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Introduction

Playgoers and readers have always recognized the power of *Macbeth*, from its first performances in Shakespeare's lifetime to its current critical status as one of Shakespeare's greatest plays. The play has invariably attracted each generation's leading actors and actresses to the parts of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, beginning with Thomas Betterton in Sir William Davenant's production in the later seventeenth century (see p. 162), and David Garrick and Sarah Siddons (still considered one of the greatest Lady Macbeths ever) in the eighteenth century, to Laurence Olivier, Paul Scofield, Vivien Leigh, and Janet Suzman in the twentieth century, among many others.¹ The popularity of *Macbeth* derives not just from its magnificent title parts, however, but also from its total impact — of terror, horror, sublimity, grandeur, violence, perversion, claustrophobia, and the grotesque. It is an extraordinary mix: one of Shakespeare's shortest, most concentrated plays, yet one of his most complex and penetrating.

Macbeth's popularity on the stage has been matched by the esteem accorded to it by critics and scholars over nearly four centuries. In his influential book, *Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904), the distinguished critic A. C. Bradley

¹ See Bartholomewsz, Kinman, and Rosenberg for the stage history of *Macbeth*.

enshrined *Macbeth* as one of the "four great tragedies," along with *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *King Lear*. The play has received enormous critical and scholarly attention throughout the twentieth century, but the commentary has been divided in its treatment of the various elements of the play. The witches, for example, have been described as everything from simply incarnations of evil, to representations of Fate or Destiny, to emblems of maternal malevolence (Adelman), and even to "the heroines of the piece . . . the most fertile force in the play" (Eagleton 2-3). Their inclusion in the play has been variously attributed to Shakespeare's desire to please King James, who had a personal and a scholarly interest in witchcraft; to Shakespeare's misogyny, in representing the feminine as demonic, and vice versa; and to Shakespeare's grasp of psychological projection, in which these malevolent external figures really symbolize the dark inner mental state of Macbeth himself.

A powerful work of theater and a complex work of literature, *Macbeth* had its own role to play in the history and culture of early modern England. The play has particular significance in reference to King James I, who had, as King James VI of Scotland, succeeded to the English throne upon the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603, three years before the play was written. *Macbeth* concerns not only Scotland and Scottish kings, but the specific line of Scottish kings from which King James traced his own descent. The relevance of this royal connection could hardly be clearer, and yet the exact nature of this relevance has been a subject of much scholarly dispute, especially in the twentieth century. Some scholars, such as H. N. Paul, have argued that *Macbeth* was written essentially to please King James, who was, after all, the patron of Shakespeare's theater company. Other readers, though, such as David Norbrook and Peter Stallybrass, have argued that this "King James version" of the play misreads both the historical and the theatrical evidence: they find the play to be far more ambivalent about, and even subversive of, James's ideological interests.

Politics and royal authority are not the only contexts in which the play is situated, of course. One danger inherent in such approaches to the play is that criticism can become too James-centered, too obsessed with the personal taste, actions, and political theories of the monarch. As important as these are to understanding *Macbeth* in its time, so too are other discourses, such as the larger fate of England itself, which was in the process of absorbing Scotland, and itself being absorbed by the new Scottish court. The union of the two monarchies in the person of King James also meant the union of these two nations; although legally it would not occur for another century, in practice it was already beginning. To many people in England in 1603, Scotland was not the friendly partner of England many see today, but a distinctly foreign nation, with a very different culture, history, and until

recently, religion. For some, Scotland was not even a nation, but a collection of warring clans, with a historically weak and unstable monarchy, marked in its history by assassinations and savagery.

So too the subject of witchcraft should not be focused completely on King James, who wrote a treatise on witchcraft published in 1597, and presided over witchcraft trials in Scotland in the 1590s. Even given James's known interest in witchcraft, it is difficult to know precisely his thinking in 1606, which may have turned much more skeptical. English interest in witchcraft, in any event, preceded James's arrival in 1603, and was itself related to a much larger controversy about the nature and rights of women at the time. Roughly coinciding with Queen Elizabeth's ascent to the throne of England in 1558, this controversy about women included declarations of women's inferiority and defenses of their rights, advice books on how women were supposed to behave, disputes about cross-dressing, and new scientific inquiries into the nature of the female body. It is no coincidence that such powerful female characters as Lady Macbeth, Cleopatra, and the Duchess of Malfi, in John Webster's play of that name, all appeared on the London stage within a period of five or six years. Ironically, though — and this fact is also part of the controversy over women — all of these women's parts were performed by boy actors, because of the general prohibition against women appearing on the stage (though they were welcome enough in the audience). The standard cultural definitions of male and female gender roles and identities were being undermined by a number of forces, from the forty-five-year reign of a powerful female monarch, to evolving conceptions of marriage. The very different female characters in *Macbeth*, no less than the complex relationships between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, and Macduff and Lady Macduff, occur not in a vacuum, but rather at a particular historical and cultural moment. The primary purpose of this edition is to provide the contemporary texts — some of which Shakespeare had read, many of which he had not — that constitute the political and cultural context of the day, so that readers may make their own judgments.

The Crisis of Sovereignty

In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare depicts four different kings, three of Scotland — Duncan, Macbeth, and Malcolm — and one of England — Edward the Confessor. Each of their histories is different (see Figure 1):

1. Duncan *inherited* the throne from his grandfather, Malcolm II; the line of descent bypassed the female altogether, just the opposite of what had happened in the cases of Elizabeth of England, daughter of Henry VIII,

| <i>The Scottish Line</i> | | <i>The English Line</i> | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 80 | Kenneth II | 976–1000 | |
| 81 | Constantine III | 1000–1002 | |
| 82 | Kenneth III | 1002–1005 | |
| 83 | Malcolm II | 1005–1034 | |
| 84 | Duncan | 1034–1040 | |
| 85 | Macbeth | 1040–1057 | Edward the Confessor 1042–1066 |
| 86 | Malcolm III (Malcolm Canmore) | 1057–1093 | William the Conqueror 1066–1087 |

FIGURE 1 *This comparative genealogy shows the kings of England and Scotland at the time of the play. The numbers on the left refer to the numerical order of the Scottish monarchy — thus Macbeth was the 85th king. The Scots prided themselves on their unbroken line of kings.*

and Mary of Scotland, daughter of James V. (This information is not in Shakespeare's play, but was in all the histories of the period.)

2. Macbeth secretly killed Duncan and was then *elect* king; Ross: "Then tis most like / The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth." *Macduff*: "He is already named and gone to Scone / 'To be invested" (2.4.29–32).

3. Malcolm seems to both be elected *and* to inherit the throne. A key hurdle for Macbeth's ambition before he murders the king — "in my way it lies" (1.4.50) — occurs when Duncan gathers his court together after the defeat of the rebels:

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. (1.4.35–39)

This act of *naming* suggests that Malcolm's succession through inheritance is not necessarily inevitable; thus, Macbeth might have legitimately achieved the crown through election, as the worthiest thane. Moreover, Macbeth was, according to Holinshed's *Chronicles* (Shakespeare's source for the plot), Duncan's first cousin, and so had some blood claim as well. But after Macbeth becomes king, and Malcolm flees, it is reported that "The son of Duncan, / From whom this tyrant [Macbeth] holds the due of birth, / Lives in the English court" (3.6.24–26). Thus Malcolm, in addition to being named heir to the throne, also seems to hold the "due of birth," or natural right to the crown. His ascent to the throne at the end of the play comes about through the killing of the current king of Scotland, who had achieved the

throne through a legitimate means of succession, even though, of course, he had murdered Duncan. The play never suggests that Macbeth is overthrown as king because he had murdered his predecessor, however, but because he had become a "tyrant" (a key word in contemporary political discourse, as we will see). Thus Malcolm becomes king through an act of regicide, as well as by election and inheritance.

4. Edward the Confessor, just offstage in act 4, scene 3, is the holy, powerful, and legitimate English king to whom Malcolm has fled for safety. Unlike any of the Scottish kings, Edward is marked by his holiness, his power to heal rather than to destroy, and his grace. The mechanism of succession in England, moreover, does not seem ambiguous at all, but both natural and sanctified: Edward's power to heal the sick symbolizes the power of the kingship itself, for even this power, it is said, is inherited: "To the succeeding royalty he leaves / The healing benediction" (4.3.156–57). And Edward will die a peaceful, spiritual death, unlike the Scottish kings.

To this list of four we should perhaps also add the great procession of kings which the ghost of Banquo shows to Macbeth in the second apparition scene: "What, will the line stretch out to th' crack of doom?" (4.1.117). This vision represents the fulfillment of the witches' earlier prophecy, and the defeat of Macbeth's greater desires: Banquo is to be "father to a line of kings," while the witches have given Macbeth only "a fruitless crown / And put a barren scepter in my grip, / Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand, / No son of mine succeeding" (3.1.61–65). Thus Macbeth has apparently dreamed of establishing a legitimate line of inheritance, father to son, even as he has disrupted that principle and achieved the crown through a different principle himself. And beyond the four kings in the play, and the line of Banquo in the apparition scene, there was also in the audience, perhaps, King James himself,² the royal spectator of a royal bloodbath, whose own right of succession to the English throne was, as we shall see, questioned.

The character of sovereign power also varies considerably among the different kings of the play, ranging from Duncan's passivity, through Macbeth's "tyranny" and Malcolm's wily self-preservation, to Edward the Confessor's unclouded goodness. The origin of monarchical power, the nature of mo-

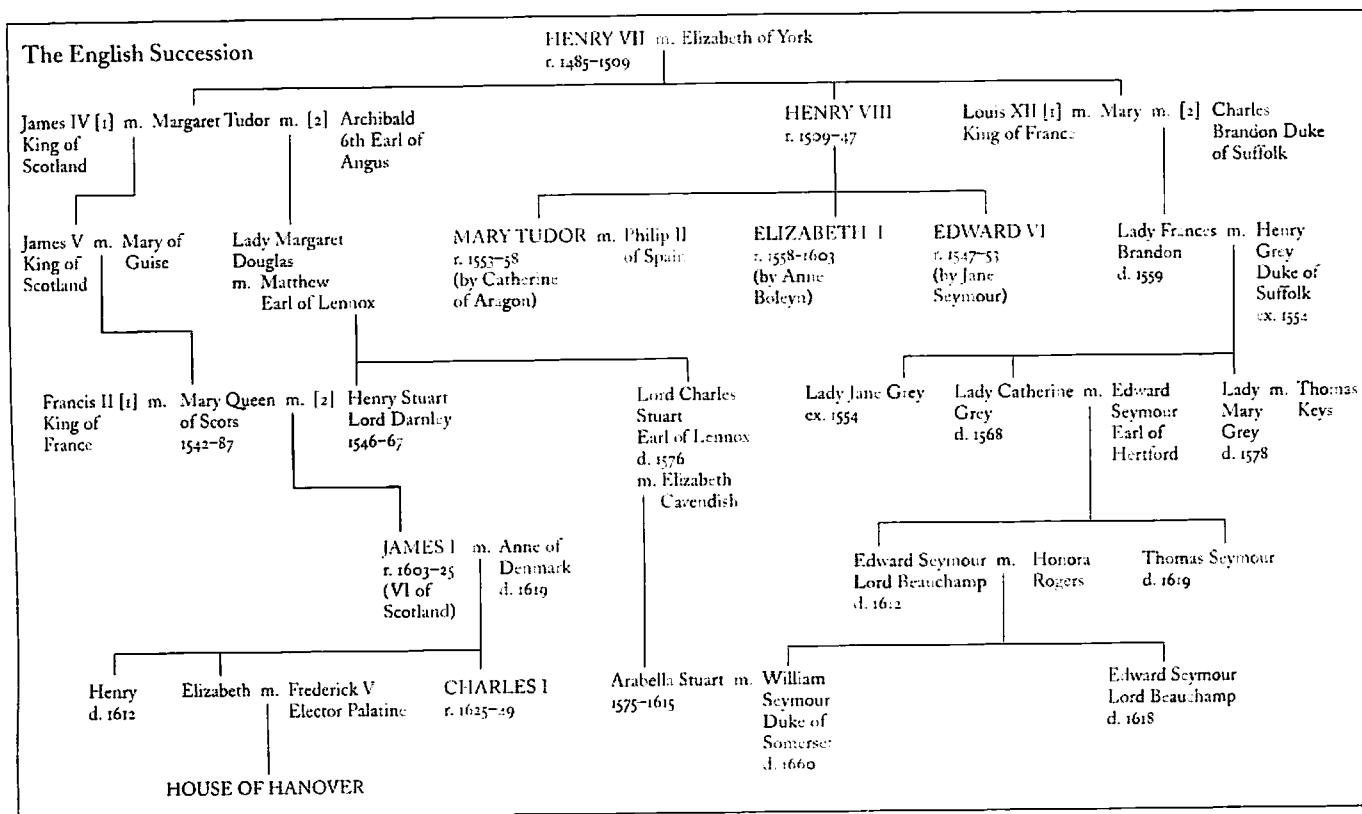
²Court records show that Shakespeare's company was paid "for three plays before His Majesty and the King of Denmark" (Queen Anne's father) in August 1606 at the royal residence of Hampton Court (Chambers, *Shakespeare* 2:333). It has sometimes been argued, based on this entry, that *Macbeth* was one of the plays performed, and it is a logical enough deduction, but there is no hard evidence to support such a conclusion. For critics such as Paul, it is essential to find *some* venue in which James, whom the play was supposed to please, could actually see the play.

narchical power, the principle of royal succession, and the manner of royal death — are all different, in some cases radically different, for each of the kings in the play. The kingship in *Macbeth* is by turns elected or inherited, unnatural or holy, legitimate or tyrannical.

