughs.]

MALCOLM.

Now that we're near enough, throw the branch
down,
And look like the men you are. You, worthy
uncle,
Shall lead our first battle with my cousin,
Your right—noble son, Worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon us what ever is left to do,
According to our order.

SIWARD.

Fare you well.
If we only find the tyrant's forces tonight,
Let us be beaten if we cannot fight.

Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.

[Exeunt.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)

» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 7

The same. Another part of the Plain.

[Alarums. Enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly,
But, bear-like I must fight the course.—What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

[Enter young Siward.]

YOUNG SIWARD.

What is thy name?

MACBETH.

Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

YOUNG SIWARD.

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

MACBETH.

My name's Macbeth.

YOUNG SIWARD.

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

MACBETH.

No, nor more fearful.

YOUNG SIWARD.

Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[They fight, and young Seward is slain.]

MACDUFF.

Blow all our trumpets. Blow them all,
Those noisy announcers of blood and death.

[Exeunt.]

5.7 The same. Another part of the Plain.

[Alarms. Enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

They have nailed me down. I cannot fly,
But, like a bear, I must fight till the end. Who is he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
I am to fear, not anyone else.

[Enter young Siward.]

YOUNG SIWARD.

What is your name?

MACBETH.

You'll be afraid to hear it.

YOUNG SIWARD.

No! Though you call yourself a hotter name
Than any other there is in hell.

MACBETH.

My name's Macbeth.

YOUNG SIWARD.

The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to my ear.

MACBETH.

No, nor more fearful.

YOUNG SIWARD.

You lie, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie you speak.

[They fight, and young Seward is slain.]

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

[Exit.]

[Alarums. Enter Macduff.]

MACDUFF.
That way the noise is.—Tyrant, show thy face!
If thou be'st 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 unbatter'd edge,
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune!
And more I beg not.

[Exit. Alarums.]

[Enter Malcolm and old Siward.]

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

MALCOLM.
We have met with foes
That strike beside us.

SIWARD.
Enter, sir, the castle.

[Exeunt. Alarums.]

» [Back to Section Index](#)
» [Back to Table of Contents](#)

Scene 8

The same. Another part of the field.

MACBETH.
You were given birth by a woman.
But I smile at swords, laugh scornfully at weapons,
Brandished by man that's been given birth by a woman.

[Exit.]

[Alarms. Enter Macduff.]

MACDUFF.
The noise is that way. Tyrant, show your face!
If you are already slain and not by me,
My wife and children's ghosts will still haunt me.
I cannot strike at wretched Irish foot soldiers, whose
arms
Are hired to bear their lances; either I kill you, Macbeth,
Or else I'll put my sword, with an undamaged edge,
Back into its sheath, unused. You should be there.
By this great clatter, someone of the greatest note
Seems to be reported. Let me find him, fortune!
And I will not beg for more.

[Exit. Alarms.]

[Enter Malcolm and old Siward.]

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

MALCOLM.
We have met with foes
That fight beside us.

SIWARD.
Enter the castle, sir.

[Exeunt. Alarms.]

5.8 The same. Another part of the field.

[Enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

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

[Enter Macduff.]

MACDUFF.

Turn, hell-hound, turn!

MACBETH.

Of all men else I have avoided thee:
But get thee back; my soul is too much charg'd
With blood of thine already.

MACDUFF.

I have no words,—
My voice is in my sword: thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out!

[They fight.]

MACBETH.

Thou lovest labour:
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 charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

MACDUFF.

Despair thy charm;
And let the angel whom thou still hast serv'd
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd.

MACBETH.

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

MACDUFF.

Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time:
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,

[Enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

Why should I play the Roman fool and die
On my own sword? While I see living
creatures, the gashes
Look better on them.

[Enter Macduff.]

MACDUFF.

Turn, hell-hound, turn!

MACBETH.

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

MACDUFF.

I have no words,
My voice is in my sword. You bloodier villain
Than terms can describe you!

[They fight.]

MACBETH.

You're wasting your efforts.
You may as easily slice the air that cannot be
cut
With your keen sword as make me bleed.
Let your blade fall on weaker heads;
I have a charmed life, which must not yield
To one given birth to by a woman.

