

DIRECTING LADY MACBETH

Inverness. Macbeth's castle.

Enter LADY MACBETH, reading a letter.

How could the actress first appear on the stage at the start of the scene? WHY?

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, before, these weird sisters saluted me,
and referred me to the coming on of time, with "Hail,
king that shalt be!" This have I thought good to
deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that
thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being
ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to
thy heart, and farewell.'

Where could you ask the actress to pause when reading the letter? WHY?

At what pace should the actress read the letter? WHY?

Should the actress stand still or move during the reading of the letter? WHY?

Underline any words the actress could emphasise.

*This soliloquy shows the audience Lady Macbeth's **reaction** to her husband's letter. It must reveal her character, and what she thinks about Macbeth, through **how** she delivers her lines.*

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
 What thou art promised; 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'ldst 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 valour of my tongue
 All that impedes thee from the golden round,
 Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
 To have thee crown'd withal.

Underline
 any words
 you think the
 actress could
 emphasise.

Where
 might the
 actress
 pause for
 effect?
 WHY?

What
 could the
 actress do
 with the
 letter
 during her
 soliloquy?

What
 movements and
 gestures could
 the actress
 make to help
 convey her
 character?

*How could the actress end this soliloquy
 before the attendant arrives with news of King
 Duncan's arrival? What should she do?*

At what pace
 should the
 actress deliver
 her lines?
 Where might it
 be slower /
 quicker?
 WHY?