I rehearse these features of the play in order to stress that the older view of *Macbeth*, supposedly written as a way to please King James with a drama of Scottish history and his own ancestors, tells only a small part of the story. Rather than clarifying and reinforcing the theories of kingship and sovereign power that James proposed in his writings and speeches, the play seems to go out of its way to mystify and undermine those theories, and in doing this, Shakespeare's play powerfully reproduces some of the major political controversies of his day.

Macbeth was written in 1606 (see the discussion of dating in the section on Middleton's *The Witch*, p. 155), and presumably performed in that same year. The writing and performance of the play occur in a key period in English history, which for our purposes here stretches from Henry VIII's break with the Catholic church in Rome in the 1520s over the subject of his divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, to the execution of Charles I, King James's son and heir, in 1649 by the Parliamentary forces led by Oliver Cromwell (see Figure 2). Henry VIII sought a divorce in order to marry a woman who could produce a male heir; more than a century later, the legal male heir of the Stuart line was "divorced" from his kingdom in a solemn act of regicide. This period was marked by what one modern critic has called the "deconsecration of sovereignty": the theater itself, Franco Moretti has argued, was "in fact one of the decisive influences in the creation of a 'public' that for the first time in history assumed the right to bring a king to justice" (7). Tragedy and especially plays such as *Macbeth*, "dissenting the absolute monarch to all ethical and rational legitimization. Having deconsecrated the king, it thus made it possible to decapitate him" (7–8). The Stuart monarchs, James I and Charles I, had argued strongly (James even before he was king of England) that they had an absolute, indefeasible right to the throne through the principle of blood inheritance, and that the rule of the monarch preceded and therefore superseded any rule of Parliament or other government, because kings were established by God alone, not by man. (See Chapter 2 for a more thorough discussion of these arguments.) The populace — whether through Parliament or through mob

FIGURE 2 This is the standard genealogy of the English descent from Henry VII to the Stuart line; much has been left out (compare Figure 10, p. 193). James could trace his lineage back to the English line, through the female, to Margaret, the daughter of Henry VII.

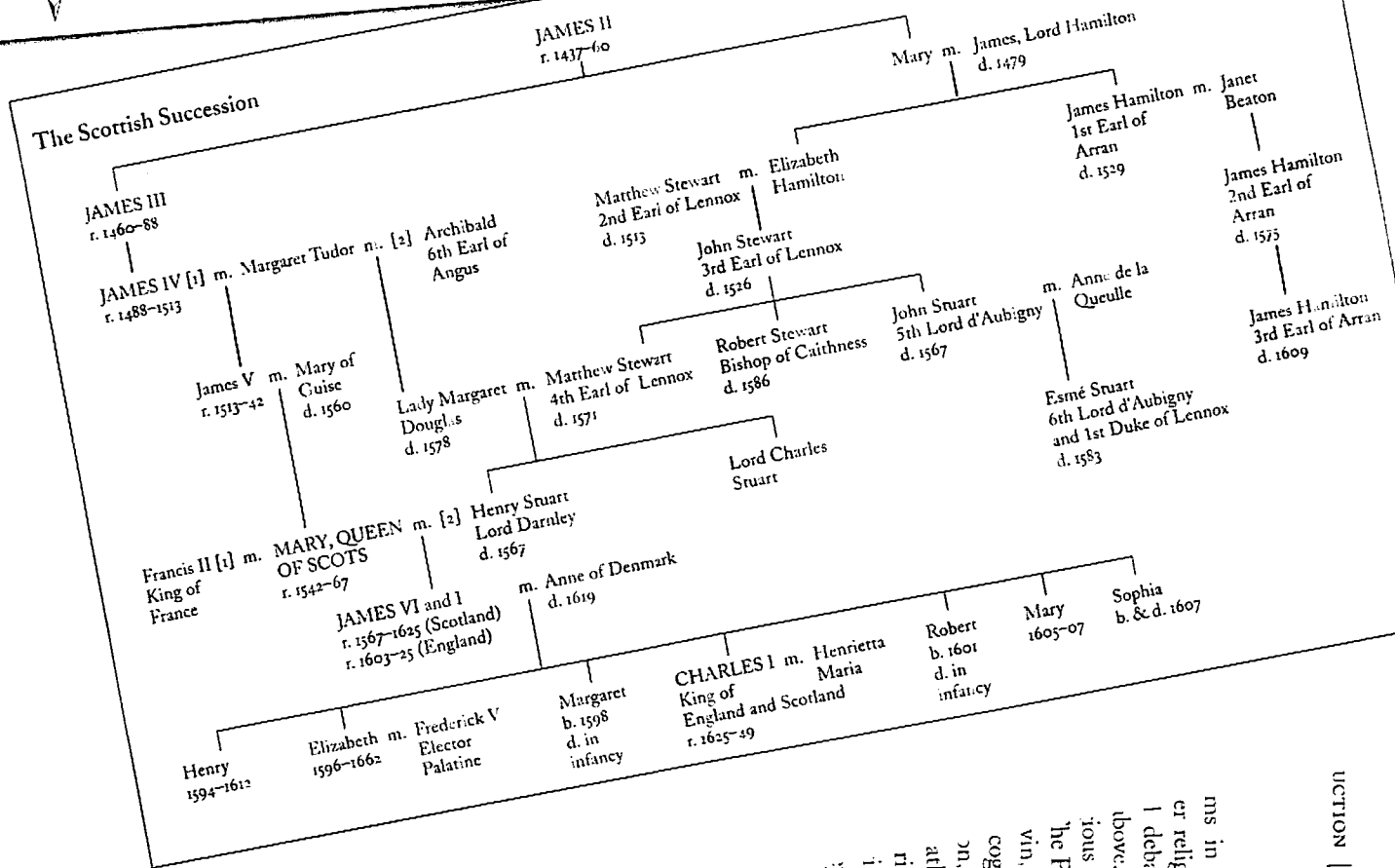


rule — had no right, no justification at all, to overthrow the king, that king were a tyrant, a madman, an incompetent. Arguing against supporters of the theory of tyrannicide, such as George Buchanan, insisted in his own writings that the king's moral and political status irrelevant, that even the worst tyrant (the sort which Malcolm, for example, pretends to be in act 4, scene 3 of *Macbeth*) could not, must not be thrown. He could hardly have imagined that his own son — a perfect legitimate king — would suffer such a fate.

This theory of absolute, divine right was by no means supported by entire populace; on the contrary, there was a long history of opposition such claims of unbridled power and right (see Chapter 3). In fact, the more insecure the actual powers of James I and Charles I became, the more insistent and dogmatically they and their supporters made claims to authority and divine right, as if asserting them would make them true. If they truly wielded such power, they would not have had to claim it so insistent. In *Macbeth*, Shakespeare presents a wide range of attitudes toward such contentions of sovereign power. When Macduff returns from discovering Duncan's dead body, for example, he says that "Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope / The Lord's anointed temple and stole thence / The life o' the building!" (58-60). On the one hand, the king's body is the "Lord's anointed temple," something sacred and, one would think, untouchable; on the other hand, this body has suffered a ghastly mutilation and assault. The royal blood that ought to guarantee succession turns out to be just a bodily fluid that seems to flow inexhaustibly throughout the play; another royal body, Macbeth's, suffers decapitation — the same fate as that of Charles I. Indeed, decapitation is itself a metaphor for regicide, for the king ruled over his people, according to the repeated analogies of the time, as a father over his family, or a head over the body.

The history of claims of sovereign power and right in the century and a half between Henry VIII and Charles I is exactly paralleled by and intertwined with controversies and confusion over the very bedrock of monarchical right, the principle(s) of royal succession. Henry VIII had attempted to provide for his descendants both through patrilineal (that is, the son of the father) inheritance, and through a kind of election by an Act of Parliament, through which he denied his elder sister Margaret (from whom James I was descended) any rights of succession should his own children die without issue (as in fact happened). Queen Elizabeth I not only refused to

FIGURE 3 This is the standard genealogy of the Scottish descent. Of James's seven children, only three — Henry, Charles, and Elizabeth — survived infancy, and his great-nephew, Henry, died prematurely.



ms in the er religion I debates, above. As ions fac- The Puri- vin, and cognize on, pri- atholic rity of inued y did ions re of few ege illic nd

martyr, and thus remained childless, but she also refused to name her heir (though she relented on her deathbed, indicating with a nod of her nearly lifeless head that James should succeed her, according to reports of those whose interests coincided with James's). James based his own claims to the throne of England entirely on the principle of blood inheritance, though even that was disputed by some (see Chapter 2 for a more detailed discussion of these issues).

It is not an exaggeration to say that, along with England's relation with its enemy Spain, the major political question in England in the 1590s was that of royal succession.³ Shakespeare wrote eight history plays in the 1590s on just this question, going back to the reign of Richard II, the rightful king deposed and murdered, and bringing the story forward until 1485, the founding of the Tudor reign in Henry Tudor's defeat of Richard III. The Tudor claim on the throne of England thus began from yet another principle of succession, the right of seizure and possession; blood relation claims were also made, though they were not at all strong ones. Shakespeare's history plays of the 1590s had registered all the tensions inherent in this earlier history, which seemed clearly to mirror his own contemporary history; but after 1600, it is Shakespeare's tragedies that most intensely represent these crises in sovereign power and succession, from *Hamlet* (in which the Danish monarchy seems to be both elected and with the strong expectation of patrilineal inheritance, yet finally succumbs to seizure by a foreign prince) to *King Lear* (in which the king disastrously abdicates and divides the kingdom, and in which royal succession at the end of the play is unclear, with different people in the two different versions of the play⁴ offering the final speech of apparent order). *Macbeth* plays its part in this debate by representing the principles of succession to the Scottish kingship as uncertain, often arbitrary, and the powers of the kingship as by turns weak, violent, imperial, and parasitical. If the kingship becomes deconsecrated, as Moretti argues, then it becomes like any other institution, subject to change, violent or otherwise. *Macbeth* does not present the image of a purely secular kingship: on the contrary, the bodies at least of Duncan and of Edward the Confessor contain a royal charisma, a power, which is beyond their mere flesh and blood. But *Macbeth* does reproduce, in its plot, imagery, and structure, some of the contradictory claims of sovereign power and right that were disputed in early modern England.

³ For thorough discussions of the succession issue for both Elizabeth and James, see Axton, Hursfield, Levine, and Nenner.

⁴ In the 1608 Quarto version of *King Lear*, Albany speaks the final four lines, but in the 1633 folio version of *King Lear*, Edgar speaks the final four lines.

Religious Controversy

One of the most powerful, agonizing, and insoluble problems in the England of Shakespeare's day was that of religion: conflicts over religion were inseparably intertwined with other political and cultural debates, including particularly the crisis of sovereign power described above. As many contemporary observers noted, there were three main religious factions in England at this time: Puritan, Protestant, and Catholic.⁵ The Puritan faction was associated with the religious writings of John Calvin, and with a political stance that, in its purest form, supposedly did not recognize the authority of secular power, even the king's. The Protestant faction, primarily the Church of England, which had split off from the Catholic Church during the reign of Henry VIII, constituted the great majority of the people at this time. (It should be noted that many Protestants continued to call themselves "Catholic," and members of the true church, but they did not recognize the authority of the Pope in the political or even religious realms.) The Catholics, often called Papists by their enemies because of their obedience to the Pope's authority, were a persecuted minority, with few legal rights: they could not legally go to Mass, could not receive a college degree or hold certain offices unless they had publicly forsworn the Catholic Church, and suffered substantial fines as "recusants" if they failed to attend Protestant religious services on Sundays.