MACDUFF.

Lose hope of your charm;
And let the genius whom you still have served
Tell you, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Delivered by caesarean section.

MACBETH.

Curse you for telling me that,
Because it has intimidated my better part of
man!
And let these deceitful fiends be believed no
more,
That trick us with double meanings,
That keep the word of promise to our ears,
And break it to our hopes! I will not fight with
you.

Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
"Here may you see the tyrant."

MACBETH.

I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou oppos'd, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. Before my body
I throw my warlike shield: lay on, Macduff;
And damn'd be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"

[Exeunt fighting.]

[Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colours, Malcolm, old
Siward, Ross, Lennox, Angus, Caithness, Menteith, and
Soldiers.

MALCOLM.

I would the friends we miss were safe arriv'd.

SIWARD.

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

MALCOLM.

Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

ROSS.

Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
He only liv'd but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.

SIWARD.

Then he is dead?

FLEANCE.

Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow
Must not be measur'd by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

SIWARD.

Had he his hurts before?

ROSS.

Ay, on the front.

MACDUFF.

Then surrender, you coward,
And live to be the center of attention of the
times.

We'll exhibit you, as our rarer monsters are,
With a painted ad on a pole, and the words,
"Here may you see the tyrant."

MACBETH.

I will not surrender,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's
feet,
And to be baited with the crowd's curse.
Although Birnam wood did come to
Dunsinane,
And you against me, being given birth to by a
woman,
I will still fight to the end. I throw my warlike
shield
Before my body. Lay on, Macduff;
And let him be damned that first cries, "Stop,
enough!"

[Exeunt fighting.]

[Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and
colours, Malcolm, old
Siward, Ross, Lennox, Angus, Caithness,
Menteith, and Soldiers.

MALCOLM.

I wish the friends we miss were safely here.

SIWARD.

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

MALCOLM.

Macduff is missing and your noble son.

ROSS.

Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt.
He only lived until he was a man,
Which, no sooner had his skills been confirmed
In the brave station where he fought,
He died like a man.

SIWARD.

Then he is dead?

SIWARD.

Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And, so his knell is knoll'd.

MALCOLM.

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

SIWARD.

He's worth no more:
They say he parted well, and paid his score:
And so, God be with him!--Here comes newer comfort.

[Re-enter Macduff, with Macbeth's head.]

MACDUFF.

Hail, king, for so thou art: behold, where stands
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free:
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine,--
Hail, King of Scotland!

ALL.

Hail, King of Scotland!

[Flourish.]

MALCOLM.

We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honour nam'd. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,--
As calling home our exil'd 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 crown'd at Scone.

[Flourish. Exeunt.]

FLEANCE.

Yes, and brought off the field. Your cause of
sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, because
then
It will have no end.

SIWARD.

Was he wounded on the front of his body?

ROSS.

Yes, on the front.

SIWARD.

Why then, he was God's soldier!
If I had as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death.
And, so his death bell is rung.

MALCOLM.

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

SIWARD.

He's worth no more.
They say he parted well and paid his score.
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer
comfort.

[Re-enter Macduff, with Macbeth's head.]

MACDUFF.

Hail, king, for so you are. Behold, here is
The usurper's cursed head. We are free.
I see you surrounded by the finest nobles in the
kingdom
That speak my greetings by their thoughts,
Whose voices I want to hear loudly with mine:
Hail, King of Scotland!

ALL.

Hail, King of Scotland!

[Flourish.]

MALCOLM.

We shall not waste time
Before we make an accounting of your separate
loves,
And make us even with you. My barons and

relatives,
From this point forward you are earls, the first
that Scotland ever
Named to such an honor. What else is left to
do,
What new changes we will make, such
As calling our friends exiled abroad home,
That fled the clutches of watchful tyranny.
Producing the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher, and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as it is thought, by her own violent hands
Took off her life, this, and whatever else is
needed
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,
We invite you to see us crowned at Scone.

[Flourish. Exeunt.]

- » [Back to Section Index](#)
- » [Back to Table of Contents](#)