The fate and fortunes of the Catholic minority during the sixteenth century varied considerably, depending on the current monarch and the political climate. When Henry VIII broke with Rome, he proceeded to seize for the crown all the lands held by monasteries — a considerable amount of the land in England — and disperse the traditional Catholic monastic communities; various other restrictions on Catholics were developed, but there was

⁵ The term "Puritan" is a particularly vexed one. Contemporaries as different as the Protestant King James and the Catholic Robert Parsons use the term "Puritan" to describe a kind of radical Protestant faction. In his *Basilikon Doron*, James admits that the term properly should refer to the "Anabaptists, called the Family of Love" — a small, very specific group — but he goes on to say that he uses it more generally to apply to those who agree with certain of their positions, particularly their "contempt of the civil Magistrate, and in leaning to their own dreams and revelations . . . and before that any of their grounds [i.e., principles] be impugn'd, let King, people, law, and all be trod under foot" (143). Modern readers should work hard to dispel the current image of the Puritan as wearing a tall hat and tight collar, obsessed with sexual purity, and in general a spoilsport. Some Puritans in Shakespeare's time may have had some of these characteristics, but their main distinction was political and religious. Some indication of the ambiguity of the term *Puritan* may be seen in the fact that Sir John Harrington, the Protestant godson of Queen Elizabeth, once called the Catholic Robert Parsons "a Puritan Papist" (Harrington 4), thus conflating two supposedly inconceivable categories.

relatively little outright persecution. Upon Henry's death in 1547, however, his son Edward VI succeeded him, and he and his councillors began a campaign of often violent iconoclasm — literally shattering and destroying the images, including the church buildings themselves, of Catholic faith: the Protestantism of Edward and his councillors was often severe and persecutory.⁶ Edward died prematurely young (age sixteen), and in 1553 his sister Mary succeeded him to the crown. Mary was a Catholic, married to Philip II of Spain, and she attempted to reverse the Protestant tide, at times by force. Now the Protestants felt the lash of religious intolerance, and a large number of so-called Marian martyrs were executed for their beliefs. But Mary, too, died within a few years of achieving the crown, and in 1558 her sister Elizabeth took the throne.

Queen Elizabeth I, even as a young woman and new queen, was canny enough to avoid the extremes of the previous decade. She was not a Catholic, yet she used aspects of Catholic imagery and belief for her own purposes, worship of the Virgin Mary was no longer permitted, for example, but Elizabeth appropriated much of the Virgin's imagery for herself, and was known as the Virgin Queen.⁷ An announced Protestant, Elizabeth resisted the more radical, anti-Catholic elements that her brother Edward had unleashed during his reign. There was no official toleration of Catholics, and the laws did not change to their benefit, but persecutions of them were intermittent. In 1570, however, Pope Pius V issued a papal bull, or declaration, entitled *Reginae in excelsis*, which proclaimed Elizabeth's excommunication *and* deposition from the throne of England; it pronounced her only a "pretended" queen (in spite of the fact that Rome had been treating her as a monarch in its dealings with her for over a decade), called upon the faithful to remove her, and absolved all Englishmen from any oath of allegiance to the queen. Aside from the religious issues of this action, which were considerable, the political implications were extremely grave: the papal declaration made *every* Catholic a potential traitor in the eyes of the state. The vast majority of English Catholics were in fact loyal subjects, as strong as their religious beliefs might be, their nationalism — manifested in a hatred and fear of Spain, a distrust of things Italian — was often greater. After the papal bull, however, the stakes were raised on both sides. Fiercely anti-Catholic Protestants and Puritans pressed for greater control and sup-

⁶ Edward VI was born in 1537 and became king when he was ten years old. When a monarch was underage upon his or her ascent to the throne, a protector was appointed by the Privy Council (the administrative body of private counsellors that assisted the king in ruling) from the ranks of the nobility; he would run the country on behalf of the youthful monarch.

⁷ Elizabeth's refusal to marry was in large part a self-conscious political strategy — she was not one to share power — but it also brought an end to the Tudor line, and led to the succession crisis.

pression of Catholics, while a new threat from the Catholics began to have an impact within England.

The Society of Jesus — the Jesuits — was founded in 1534 in Paris by Ignatius Loyola, and authorized by the pope in 1540. As the group grew in strength and organization, it became known, to Protestants at least, as a secret army of fanatical soldiers dedicated to overthrowing heretic (that is, non-Catholic) rule everywhere; to Catholics, the society was a monastic order, bound by vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, dedicated to supporting the Roman church against the reformers and propagating the faith among the heathen. Yet their secrecy and power led to conflicts with authorities even in Catholic countries. Eventually, Jesuit priests began to enter England secretly and to move around the country in disguise, entering the faithful, among the earliest and most notorious were Father Campion (eventually caught and executed) and Father Parsons (see p. 191). For the government of Elizabeth I — for any government in a similar situation — the existence of a secret underground of religious fanatics dedicated to its overthrow was intolerable; it devoted enormous efforts to finding and punishing these Jesuits. Early in the reign of King James, the equation of the Jesuits with treason was resoundingly and absolutely confirmed, for many, by the Jesuits' prior knowledge of, and alleged involvement in, the Gunpowder Plot, an attempt on James's life (see p. 249). The Jesuit doctrine of "equivocation" — a form of withholding the truth in testimony (see p. 263) — to which Shakespeare alludes in 2.3 of *Macbeth*, seemed to be the final link between Jesuits, lying, and treason (see Mullaney, Fraser).

What with the growing power of a zealous anti-Catholic minority, the beleaguered sense of the Protestant majority, the presence of Jesuit priests, and the official persecution of Catholics, the pot of religious controversy bubbled throughout Elizabeth's reign. Civil disorders based in religious conflict, individual persecutions, families divided against themselves along religious lines — it was a difficult time in which to rule, made even more difficult by two major events in the late 1580s that had religious implications. First, Mary, the queen of Scotland, mother of James VI, was forced to abdicate in favor of James because of various scandals in 1567; a strong Catholic, she was a legitimate contender for the crown of England, and, unlike Elizabeth, she had a male heir who could continue after her. Elizabeth recognized her as a dangerous rival, and imprisoned Mary for several years after she was implicated in a plot against her. Even as a prisoner, Mary was implicated in various attempts to regain her throne, and possibly even take Elizabeth's, and Elizabeth was finally convinced to have Mary executed for treason in 1587, an act that James would not forget. The next year, 1588, saw the attempted invasion of England by its most hated and

dangerous Catholic enemy, Spain; many people — not just government propagandists — saw the destruction of the Spanish fleet, largely the result of a storm, as a sign of God's blessing on Elizabeth and the English nation, and as a punishment of those who opposed them. In the last years of Elizabeth's reign, the religious divisions in England continued to grow, fostered by growing anxiety about who Elizabeth's successor might be, and of what religious persuasion. There were strong Catholic as well as Protestant claimants for her throne.

Into this volatile situation James VI came down from Scotland in 1603 to take the throne of England. He had already experienced similar religious conflicts in Scotland, which had broken with the Catholic church some years later than England had; James was personally tolerant of other religious beliefs, and he seems to have given private assurances to various ambassadors and Catholic leaders that they could expect some accommodation when he became king (though this was all publicly denied a few years later). Moreover James's wife, Queen Anne, had herself converted to Catholicism a few years earlier and observed her faith in private; but Anne's Catholicism was well known to Catholic leaders in Europe, leading many to believe, or hope, that she would be able to convert James himself as well. All hope of James's conversion soon died, however, and within a few years, he would institute some of the harshest anti-Catholic measures yet known.

In a speech of March 19, 1604, on the first day of his first Parliament, James himself elucidated the religious situation as he found it upon his accession to the throne:

At my first coming [to England], although I found but one religion [i.e., Protestant], and that which by my self is professed, publicly allowed, and by the law maintained, yet found I another sort of religion, besides a private sect, lurking within the bowels of this nation. The first is the true religion, which by me is professed, and by the law is established. The second is the falsely called Catholics, but truly Papists. The third, which I call a sect rather than religion, is the Puritans and Novelists;⁸ who do not so far differ from us in points of religion, as in their confused form of policy and party, being ever discontented with the present government, and impatient to suffer any superiority, which maketh their sect unable to be suffered in any well-governed commonwealth. (*Works* 490)

The problem with the Papists, James observes, is their doctrine of the

arrogant and ambitious supremacy of their Head the Pope, whereby he not only claims to be spiritual head of all Christians, but also to have an imperial

⁸ Novelists: one who makes innovations (not necessarily a positive thing).

civil power over all kings and emperors, dethroning and de crowning princes with his foot as pleaseth him, and dispensing and disposing of all kingdoms and empires at his appetite. The other point which they observe in continual practice, is the assassinations and murders of kings, thinking it no sin, but rather a matter of salvation, to do all actions of rebellion and hostility against their natural Sovereign Lord, if he be once cursed [i.e., excommunicated]. (492)

In less than a year and a half, James would be the target of just such an assassination attempt by a small group of disgruntled, radical Catholics, which became known as the Powder Treason, or the Gunpowder Plot. After the Plot failed, even James conceded the need for a harsh crackdown on Catholics in general and Jesuits in particular, and a new and stricter oath of allegiance (subjects had to swear allegiance to the King and forswear papal supremacy) was initiated, making life even more difficult for loyal Catholics in matters of conscience.

The religious discourse of the period was by no means entirely constituted by such high matters of state as described above. The offstage presence of King Edward the Confessor in *Macbeth*, for example, is marked by his ability to heal the sick through his touch (see p. 222). English monarchs had for generations appropriated to themselves the kind of semimagical, religious aura which was quite commonly possessed by "cunning women" and "doctors" in the villages and countryside of the kingdom. The belief in such charismatic powers usually arose and flourished in rural areas away from London, as a symptom of a particular set of social and religious issues. Magical healing, prophecy, and potent cursing are aspects of religious belief no less than the high doctrines of papal superiority and transubstantiation. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* registers all these energies, like a seismometer on the edge of a volcano.

Discourses of the Feminine

Among the most striking features of *Macbeth* are its women — the three witches, Hecate, Lady Macbeth, and Lady Macduff; it was chiefly their parts, already substantial, that Sir William Davenant expanded in his adaptation of the play in 1664. In none of the historical narratives of Macbeth, however, do women play as extensive a part as they do in Shakespeare's play. *Macbeth* registers many aspects of the period's rich discourse about women, especially the question of a woman's place in the world. There had been misogynist attacks on women for centuries prior to Shakespeare, in which male writers described women's inferiority to men as deriving from their

very creation in the Garden of Eden, from Adam's rib; defenders of women would often take the same evidence and argue the contrary point: that Eve was created from Adam's rib, not his foot, which signifies that she was at the same level as Adam, and not literally and figuratively lower.⁹

With the Reformation in the sixteenth century came new ideas about the nature of marriage, and a woman's rights within it.¹⁰ By law, married women had no legal right to own property, and were in effect legally subsumed into their husbands: man and woman become one flesh in marriage, the saying went, and that flesh was the male. In the usual analogies, moreover, just as God ruled his kingdom, as the king ruled his subjects, and as the head ruled the body, so the husband ruled the wife. The alleged theological and philosophical superiority of the male was enshrined in the law in many ways: according to some commentators, husbands had the right, even the duty, to beat their wives (though not to death) if they became unruly. But within this confining legal system, what has been described as the practice of "Protestant companionate marriage" developed. In this paradigm of marriage, the wife was by no means liberated, in our modern sense, but was granted, or came to possess, a greater autonomy of action and will, at least within the domestic sphere; moreover, marriages could take place for love, as well as through parental arrangement. As a social institution, marriage in this period was always understood as a mechanism for the transfer of property from one male (the father) to another (the husband); the wife herself was thus one kind of property. Hence the arranged or even enforced marriage was the rule, at least for the aristocracy, where issues of property and title were extremely important. The law had always stated that the parents could not technically force a woman to marry; she always had to give her consent, though it is easy to imagine the social and legal pressures to succumb to the parents' will. But marriage for love was increasingly justified.¹¹ Many of these issues of courtship and marriage are played out in Shakespeare's comedies, and the first scene of *King Lear* is virtually a guidebook to what can go wrong.

Macbeth depicts two paradigms of marriage. The Macbeths are a kind of anti-family: not only do they not have children — one fundamental purpose of marriage, according to the Bible, was to go forth and multiply — but also Lady Macbeth claims she would sacrifice whatever child she did

⁹ For a solid discussion of the controversy over women in the English Renaissance, see Woolf-bridge.

¹⁰ Among many recent works on this topic, see Annusson, Houlbrooke, Macfarlane, *Marriage, and Stone, Family*.

¹¹ See Cook for an analysis of courtship theory in the period.

have in the name of ambition. A great deal of critical argument has taken place over the question of Lady Macbeth's childlessness.¹² She does after all say, "I have given suck, and know / How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me; / I would, while it was smiling in my face, / Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums / And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you / Have done to this" (1.7.55–60). Macbeth, on the other hand, laments that while Banquo is hailed as father to a line of kings, "Upon my head they [the witches] placed a fruitless crown / And put a barren scepter in my grip, / Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand, / No son of mine succeed- ing" (3.1.62–65). Shakespeare seems to want us to see it both ways: Lady Macbeth seems to have experienced the maternal, but only as a perversion; but the Macbeths are also apparently sterile, incapable of procreation.¹³ They can create only destruction.

The Macbeths differ from the supposed cultural norm of the family in another way: in his letter in act 1, scene 5, reporting on the witches' prophecy, Macbeth calls his wife "my dearest partner of greatness" (1.5.8), and to a great extent they are coequal in their crime. At the beginning of the murder plot, the husband's traditional dominance is absent. In one attempt to explain their relationship, the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud described them as "two disunited parts of a single psychological individuality" (Wain 137), in the sense that their strengths and weaknesses seem inversely and profoundly related: as many observers have noted, when Lady Macbeth is strong, Macbeth is weak (as at the beginning of the murder plot), and when Macbeth is strong, Lady Macbeth becomes weak (as at the end of the play). "Strong" and "weak" are of course not simple terms here. Still, at the beginning of the play, as the murder is being plotted and carried out, Lady Macbeth is a strong, terrifying figure — linked with the witches in many ways, and associated particularly with conventionally unfeminine notions: she would destroy her child if necessary, as we saw in the quotation above, and she calls upon the "murdering ministers" to "unsex me here," to erase whatever in her is feminine, and therefore supposedly weak and sympathetic, and fill her instead with "direst cruelty" (1.5.37–39). From one point of view, then, her "greatness" is the antithesis of being "female," and so her strength, her ambition, her murderousness, her antimaternal feelings, all mark her as

¹² One famous essay by L. C. Knights was entitled "How Many Children Had Lady Macbeth?"; it was a response to A. C. Bradley's approach to the play, which focused on a close analysis of individual characters as if they were real people.

¹³ In some of the earlier narrative histories, Lady Macbeth has a son, Lulach — often called "the simple" or said to be mentally defective — by a previous marriage, but Shakespeare makes no mention of him.

"unfemale," and therefore to be linked with the witches, whose gender also is not purely female.

Lady Macduff, by contrast, at first seems to be Lady Macbeth's antithesis: the good, dutiful wife, not barren but fruitful, with a brave little son; her fate is subsumed in her husband's. Yet all that her obedience, fertility, and maternal devotion finally gain her is a violent death: she is abandoned by her husband — left defenseless with her son, and both are slaughtered by the murderers Macbeth has sent. The lesson seems clear: if you are a strong, willful wife, like Lady Macbeth, you will die; if you are a helpless, obedient wife, like Lady Macduff, you will die. Lady Macbeth is ultimately reduced to a sleepwalker — literally lacking consciousness — and apparently commits suicide offstage in the fifth act; Lady Macduff and her family suffer for their husband and father ("Not for their own demerits, but for mine, / Fell slaughter on their souls," Macduff admits [4.3.228–29]). Bad or good, strong or weak, willful or obedient, the women in the play suffer the same fate. As Janet Adelman and others have shown, moreover, *Macbeth* registers a systematic demonization, then destruction, of the maternal presence. Throughout the play, images of the female body are conjured up, but these images are of rape, mutilation, and assault. Only Macduff, the man not of woman born, seems to escape the contaminating maternal presence; permitting him to slay Macbeth at the end and take his place in a world now made up entirely of men: his birth by caesarean section, to a seventeenth-century audience, would of course have meant the death of his mother.

In beseeching the "murdering ministers" to "unsex me here," Lady Macbeth sought to join the stereotypical male world of cruelty, violence, and lack of remorse — something like the code of the warrior that Macbeth exemplifies in the first scenes of the play, when his defeat of the rebels is couched in a language that masks an inhuman ferocity. He is covered in blood from disembowelling and decapitating his opponents, and receives the highest praise and honors for it. In seeking to emulate that violence, Lady Macbeth will only open herself up to the kind of guilt and remorse that Macbeth feels at the beginning of the murder plot.

The witches are clearly linked with Lady Macbeth in a variety of ways, yet they differ from her in that they already exist only on the boundaries — of the kingdom, of gender, of good and evil. When he first sees them, Banquo notes "You seem to understand me, / By each at once her choppy finger laying / Upon her skinny lips. You should be women, / And yet your beards forbid me to interpret / That you are so" (1.3.43–47). There are a variety of ways to account for the existence of these witches on Shakespeare's stage, as noted above. One way to think about the witches is to ask what social function they served in the society outside the theater. One scholar, Christina

Larner, has argued that "witches represented the most extreme form of deviance" (89), and hence served the community as "a negative standard of social behaviour and social acceptability" (91). In Shakespeare's culture, the typical accused witch was an independent woman who did not conform to cultural stereotypes of the ideal woman — chaste, silent, and obedient. (Although men could in theory be witches, the overwhelming majority of those accused were women.) Such women were assertive, vocal, often suspected of having mysterious powers to heal or harm; to name them as witches, then, is to define them as deviant, even criminal, by the standards of the dominant culture.¹⁴

We should see the witches in *Macbeth*, then, not simply as external symbols of evil: they are profoundly linked not only to what is already in Macbeth himself, but also to the violent, hierarchical, male order of culture itself. They are the inevitable antithetical product of that social formation. Virtually everything about them — their appearance, their riddling language, their ambiguous gender — represents some inversion of the personal and social values exhibited by the dominant culture. But as loathsome and frightening as the witches may seem, Shakespeare does not allow the audience fully to embrace their opposite in this play, the violent male warrior culture of the Scots: for *Macbeth* also undermines those values.

At the summit of the male warrior culture in *Macbeth* is the king, and so we return again to our earlier topic, the crisis of sovereign order in the period. "Sovereign order," in spite of the long rule of Queen Elizabeth, is the order of the male, especially in *Macbeth*, and the witches, "the most extreme form of deviance," in Larner's phrase, are the enemy of masculine order. Yet as *Macbeth* opens, the chief embodiment of authority in the play, King Duncan, seems completely removed from the violent warrior culture over which he rules. Described as good, innocent, and worthy, Duncan actually does nothing in the play: his thames fight his battles; defeat his enemies; secure his throne; Duncan rewards them with titles and riches, though those are not enough for Macbeth. Duncan's passivity in one sense creates the vacuum of power that Macbeth eagerly fills, and will be reflected in his son Malcolm, who also does not fight his own battle, relying on Macduff to overthrow Macbeth and secure his succession to the throne. At the center of sovereign authority in the play, then, is a kind of emptiness, a hollow in the center of a vortex of violence and treason.

Finally, the presence of the witches exposes the violence inherent in the dominant cultural system of the play, the savage customs of the Scots

¹⁴ For other accounts of the origins of witchcraft accusations, see Willis, Purkiss, and the discussion in "Discourses of Witchcraft" (p. 300).

whereby honors and titles derive directly (and, in the play, entirely) from murderous violence. How does one become thane of Cawdor? By his death. How does one become king? By killing him. How does one become an earl, as at the end of the play? By killing. After each killing, the victim is described as a traitor or a tyrant or a "dead butcher" (5.8.70), and the victor is described as thane, earl, or king. Such is the basis of kingship in the play. The witches lead us, as they led Macbeth, to the heart of kingship's darkness.

PART ONE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Macbeth

Edited by David Bevington

Macheth



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

DUNCAN, *King of Scotland*
MALCOLM
DONALDRAIN } *his sons*

MACBETH, *Thane of Glamis, later of Cawdor, later King of Scotland*
LADY MACBETH

BANQUO, *a thane of Scotland*
FLEANCE, *his son*
MACDUFF, *Thane of Fife*
LADY MACDUFF
SON of *Machuff and Lady Machuff*

LENNOX
ROSS
MENTEITH
ANGUS
CAITHNESS } *thanes and noblemen of Scotland*

SWARD, *Earl of Northumberland*
 YOUNG SIWARD, *his son*
 SEYTON, *an officer attending Macbeth*
Another LORD
 ENGLISH DOCTOR
 GENTLEWOMAN *attending Lady Macbeth*
 CAPTAIN *servicing Duncan*
 PORTER
 OLD MAN
Three MURDERERS of Banquo
 FIRST MURDERER *at Macduff's castle*
 MESSENGER *to Lady Macbeth*
 SERVANT *to Macbeth*
 SERVANT *to Lady Macbeth*
 Three WITCHES *or WEIRD SISTERS*
 HEGATE
 Three APPARITIONS

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

SCENE: *Scotland; England*

ACT I, SCENE 1⁸

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

FIRST WITCH:
 When shall we three meet again?
 In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
 SECOND WITCH:
 When the hurlyburly's done,
 When the battle's lost and won.
 THIRD WITCH:
 That will be ere the set of sun.
 FIRST WITCH:
 Where the place?
 SECOND WITCH:
 Upon the heath.
 THIRD WITCH:
 There to meet with Macbeth.

ACT I, SCENE 1. Location: An open place. 3. hurlyburly: tumult.

FIRST WITCH:
 I come, Ginnalkin!⁸
 SECOND WITCH:
 Paddock⁹ calls.
 THIRD WITCH:
 Anon.¹⁰
 ALL:
 Fair is foul, and foul is fair,
 Hover through the fog and filthy air.

Exeunt.

ACT I, SCENE 2¹¹

Malcolm¹² within. Enter King [Duncan], Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, with attendants, meeting a bleeding Captain.

DUNCAN:
 What bloody man is that? He can report,
 As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
 The newest state.¹³
 MALCOLM:
 This is the sergeant¹⁴
 Who like a good and hardy soldier fought
 'Gainst my captivity: Hail, brave friend!
 Say to the King the knowledge of the broil¹⁵
 As thou didst leave it.
 CAPTAIN:
 Doubtful it stood,
 As two spent¹⁶ swimmers that do cling together
 And choke their art.¹⁷ The merciless Macdonwald —
 Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
 The multiplying villainies of nature
 Do swarm upon him¹⁸ — from the Western Isles¹⁹
 Of kerns²⁰ and gallowglasses²¹ is supplied;
 And Fortune, on his damned quarrel²² smiling,

8. Ginnalkin: i.e., gray cat, name of the witch's familiar — a demon or evil spirit supposed to answer a witch's call and to allow him or her to perform black magic. 9. Paddock: toad; also answer a witch's call and to allow him or her to perform black magic. 10. Anon: at once, right away. ACT I, SCENE 2. Location: A camp near Forres. s.d. *Malcolm*: trumpet call to arms. 3. newest state: latest news. sergeant: i.e., staff officer. (There may be no inconsistency with his rank of "captain" in the stage direction and speech prefixes in the folio.) 6. broil: battle. 8. spent: tired out. 9. choke their art: render their skill in swimming useless. 10. to that: as if to that end or purpose. 11–12. The multiplying . . . him: ever increasing numbers of villainous rebels (or perhaps villainous qualities) swarm about him like vermin. 12. Western Isles: islands to the west of Scotland — the Hebrides and perhaps Ireland. 13. Of kerns: with light-armed Irish foot soldiers. gallowglasses: horsemen armed with axes. 14. quarrel: cause.

15 Showed¹⁵ like a rebel's whore. But all's too weak;
For brave Macbeth — well he deserves that name¹⁶ —
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valor's minion¹⁷ carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave.¹⁸
20 Which¹⁹ ne'er shook hands nor bade farewell to him²⁰
Till he unscanned him from the nave²¹ to th' chops,²²
And fixed his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN:

O valiant cousin,²³ worthy gentleman!

CAPTAIN:

25 As whence²⁴ the sun gins his reflection²⁵
Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort seemed to come
Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valor armed,
Compelled these skipping²⁶ kerns to trust their heels
30 But the Norwegian lord, surveying vantage,²⁷
With furnished arms and new supplies of men,
Began a fresh assault.

DUNCAN:

Dismayed not this our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

CAPTAIN:

35 Yes, as sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth,²⁸ I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks,²⁹
So they doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe.
Except³⁰ they meant to bathe in reeking wounds
Or memorize³¹ another Golgotha,³²
40 I cannot tell.
But I am faint. My gashes cry for help.

15. Showed: appeared. 16. name: i.e., "brave." 19. minion: darling. 20. the slave: i.e., Macdonwald. 21. Which: who, i.e., Macbeth. ne'er . . . to him: proffered no polite salutation or farewell, acted without ceremony. 22. nave: navel. chops; jaws. 24. cousin: kinsman. 25. As whence: just as from the place where. gins his reflection: begins its turning back (from its southward progression during winter). 30. skipping: (1) lightly armed, quick at maneuvering (2) skitish. 31. surveying vantage: seeing an opportunity. 36. say sooth: tell the truth. 37. cracks: charges of explosive. 39. Except: unless. 40. memorize: make memorable or famous. Golgotha: "place of a skull," where Christ was crucified (Mark 15:22).

DUNCAN:
So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honor both. — Go get him surgeons.
[Exit Captain, attended.]

Enter Ross and Angus.

Who comes here?

MALCOLM: "The worthy Thane" of Ross.

LENNOX:

What a haste looks through his eyes!

So should he look that seems to³³ speak things strange.

ROSS:

God save the King!

DUNCAN:

Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

ROSS:

From Fife, great King,
Where the Norwegian banners flout³⁴ the sky
And fan our people cold.³⁵

Norway³⁶ himself, with terrible numbers,³⁷

Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal³⁸ conflict,
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapped in proof,³⁹

Confronted him⁴⁰ 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
Sveno, the Norways⁴¹ king, craves composition;⁴²
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's Inch⁴³
45 Ten thousand dollars⁴⁴ to our general use.

45. Thane: Scottish title of honor, roughly equivalent to "Earl." 47. seems to: seems about to. 51. flout: mock, insult. 52. fan . . . cold: fan cold fear into our troops. 53. Norway: the King of Norway. terrible numbers: terrifying numbers of troops. 55. dismal: ominous. 56. Till . . . proof: i.e., until Macbeth clad in well-tested armor; (Bellona was the Roman goddess of war). 57. him: i.e., the King of Norway. self-comparisons: i.e., matching count-downs of war). 62. Norways: Norwegians' composition: agreement, treaty of peace. 64. Saint Colme's Inch: Inchcolm, the Isle of St. Columba in the Firth of Forth. 65. dollars: Spanish or Dutch coins.

DUNCAN:

No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom^o interest. Go pronounce his present^o death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

ROSS:

I'll see it done.

DUNCAN:

What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.

Exunt. 70ACT I, SCENE 3^o*Thunder. Enter the three Witches.*

FIRST WITCH:

Where hast thou been, sister?

SECOND WITCH:

Killing swine.

THIRD WITCH:

Sister, where thou?

FIRST WITCH:

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,

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

"Avoint thee," witch!" the rump-fed^o runnion^o cries.

Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the *Tiger*^o.

But in a sieve I'll thither sail,

And like a rat without a tail

I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

SECOND WITCH:

I'll give thee a wind.

FIRST WITCH:

Thou'rt kind.

THIRD WITCH:

And I another.

FIRST WITCH:

I myself have all the other,^o

And the very ports they blow,^o

15

All the quarters that they know

I' the shipman's card^o

I'll drain him dry as hay;

Sleep shall neither night nor day

Hang upon his penthouse lid.^o

He shall live a man forbid.^o

Weary sev'n nights^o nine times nine

Shall he dwindle, peak,^o and pine.

Though his bark cannot be lost,

Yet it shall be tempest-tossed.

Look what I have.

SECOND WITCH:

Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH:

Here I have a pilot's thumb,

Wrecked as homeward he did come.

THIRD WITCH:

A drum, a drum!

Macbeth doth come.

ALL dancing in a circle:

The Weird Sisters,^o hand in hand,

Posters of^o 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 called^o to Forres? — What are these,

So withered and so wild in their attire,

That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' earth

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

That man may question? You seem to understand me

By each at once her chappy^o finger laying

40

Drum within.

50

35

67. Our: (The royal "we.") bosom: close and affectionate. present: immediate. ACT I, SCENE 3. Location: a heath near Forres. 6. Avoint thee: begone. rump-fed: fed on refuse, or fat-rumped. runnion: many creature, scabby woman. 7. *Tiger*: (A ship's name.) 9-10. like... do: (Suggestive of the witches' deformity and sexual insatiability. Witches were thought to seduce men sexually.) 10. do: (1) act (2) perform sexually. 14. other: others. 15. And... blow: (The witches can prevent a ship from entering port by causing the winds to blow from land.)

17. shipman's card: compass card. 20. penthouse lid: i.e., eyelid (which projects out over the eye like a *penthouse* or slope-roofed structure). 21. forbid: accursed. 22. sev'n nights: weeks. 23. peak: grow peaked or thin. 32. Weird Sisters: women connected with fate or destiny; also women having a mysterious or unearthly, uncanny appearance. 33. Posters of: swift travelers over. 39. is 't called: is it said to be. 44. chappy: chapped.

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!

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? — 'T the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical³³ or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace³⁴ and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal.³⁵ 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.³⁶

FIRST WITCH:

Hail!

SECOND WITCH:

Hail!

THIRD WITCH:

Hail!

FIRST WITCH:

Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

SECOND WITCH:

Not so happy³⁷, yet much happier.

THIRD WITCH:

Thou shalt get³⁸ kings, though thou be none.
So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

FIRST WITCH:

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

45

70

MACBETH:

Stay, you imperfect³⁹ speakers, tell me more!
By Sinel's⁴⁰ 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,⁴¹ or why
Upon this blasted⁴² heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.

BANQUO:

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

MACBETH:

Into the air, and what seemed corporal⁴³ melted,
As breath into the wind. Would they had stayed!

BANQUO:

Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on⁴⁴ the insane root⁴⁵
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 th' selfsame tune and words. — Who's here?

Enter Ross and Angus.

ROSS:

The King hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success; and when he reads⁴⁶
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,⁴⁷
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his. Silenced with that,⁴⁸

90

85

75

Withdraws.

80

33. fantastical: creatures of fantasy or imagination. 34. show: appear. 35. grace: honor. 36. rapt withal: carried out of himself, distracted by these predictions. withal: with it, by it. 37. beg: . . . have; beg your favors nor fear your hate. 38. happy: fortunate. 39. get: beg.

40. imperfect: cryptic. 41. Sinel's: (Sinel was Macbeth's father.) 42-46. Say . . . intelligence: say from what source you have this unusual information. 47. blasted: blighted. 48. corporal: bodily. 49. on: of. insane root: root causing insanity; variously identified. 50. reads: i.e., considers. 51. Thy . . . fight: your endangering yourself in fighting the rebels; or (reading *fight* as *sight*) your endangering yourself before the very eyes of the rebels. 52-53. His . . . that: i.e., your wondrous deeds so outdo any praise he could offer that he is silenced.

In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day
 He finds thee in the stout Norwegian ranks,
 Nothing⁹⁵ afear'd of what thyself didst make,
 Strange images of death. As thick as tale
 Came post with post,⁹⁶ and every one did bear
 Thy praises in his kingdom's great defense,
 And poured them down before him.

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

ROSS:
 And, for an earnest⁹⁷ of a greater honor,
 He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor;
 In which addition,⁹⁸ hail, most worthy thane,
 For it is thine.

BANQUO: What, can the devil speak true?
 MACBETH:
 The Thane of Cawdor lives. Why do you dress me
 In borrowed robes?

ANGUS: Who⁹⁹ was the thane lives yet,
 But under heavy judgment bears that life
 Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined¹⁰⁰
 With those of Norway, or did line¹⁰¹ the rebel¹⁰²
 With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
 He labored in his country's wrack,¹⁰³ I know not;
 But reasons capital,¹⁰⁴ confessed and proved,
 Have overthrown him.

MACBETH [*aside*]: Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor!
 The greatest is behind.¹⁰⁵ [*To Ross and Angus*] Thanks for your pains.
 [*Aside to Banquo*] Do you not hope your children shall be kings
 When those that gave the Thane of Cawdor to me
 Promised no less to them?

BANQUO [*to Macbeth*]: That, trusted home,¹⁰⁶
 Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
 Besides the Thane of Cawdor. But 'tis stranger:

96. Nothing: not at all. 97-98. As . . . with post: as fast as could be told, i.e., counted, came messenger after messenger (unless the text should be amended to "As thick as hail"). 104. earnest: token payment. 106. addition: title. 109. Who: he who. 111. combined: confederate. 112. line: reinforce. the rebel: i.e., Macdonwald. 114. in . . . wrack: to bring about his country's ruin. 115. capital: deserving death. 117. behind: to come. 120. home: all the way.

And oftentimes to win us to our harm
 The instruments of darkness¹²⁴ tell us truths,
 Win us with honest trifles, to betray's¹²⁵
 In deepest consequence.¹²⁶ —

Cousins,¹²⁷ a word, I pray you. [*He converses apart with Ross and Angus.*]
 MACBETH [*aside*]:
 Two truths are told,
 As happy prologues to the swelling act¹²⁸
 Of the imperial theme. — I thank you, gentlemen.

[*Aside*] This supernatural soliciting¹²⁹
 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 horrid¹³⁰ image doth unfix my hair
 And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
 Against the use¹³¹ of nature? Present fears
 Are less than horrible imaginings.
 My thought, whose¹³² murder yet is but fantastical,¹³³
 Shakes so my single state of man¹³⁴
 That function¹³⁵ is smothered in surmise,¹³⁶
 And nothing is but what is not.¹³⁷

BANQUO:
 Look how our partner's rap.
 MACBETH [*aside*]:
 If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me
 Without my stir.¹³⁸

BANQUO: New honors come¹³⁹ upon him,
 Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mold
 But with the aid of use.¹⁴⁰
 MACBETH [*aside*]: Come what come may,
 Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.¹⁴¹

124. darkness: (Indicates the demonic beyond the witches.) 126. In deepest consequence: in the profoundly important sequel. 127. Cousins: i.e., fellow lords. 129. swelling net: stately drama. 131. soliciting: tempting. 136. horrid: literally, "bristling," like Macbeth's hair. 138. use: custom. fears: things feared. 140. whose: in which, but fantastical: merely imagined. 141. single . . . man: weak human condition. 142. function: normal power of action. surmise: speculation, imaginings. 143. nothing . . . not: only unreal imaginings have (for me) any reality. 146. stir: bestirring (myself). come: i.e., which have come. 147-148. cleave . . . use: do not take the shape of the wearer until often worn. (Macbeth is often connected in the text with clothes that don't really fit him.) 149. Time . . . day: i.e., what must happen will happen one way or another.

BANQUO:
Worthy Macbeth, we stay^o upon your leisure.

MACBETH:
Give me your favor.^o My dull brain was wrought^o
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are registered^o where every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the King,
[*Aside to Banquo.*] Think upon what hath chanced, and at more time,^o
The interim having weighed it, let us speak
Our five hearts^o each to other.

BANQUO [*to Macbeth*]:
Very gladly,
MACBETH [*to Banquo*]:
Till then, enough. — Come, friends.

Exeunt.

ACT 1, SCENE 4^a

Flourish. Enter King [Duncan], Lennox, Malcolm, Donalbain, and attendants.

DUNCAN:
Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission^o yet returned?

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

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

50. stay: wait. 51. favor: pardon. wrought: shaped, preoccupied. 153. registered: recorded (in my memory). 155. at more time: at a time of greater leisure. 157. Our five hearts: our hearts freely. ACT 1, SCENE 4. Location: Forres. The palace. 2. in commission: having warrant (to see to the execution of Cawdor). 9. been studied: made it his study. 10. owed: owned. 11. careless: uncared for.

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^o
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine!^o 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.^o
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 deserved, 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^o in fullness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow. — Sons, kinsmen, thanes,
And you whose places are the nearest, know
We^o will establish our estate^o upon
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland;^o which honor must
Not unaccompanied invest him only.^o
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine

16. before: ahead (in describing). 19–20. That . . . mine: that I might have thanked and rewarded you in ample proportion to your worth. 25. Arc . . . servants: are like children and servants in relation to your throne and dignity, existing only to serve you. 27. Safe . . . honor: to safeguard you whom we love and honor. 34. Wanton: unrestrained. 37. We: (The royal "we") establish our estate: fix the succession of our state. 39. Prince of Cumberland: title of the heir apparent to the Scottish throne. 40. Not . . . only: not be bestowed on Malcolm alone; other deserving nobles are to share honors.

On all deservers. — From hence to Inverness,⁴²
And bind us further to you.⁴³

МАЧЕТН:

The rest is labor which is not used for you.⁴⁴
I'll be myself the harbingers⁴⁵ and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach;
So humbly take my leave.

45

DUNCAN:

My worthy Cawdor!

МАЧЕТН [*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.⁴⁶ Stars, hide your fires,
Let not light see my black and deep desires.
The eye wink at the hand;⁴⁷ yet let that be⁴⁸
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

50

DUNCAN:

True, worthy Banquo. He is full so valiant,⁴⁹
And in his commendations⁵⁰ I am fed;
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome.
It is a peerless kinsman.

Exit.

55

Flourish. Exeunt.

ACT I, SCENE 5¹

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

LADY MACBETH [*reads*]: "They met me in the day of success, and I have
learned by the perfect'st² report they have more in them than mortal
knowledge. When I burnt in desire to question them further, they made
themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the
wonder of it came missives³ 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

5

42. Inverness: the seat or location of Macbeth's castle; Dunsinane. 43. bind . . . you: put me further in your (Macbeth's) obligation by your hospitality. 44. The . . . your: inactivity, not being devoted to your service, becomes tedious and wearisome. 45. harbingers: forerunner, and Macbeth had a right to believe that he himself might be chosen as Duncan's successor; he here questions whether he will interfere with the course of events.) 52. wink . . . hand: blind valiant as you say. (Apparently, Duncan and Banquo have been conversing privately on this subject during Macbeth's soliloquy.) 55. his commendations: the praises given to him. ACT I, SCENE 5. Location: Inverness. Macbeth's castle. 2. perfect'st: most accurate. 5. missives: messengers.

have I thought good to deliver thee,⁴ 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!"

10

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be
What thou art promised. Yet do I fear⁵ 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 illness⁶ should attend it. What thou wouldst highly,⁷

15

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 have⁸ it,
And that which rather thou dost fear to do

Than wishest should be undone.⁹ Hie¹⁰ thee hence,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear
And chastise with the valor of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round¹¹
Which fate and metaphysical¹² aid doth seem
To have thee crowned withal."

20

Enter [a servant as] Messenger.

What is your tidings?

25

MESSENGER:

The King comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH:

Thou'tt mad to say it!

Is not thy master with him, who, were¹³ it so,
Would have informed for preparation?¹⁴

MESSENGER:

So please you, it is true. Our thane is coming.

30

One of my fellows had the speed of¹⁵ him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more

Than would make up his message.
LADY MACBETH:

Give him tending;¹⁶

He brings great news.

Exit Messenger.

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
He brings himself is hoarse

35

8. deliver thee: inform you of. 12. do I fear: I am anxious about; mistrust. 16. illness: evil (that), highly: greatly. 19. have: are to have; want to have. 20-21. And that . . . undone: i.e., and the thing you ambitiously crave frightens you more in terms of the means needed to achieve it than in the idea of having it; if you could have it without those means, you certainly wouldn't wish it undone. 21. Hie: hasten. 24. round: crown. 25. metaphysical: supernatural. 26. with: with. 29. informed for preparation: i.e., sent me word so that I might get things ready. 31. had . . . of: outstripped. 33. tending: attendance.

Under my bartlements. Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts,³⁷ unsex me here
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood;³⁸
Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,³⁹
That no compunctious visitings of nature⁴⁰
Shake my fell⁴¹ purpose, nor keep peace⁴² between
Th' effect and it!⁴³ Come to my woman's breasts
And take my milk for gall,⁴⁴ you murdering ministers,⁴⁵
Where'er in your sightless⁴⁶ substances
You wait on⁴⁷ nature's mischiefs! Come, thick night,
And pall⁴⁸ thee in the dunnest⁴⁹ 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 Clamish Worthy Cawdor!

Greater than both by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have⁵⁰ 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: Tomorrow, as he purposes.

LADY MACBETH: O, never

Shall sun that morrow see!
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men

May read strange matters. To beguile the time,⁵¹
Look like the time;⁵² bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue. I look like th' innocent flower
But be the serpent under 't. He that's coming

37. tend . . . thoughts: attend on, act as the instruments of, deadly or murderous thoughts.
40. remorse: pity. 41. nature: natural feelings. 42. fell: fierce, cruel. keep peace: inter-
exchange for gall, or perhaps at gall, with the milk itself being the gall. ministers: agents.
45. sightless: invisible. 46. wait on: attend, assist. nature's mischiefs: the kind of evil to
which human nature is prone. 47. pall: envelop. dunnest: darkest. 52. letters have: i.e., let-
ter has. 59. beguile the time: i.e., deceive all observers. 60. Look like the time: look the
way people expect you to look.

Must be provided for; and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch,⁶⁴
Which shall to all our nights and days to come
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

MACBETH: We will speak further.

LADY MACBETH: Only look up clear.⁶⁵

To alter favor ever is to fear.⁶⁶
Leave all the rest to me.

ACT I, SCENE 6⁶⁷

Hamboys and torches. Enter King [Duncan], Malcolm, Donalbain, Banquo, Lennox, Macduff, Ross, Angus, and attendants.

DUNCAN:

This castle hath a pleasant seat.⁶⁸ The air
Nimble and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle⁶⁹ senses.

BANQUO:

This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting⁷⁰ martlet,⁷¹ does approve⁷²
By his loved mansiony⁷³ that the heavens' breath
Smells woingly here. No jury⁷⁴, frieze,
Buttress, nor cign of vantage⁷⁵ but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant⁷⁶ cradle.
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed
The air is delicate.

Enter Lady [Macbeth].

DUNCAN: See, see, our honored hostess!

The love that follows us sometimes is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love.⁷⁷ Herein I teach you

64. dispatch: management. 67. look up clear: give the appearance of being untroubled.
68. To . . . fear: i.e., to show a troubled countenance is to arouse suspicion. ACT I, SCENE 6.
Location: Before Macbeth's castle. s.d. *Hamboys*: obnoxious instruments. 1. seat: site.
3. gentle: (1) noble (2) refined (by the delicate air). 4. temple-haunting: nesting in churches.
martlet: house martin. approve: prove. 5. mansiony: nest building. 6. jury: projection
of wall or building. 7. cign of vantage: convenient corner, i.e., for resting. 8. procreant:
for breeding. 11-12. The love . . . love: the love that sometimes forces itself inconveniently
upon us we still appreciate, since it is meant as love. (Duncan is graciously suggesting that his
visit is a bother, but, he hopes, a welcome one.)

How you shall bid God 'tid us for your pains,^o
And thank us for your trouble.

LADY MACBETH:

All our service

In every point twice done, and then done double.

Were poor and single^o business to contend

Against^o those honors deep and broad wherewith

Your Majesty loads our house. For those of old,^o

And the late^o dignities heaped up to^o them,

We rest^o your hermits.^o

DUNCAN:

Where's the Thane of Cawdor?

We coursed^o him at the heels, and had a purpose

To be his purveyor^o; but he rides well,

And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp^o 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.^o

DUNCAN:

Give me your hand.

Conduct me to mine host. We^o love him highly.

And shall continue our graces towards him.

By your leave, hostess.

Exeunt

30

ACT I, SCENE 7^o

Hauboyes. Torches. Enter a server, and divers servants with dishes and service [and pass] over the stage. Then enter Macbeth.

MACBETH:

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well

It were done quickly. If th' assassination

Could trammel up the consequence,^o and catch

With his surcease^o success^o — that but^o this blow

Might be the be-all and the end-all! — here,^o

But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,

We'd jump^o the life to come. But in these cases

We still have judgment^o here, that^o we but teach

Bloody instructions,^o which, being taught, return

To plague th' inventor: This evenhanded justice

Commends^o th' ingreience^o of our poisoned chalice

To our own lips. He's here in double trust:

First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,

Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,

Who should against his murderer shut the door,

Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan

Hath borne his faculties^o so meek, hath been

So clear^o in his great office, that his virtues

Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against

The deep damnation of his taking-off^o.

And Pity, like a naked newborn babe

Striding^o the blast,^o or heaven's cherubin, horsed

Upon the sightless couriers^o of the air,

Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,

That tears shall drown the wind.^o I have no spur

To prick the sides of my intent, but only

Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself

And falls on th' other^o —

Enter Lady [Macbeth].

How now, what news?

LADY MACBETH:

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

30

13. bid . . . pains: ask God to reward me for the trouble I'm giving you. (This is said in the same gently jocular spirit as lines 11–12.) 14. yield, repay. 16. single: small, inconsiderable. 16–17. contend: vie with. 18. those of old: i.e., honors formerly bestowed on us. 19. later: recent. 20. besides: in addition to. 20. rest: remain. 21. hermits: i.e., those who will pray for you like hermits or beadsmen. 21. coursed: followed (as in a hunt). 22. purveyor: an officer sent ahead to provide for entertainment; here, forerunner. 23. holp: helped. 25–28. Your . . . own: those who serve you hold their own servants, themselves, and all their possessions in trust from you, and can render an account whenever you wish, ready always to render back to you what is yours. (A feudal concept of obligation.) 29. We: (The royal "we.") ACT I, SCENE 7. Location: Macbeth's castle; an inner courtyard. s.d. server: chief waiter, butler.

3. trammel . . . consequence: entangle as in a net and prevent the consequences that follow any action. 4. his surcease: cessation (of the assassination and of Duncan's life). success: what succeeds, follows. (If only the assassination itself were the end of the matter) that but: so that only. 5. here: in this world. 7. jump: risk. (But imaging the physical act is characteristic of Macbeth; compare this with line 27.) 8. still have judgment: are invariably punished. 9. that: in that. 9. instructions: lessons. 11. Comments: presents. ingreience: contents of a mixture. 17. faculties: powers of office. 18. clear: free of taint. 20. taking-off: murder. 22. Striding: bestriding. blast: tempest (of compassionate horror). 23. sightless couriers: invisible steeds or runners, i.e., the winds. 35. shall drown the wind: i.e., will be as heavy as a downpour of rain and thereby still the wind. 28. other: other side. (The image is of a horseman vaulting into his saddle and ignominiously falling on the opposite side.)

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MACBETH:

Hath he asked for me?

LADY MACBETH: Know you not he has?

MACBETH:

We will proceed no further in this business.

He hath honored me of late, and I have bought³³

Golden opinions from all sorts of people.

Which would³⁴ be worn now in their newest gloss,

Nor cast aside so soon.

LADY MACBETH:

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?And wakes it now, to look so green³⁵ and pale

At what it did so freely? From this time

Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard

To be the same in thine own act and valor

As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that

Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,³⁶

And live a coward in thine own esteem,

Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"

Like the poor cat i' th' adage?³⁷

MACBETH:

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 break³⁸ 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,³⁹ and yet you would⁴⁰ make both.They have made themselves, and that their fitness⁴¹ now

Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know

How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:

I would, while it was smiling in my face,

Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums

And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you

Have done to this.

If we should fail?

We fail?

But screw your courage to the sticking place,⁴²

And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—

Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey

Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains⁴³Will I with wine and wassail⁴⁴ so convince⁴⁵That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt⁴⁶ of reason
A limbeck⁴⁷ only. When in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
That unguarded Duncan? What not put upon
His spongy⁴⁸ officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?⁴⁹MACBETH: Bring forth men-children only!
For thy undaunted mettle⁵⁰ should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,⁵¹
When we have marked with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done 't?LADY MACBETH: Who dares receive it other,⁵²
As we shall make our grieis and clamor roar
Upon his death?MACBETH: I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent⁵³ to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock⁵⁴ the time with fairest show.
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

33. bought: acquired (by bravery in battle). 35. would: ought to, should. 38. green: sickly.

43. the ornament of life: i.e., the crown. 45. wait upon: accompany, always follow.

46. adage: (i.e., "The cat would eat fish but she will not wet her feet.") 49. break: broach.

53. adhere: agree, suit. would: wanted to. 54. that their fitness: that very suitability of time and place.

61. But only: the sticking place: the notch into which is fitted the string of a crossbow

cranked taut for shooting. 64. chamberlains: attendants on the bedchamber. 65. wassail:

carousal, drink. convince: overpower. 66–68. warder . . . only: (The brain was thought to

be divided into three ventricles: imagination in front, memory at the back, and between them

the seat of reason. The fumes of wine, arising from the stomach, would deaden memory and

judgment.) 67. receipt: receptacle, ventricle. 68. limbeck: device for distilling liquids.

72. spongy: soaked, drunken. 73. quell: murder. 74. mettle: (The same word as *mettle*;

substance; temperament. 75. received: i.e., as truth. 78. other: otherwise. 79. As: inas-

much as. 80–81. bend . . . agent: strain every muscle. 82. mock: deceive.

80. As we shall make our grieis and clamor roar

Upon his death?

MACBETH: I am settled, and bend up

Each corporal agent⁵³ to this terrible feat.Away, and mock⁵⁴ the time with fairest show.

False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

Faint.

ACT 2, SCENE 1⁶

Enter Banquo, and Fleance, with a torch before him.

BANQUO:
How goes the night, boy?

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

BANQUO:
And she goes down at twelve.

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

BANQUO:
Hold, take my sword. [*He gives him his sword.*] There's husbandry⁷ in heaven;

Their candles are all out. Take thee that too. [*He gives him his belt and dagger.*]

A heavy summons⁸ lies like lead upon me.
And yet I would not⁹ sleep. Merciful powers,¹⁰
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose!

Enter Macbeth, and a Servant with a torch.

Give me my sword. Who's there? [*He takes his sword.*]

MACBETH:
A friend.

BANQUO:
What, sir, not yet at rest? The King's abed.
He hath been in unusual pleasure,
And sent forth great largess¹¹ to your offices.¹²
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess, and shut up
In¹³ measureless content.

MACBETH:
Our will became the servant to defect,¹⁴
Which else should free¹⁵ have wrought.

[*He gives a diamond.*]

ACT 2, SCENE 1. Location: Inner courtyard of Macbeth's castle. Time is virtually continuous from the previous scene. s.d. *torch*: (This may mean "torchbearer," although it does not at line 9 s.d.). 4. husbandry: economy. 6. summons: i.e., to sleep. 7. would not: am reluctant to (owing to my uneasy fears). 8. powers: order of angels deputed by God to resist demons. 9. largess: gifts, gratuities. 10. offices: quarters used for the household work. 11-17. shut up In: concluded what he had to say with expressions of, or perhaps, he professes himself enclosed in. 18. Our . . . defect: our good will (to entertain the King handsomely) was limited by our meager means (at such short notice). 19. free: freely, unrestrainedly.

BANQUO:
All's well. 20

I dreamt last night of the three Weird Sisters.

To you they have showed some truth.

I think not of them.

MACBETH:
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 kindest leisure. 25

MACBETH:
If you shall cleave to my consent when 'tis,²⁶
It shall make honor for you.

BANQUO:
So²⁷ I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchisèd²⁸ and allegiance clear.²⁹

I shall be counseled.³⁰

MACBETH:
Good repose the while!

BANQUO:
Thanks, sir. The like to you.

Exit Banquo [with Fleance].

MACBETH: [*to Servant*]
Go bid thy mistress, when my drink³¹ is ready,

She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

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, fatal³² vision, sensible³³
To feeling as to sight? Or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressèd³⁴ 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,³⁵

And such an instrument I was to use.

Mine eyes are made the fools o' th' other senses,
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still,

[*He draws a dagger.*]

As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going,³⁶

And such an instrument I was to use.

Mine eyes are made the fools o' th' other senses,
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still,

26. cleave . . . 'tis: give me your support, adhere to my view, when the time comes. 27. So: provided. 29. franchisèd: free (from guilt). clear: unstained. 30. counseled: receptive to suggestion. 32. drink: i.e., posset or bedtime drink of hot spiced milk curdled with ale or wine, as also in 2.2.6. 37. fatal: ominous. sensible: perceivable by the senses. 40. heat-oppressèd: fevered. 43. Thou . . . going: you seem to guide me toward the destiny I intended, toward Duncan's chambers. 45-46. Mine . . . rest: i.e., either this is a fantasy, deceiving me with what my eyes seem to see, or else it is a true vision expressing something that is beyond ordinary sensory experience.

And on thy blade and dudgeon^o gouts^o of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing.
It is the bloody business which informs^o
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse^o
The curtain'd^o sleep. Witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings,^o and wither'd Murder,
Aarum'd^o by his sentinel, the wolf,
Whose howls his watch^o; thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's^o 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.^o Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.^o
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.

A bell rings.

Exit.

ACT 2, SCENE 2^o

Enter Lady [Macbeth].

LADY MACBETH:
That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath quenched them hath given me fire. Hark! Peace!
It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal bellman,^o
Which gives the stern'st good-night.^o He is about it.
The doors are open; and the surfeit'd grooms^o
Do mock their charge^o with snores. I have drugg'd their possessors,^o

47. dudgeon: hilt of a dagger. gouts: drops. 49. informs: creates forms or impressions. 51. abuse: deceive. 52. curtain'd: (1) veiled by bed curtains (2) screened from rationality and consciousness. 53. Pale Hecate's offerings: sacrificial offerings to Hecate, the goddess of night and witchcraft. (She is *pale* because she is identified with the pale moon.) 54. Aarum'd: given the signal to action. 55. watch: watchword, or cry like the hourly call of the night watchman. 56. Tarquin's: (Tarquin was a Roman tyrant who ravished Locrine.) 60-61. And take . . . with it: and thus echo and augment the horror which is so suited to this evil hour, or usurp the present horror by breaking the silence. 62. Words . . . gives: words give only lifeless expression to live deeds, are no substitute for deeds. ACT 2, SCENE 2. Location: Scene continues. 3. bellman: one who rings a bell to announce a death or to mark the hours of the night. 4. stern'st good-night: i.e., notice to condemned criminals that they are to be executed in the morning. 5. grooms: servants. 6. mock their charge: make a mockery of their guard duty. possessors: hot bedtime drinks (as in 2.1.12).

That death and nature do contend about them
Whether they live or die.
Who's there? What, ho!
LADY MACBETH:
Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
And 'tis not done. Th' attempt and not the deed
Confounds^o us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

Enter Macbeth [bearing bloody daggers].

My husband!
MACBETH:
I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?
LADY MACBETH:
I heard the owl scream and the crickets^o 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 [*looking at his hands*]:
This is a sorry sight.
LADY MACBETH:
A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH:
There's one did laugh in 's sleep, and one cried "Murder!"
That they did wake each other. I stood and heard them.
But they did say their prayers, and addressed them^o
Again to sleep.
LADY MACBETH:
There are two^o lodged together.

11. Confounds: ruins. 16. owl, crickets: (The sounds of both could be ominous and prophetic of death.) 28. addressed them: settled themselves. 29. two: i.e., Malcolm and Donalbain.

MACBETH:
One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen!" the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.³¹
List'ning their fear. I could not say "Amen"
When they did say "God bless us!"

LADY MACBETH:
Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH:
But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?
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:
Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve³² of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,³³
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,³⁴
Chief nourisher in life's feast —

LADY MACBETH: What do you mean?

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

LADY MACBETH:
Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend³⁵ your noble strength to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water
And wash this filthy witness³⁶ 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.

31. As: as if. hangman's hands: bloody hands (because the hangman would draw and quarter the condemned, and also executed with an ax). 32. thought: thought about. 33. so: if we do so. 41. raveled sleeve: tangled skin. 42. bath: i.e., to relieve the soreness. 43. second course: (Ordinary feasts had two courses, of which the second was the *chief nourisher*; here, sleep is seen as following eating in a restorative process.) 49. unbend: slacken (as one would a bow; contrast with "bend up" in 1.7.80). 51. witness: evidence.

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 gild⁶⁰ the faces of the grooms withal,
For it must seem their guilt. [*She takes the daggers, and | exits. Knock within.*]

MACBETH:
Whence is that knocking?
How is 't with me, when every noise appalls me?
What hands are here? Ha! They pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous⁶¹ seas incarnadine,⁶²
Making the green one red.

Enter Lady [Macbeth].

LADY MACBETH:
My hands are of your color, but I shame
To wear a heart so white. (*Knock.*) I hear a knocking
At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.
A little water clears us of this deed.
How easy is it, then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended. (*Knock.*) Hark! More knocking.
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly⁶³ in your thoughts.

MACBETH:
'To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself."
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

ACT 2, SCENE 3⁶⁴

Knocking within. Enter a Porter.

PORTER: Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of hell gate, he
should have old⁶⁵ "turning the key." (*Knock.*) Knock, knock, knock! Whos
a-gittin' smarr, coat, as if with a thin layer of gold. (Gold was ordinarily spoken of as red.)
66. multitudinous: both multiform and teeming. incarnadine: make red. 67. one red: one
all-perceiving red. 72-73. Your . . . unattended: your firmness has deserted you. 74. night-
gown: dressing gown. 75. watchers: those who have remained awake. 76. poorly: dejectedly.
77. To . . . myself: i.e., it were better to be lost in my thoughts than to have consciousness of my
deed if I am to live with myself. I will have to shut this out or be no longer "the person I was."
Act 2, Scene 3. Location: Scene continues. The knocking at the door has already been heard in
2.2. It is not necessary to assume literally, however, that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth have been
talking near the *south entry* (2.2.76) where the knocking is heard. 2. old: plenty of.

there, i' the name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer that hang'd himself on th' expectation of plenty.³ Come in time!⁴ Have napkins⁵ enough about you: here you'll sweat for 't (*Knock*.) Knock, knock! Who's there, in th' other devil's name? Faith, here's an equivocator,⁶ that could swear in both the scales against either scale, who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven. O, come in, equivocator. (*Knock*.) Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose.⁷ Come in, tailor. Here you may roast your goose.⁸ (*Knock*.) Knock, knock! Never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further. I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to th' everlasting bonfire. (*Knock*.) Anon, anon! [*He opens the gate.*] I pray you, remember the porter.

15

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,⁹ and drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

MACDUFF: What three things does drink especially provoke?

20

PORTER: Marry,¹⁰ sir, nose-painting,¹¹ 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;¹² in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep¹³ and, giving him the lie,¹⁴ leaves him.¹⁵

25

3. Beelzebub: a devil. 3-4. Here's . . . plenty: i.e., here's a farmer who has hoarded in anticipation of a scarcity and will be justly punished by a crop surplus and low prices. 4. Come in time: i.e., you have come in good time. napkins: handkerchiefs (to mop up the sweat). 6. equivocator: (This is regarded by many editors as an allusion to the trial of the Jesuit Henry Garnet for treason in the spring of 1606 and to the doctrine of equivocation said to have been presented in his defense; according to this doctrine, a lie was not a lie if the utterer had in his mind a different meaning in which the utterance was true.) 10. French hose: very narrow breeches of the sort that would easily reveal the tailor's attempt to skimp on the cloth supplied him for their manufacture — as he evidently had done with impunity when the French style ran to loose-fitting breeches. 11. roast your goose: heat your tailor's smooching iron (with an obvious pun on the sense, "cook your goose"). 18. second cock: i.e., 3 a.m., when the cock was thought to crow a second time. 21. Marry: (Originally, an oath, "by the Virgin Mary.") nose-painting: i.e., reddening of the nose through drink. 25-26. makes . . . stand to: stimulates him sexually but without sexual capability. 26. equivocates . . . sleep: (1) lulls him asleep (2) gives him an erotic experience in dream only. giving him the lie: (1) deceiving him (2) laying him out flat. 27. leaves him: (1) dissipates as intoxication (2) is passed off as urine.

MACDUFF: I believe drink gave thee the lie¹⁶ last night.
PORTER: That it did, sir, i' the very throat on me.¹⁷ But I requited him for his lie, and I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs¹⁸ sometimes, yet I made a shift¹⁹ to cast²⁰ him.
MACDUFF: Is thy master stirring?

Enter Macbeth.

Our knocking has awaked him. Here he comes.

[*Exit Porter.*]

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 timely²¹ on him.

I have almost slipped²² the hour.

MACBETH:
I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF:
I know this is a joyful trouble to you,

But yet tis one.

MACBETH:
The labor we delight in physics pain.²³

40

This is the door. I'll make so bold to call,

MACDUFF:
For 'tis my limited²⁴ service.

[*Exit Macduff.*]

LENNOX:
Goes the King hence today?

MACBETH:
He does; he did appoint so.

LENNOX:

The night has been unruly. Where we lay,

Our chimneys were blown down, and, as they say,

Lamentings heard i' th' air, strange screams of death,

And prophesying with accents terrible²⁵

45

28. gave thee the lie: (1) called you a liar (2) made you unable to stand and put you to sleep. 29. i' the . . . air: i.e., insulting me with a deliberate lie that requires a duel (with a pun on the literal sense). on: of. 30. took up my legs: lifted me as a wrestler would (with a suggestion of the drunkard's unsteadiness on his legs and perhaps also of lifting the leg as a dog might to urinate). 31. made a shift: managed. cast: (1) throw, as in wrestling (2) vomit. 36. timely: becomes early. 37. slipped: let slip. 40. physics pain: i.e., cures that labor of its troublesome aspect. 42. limited: appointed. 48. accents terrible: terrifying utterances.

Of fire combustion^o and confused events
New hatched to the woeful time." The obscure bird^o
Clamored the livelong night. Some say the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

50

MACBETH: 'Twas a rough night.

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

Enter Macduff.

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

55

MACBETH AND LENNOX:
What's the matter?

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

60

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.^o Do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.

Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.

65

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^o and walk like sprites^o
To countenance^o this horror! Ring the bell.

70

Bell rings.

Enter Lady [Macbeth].

49. combustion: tumult. 50. New . . . time: newly born to accompany the woeful nature of the time. obscure bird: owl, the bird of darkness. 57. Confusion: destruction. 64. Gorgon: one of three monsters with hideous faces (Medusa was a Gorgon), whose look turned the beholders to stone. 70. great doom's image: replica of Doomsday. 71. As . . . rise up: (At the Last Judgment, the dead will rise from their graves to be judged.) sprites: souls, ghosts. 72. countenance: (1) be in keeping with (2) behold.

LADY MACBETH:

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

75

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

Enter Banquo.

O Banquo, Banquo,

Our royal master's murdered!

Woe, alas!

80

LADY MACBETH:
What, in our house?

BANQUO:
Too cruel anywhere.
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself
And say it is not so.

Enter Macbeth, Lennox, and Ross.

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

85

Enter Malcolm and Donalbain.

DONALBAIN:
What is amiss?

MACBETH: You are, and do not know 't.

The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopped, the very source of it is stopped.

90

MACDUFF:
Your royal father's murdered.

MALCOLM: O, by whom?

74. trumpet: (Another metaphorical suggestion of the Last Judgment; the trumpet here is the shouting and the bell.) 78. repetition: recital, report. 84. chance: occurrence (the murder of Duncan). 86. serious in mortality: worthwhile in mortal life. 87. toys: trifles. 88. lees: dregs. 89. vault: (1) wine-vault (2) earth, with its vaulted sky.

LENNOX:

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

95

MACBETH:

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

MACDUFF:

Wherefore did you so?

100

MACBETH:

Who can be wise, amazed,^o temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.
Th' expedition^o of my violent love

Outran the pauser; reason. Here lay Duncan,

His silver skin laced with his golden^o blood.

And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature^o

For ruin's wasteful^o entrance; there the murderers,

Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers

Unmannerly breeched with gore.^o Who could refrain

That had a heart to love, and in that heart

Courage to make's love known?^o

110

LADY MACBETH [*fainting*]:

Help me hence, ho!

MACDUFF:

Look to the lady.

MALCOLM [*aside to Donalbain*]:

Why do we hold our tongues,

That most may claim this argument^o for ours?

DONALBAIN [*aside to Malcolm*]:

What should be spoken here, where our fate,

Hid in an auger hole,^o may rush and seize us?

Let's away. Our tears are not yet brewed.

MALCOLM [*aside to Donalbain*]:

Nor our strong sorrow upon the foot of motion.^o

115

BANQUO:

Look to the lady.

[*Lady Macbeth is helped out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,^o
That suffer in exposure, let us meet

And question^o this most bloody piece of work

To know it further. Fears and scruples^o shake us.

In the great hand of God I stand, and thence

Against the undivulged pretense^o I fight

Of treasonous malice.^o

120

MACDUFF: And so do I.

ALL: So all.

125

MACBETH:

Let's briefly^o put on manly readiness^o

And meet 'i' the hall together.

ALL: Well contented.

Exeunt [all but Malcolm and Donalbain].

MALCOLM:

What will you do? Let's not consort^o with them.

To show an unfeil sorrow is an office

Which the false man does easy.^o 'T'll to England.

130

DONALBAIN:

To Ireland, I. Our separated fortune

Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are,

There's daggers in men's smiles; the nearer in blood.

The nearer bloody.^o

MALCOLM: This murderous shaft that's shot

Hath not yet lighted,^o and our safest way

Is to avoid the aim. Therefore to horse,

And let us not be dainty of^o leave-taking,

But shift away.^o There's warrant^o in that theft

Which steals itself when there's no mercy left.

Exeunt.

135

95. badged: marked, as with a badge or emblem. 101. amazed: bewildered. 103. expedition: haste. 105. golden: (See the note for 2.2.60.) 106. breach in nature: gap in the defenses of life. (A metaphor of military siege.) 107. wasteful: destructive. 109. breeched with gore: covered (as with breeches) to the hips with gore. 111. make's love known: make manifest his love. 113. argument: topic, business. 115. in an auger hole: i.e., in some hiding place, in ambush. 117. upon . . . motion: yet in motion, ready to act.

119. our naked frailties hid: clothed our poor, shivering bodies (which remind us of our human frailty). 121. question: discuss. 122. scruples: doubts, suspicions. 123-25. thence . . . malice: with God's help, I will fight against the as-yet-unknown purpose that prompted this treason. 124. pretense: design. 125. malice: enmity. 126. briefly: quickly. 130. easy: men's men's clothing and resolute purpose. 128. consort: keep company, associate. 130. easy: murdered. 133-34. the nearer . . . bloody: the closer the kinship, the greater the danger of being murdered. 135. lighted: aligned, descended. 137. dainty of: particular about. 138. shift away: disappear by stealth. warrant: justification.

ACT 2, SCENE 4^a*Enter Ross with 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^b night
 Hath trifled former knowings.^c

ROSS:

Ha, good father!^d
 Thou seest the heavens^e, as troubled with man's act,^f
 Threatens his bloody stage: By th' clock tis day,
 And yet dark night strangles the traveling lamp.^g
 Is't night's predominance^h 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, towingⁱ in her pride of place,^j
 Was by a mousing^k owl hawked at and killed.

ROSS:

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

OLD MAN:

'Tis said they eat^o each other.

ROSS:

They did so, to th' amazement of mine eyes
 That looked upon t.

Enter Macduff.

Here comes the good Macduff —

How goes the world, sir, now?

MACDUFF:

Why, see you not?

ACT 2, SCENE 4. Location: Outside Macbeth's castle of Inverness. 3. sore: dreadful, grievous. 4. trifled former knowings: made trivial all former experiences. father: old man. 5-6. heavens, act, stage: (A theatrical metaphor; the *deus ex machina* refer to the decorated roof over the stage.) 7. traveling lamp: i.e., sun. 8. predominance: ascendancy; superior influence (as pitch, highest point in the falcon's flight). 12. towering: circling higher and higher. (A term in falconry.) place: 15. minions: darlings. 17. as: as if. 18. eat: ate. (Pronounced "at.")

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 suborned.^a

Malcolm and Donaldbin, the King's two sons,

Are stol'n away and fled, which puts upon them

Suspicion of the deed.

ROSS:

'Gainst nature still!

Thriftless^b ambition, that will ravin up^c

Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like^d

The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

MACDUFF:

He is already named^e and gone to Scone^f

To be invested.

ROSS:

Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFF:

Carried to Colmekill,^g

The sacred storehouse of his predecessors

And guardian of their bones.

ROSS:

Will you to Scone?

MACDUFF:

No, cousin, I'll to Fife.^h

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 benisonⁱ go with you, and with those

That would make good of bad, and friends of foes!

Exeunt omnes.

24. What . . . pretend: i.e., what could they hope to gain by it? pretend: intend. suborned: bribed, hired. 28. Thriftless: wasteful. ravin up: devour ravenously. 29. like: likely. 31. named: chosen. (See the note for 1.4.50.) Scone: ancient royal city of Scotland near Perth. 33. Colmekill: Icolinkill, i.e., Cell of St. Columba, the barren islet of Iona in the Western Islands, a sacred spot where the kings were buried; here, called a *storehouse*. 36. Fife: (Of which Macduff is Thane.) 40. benison: blessing.

ACT 3, SCENE 1¹*Enter Banquo.*

BANQUO:

Thou hast it now — King, Cawdor, Glamis, all
As the weird women promised, and I fear
Thou played'st most foully for 't. Yet it was said
It should not stand² 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 shine³ —
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.

Seneca's sounded. Enter Macbeth as King, Lady [Macbeth], Lennox, Ross, lords, 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-thing⁴ unbecoming.

MACBETH:

Tonight we hold a solemn⁵ supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

BANQUO:

Let Your Highness
Command⁶ upon me, to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
Forever knit.

MACBETH:

Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO:

Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH:

We should have else desired your good advice,
Which still⁷ hath been both grave⁸ and prosperous,⁹
In this day's council; but we'll take tomorrow.
Is 't far you ride?

ACT 3, SCENE 1. Location: Forres. The palace. 4. stand: stay, remain. 7. shine: are brilliantly manifest. s.d. *Seneca*: trumpet call. 13. all-thing: in every way. 14. solemn: ceremonious. 16. Command: lay your command. 22. still: always. grave: weighty. prosperous: profitable.

BANQUO:

As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
Twixt this and supper. Go not my horse the better,¹⁰
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.

MACBETH:

Fare not our feast.

BANQUO:

My lord, I will not.

MACBETH:

We hear our bloody cousins are bestowed¹¹
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention.¹² But of that tomorrow,
When therewithal¹³ we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly,¹⁴ 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 commend¹⁵ 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 ourself¹⁶
Till supper-time alone. While¹⁷ then, God be with you!

*Exeunt Lords [and all but Macbeth and a Servant].*Sirrah,¹⁸ a word with you. Attend those men

Our pleasure?

SERVANT:

They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

MACBETH:

Bring them before us.

Exit Servant.

To be thus¹⁹ is nothing,
But²⁰ to be safely thus. — Our fears in²¹ Banquo

26. Go . . . better: unless my horse makes better time than I expect. 31. bestowed: lodged. 34. invention: falsehood (i.e., that Macbeth was the murderer). 35. therewithal: besides that. 35-36. cause . . . jointly: questions of state occupying our joint attention. 40. command: commit, entrust. 44. we . . . ourself: I will keep to myself. 45. While: till. 46. Sirrah: (A form of address to a social inferior.) 49. thus: i.e., king. 50. But: unless, in: concerning.

Struck deep, and in his royalty of nature⁵¹

Reigns that which would be⁵² feared. 'Tis much he dares:

And to⁵³ that dauntless temper of his mind

He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor

To act in safety. There is none but he

Whose being I do fear; and under him

My genius is rebuked,⁵⁴ as it is said

Mark Antony's was by Caesar.⁵⁵ He chid the sisters

When first they put the name of king upon me,

And bade them speak to him. Then, propheticlike,

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,

Thence to be wrenched with⁵⁶ an unlineal⁵⁷ hand,

No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,

For Banquo's issue have I filed⁵⁸ my mind;

For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered,

Put rancors⁵⁹ in the vessel of my peace

Only for them, and mine eternal jewel⁶⁰

Given to the common enemy of man⁶¹

To make them kings, the seeds of Banquo kings.

Rather than so, come fate into the list,⁶²

And champion me⁶³ to th' utterance!⁶⁴ — Who's there?

Enter Servant and two Murderers.

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

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

MURDERERS:

It was, so please Your Highness.

MACBETH:

Well then, now

Have you considered of my speeches? Know

That it was he in the times past which held you

So under fortune,⁶⁵ which you thought had been

Our innocent self. This I made good to you

In our last conference, pass'd in probation⁶⁶ with you

Exit Servant.

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51. royalty of nature: natural kingly bearing. 52. would be: deserves to be. 53. to: added to. 54. My genius is rebuked: my guardian spirit is daunted or abashed. 55. Caesar: Octavius Caesar. 64. with: by. unlineal: not of lineal descent from me. 66. filed: defiled. 68. rancors: malignant enemies (here visualized as a poison added to a vessel full of whole-some drink). 69. eternal jewel: i.e., soul. 70. common . . . man: i.e., devil. 72. list: lists, place of combat. 73. champion me: fight with me in single combat. to th' utterance: to the last extremity (French, *à l'outrance*). 79. under fortune: down in your fortunes. 81. passed in probation: went over the proof.

How you were borne in hand,⁸² how cross'd,⁸³ the instruments,⁸⁴

Who wrought with them, and all things else that might

To half a soul⁸⁵ and to a notion⁸⁶ crazed

Say, "Thus did Banquo."

FIRST MURDERER: You made it known to us.

MACBETH:

I did so, and went further, which is now

Our point of second meeting. Do you find

Your patience so predominant in your nature

That you can let this go? Are you so gospel'd⁸⁷

To pray for this good man and for his issue,

Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave

And beggared yours⁸⁸ forever?

FIRST MURDERER: We are men, my liege.

MACBETH:

Ay, in the catalogue ye go for⁸⁹ men,

As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, curs,

Shoughs,⁹⁰ water-rugs,⁹¹ and demi-wolves⁹² are clept⁹³

All by the name of dogs. The valued file⁹⁴

Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,

The housekeeper,⁹⁵ the hunter, every one

According to the gift which bounteous nature

Hath in him closed,⁹⁶ whereby he does receive

Particular addition from the bill

That writes them all alike,⁹⁷ and so of men.

Now, if you have a station in the file,⁹⁸

Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say 't,

And I will put that business in your bosoms

Whose execution⁹⁹ takes your enemy off.

Grapples you to the heart and love of us,

Who wear our health but sickly in his life,¹⁰⁰

Which in his death were perfect.

SECOND MURDERER: I am one, my liege,

Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world

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82. borne in hand: deceived by false promises. crossed: thwarted. instruments: agents. 84. To half a soul: even to a half-wit. notion: mind. 89. gospel'd: imbued with the gospel spirit. 92. yours: your family. 93. go for: pass for, are entered for. 95. Shoughs: a kind of shaggy dog. water-rugs: long-haired water dogs. demi-wolves: a crossbreed with the wolf. clept: called. 96. valued file: list classified according to value. 98. housekeeper: watchdog. 100. in him closed: enclosed in him, set in him like a jewel. 101-02. Particular . . . alike: particular qualification apart from the catalog that lists them all indiscriminately. 103. file: military row, as in "rank and file"; see *rank* in line 104. 106. Whose execution: the doing of which. 108. in his life: while he lives.

Hath so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER: And I another.

So weary with disasters, tugged with^o fortune,
That I would set^o my life on any chance
To mend it or be rid on^t.

MACBETH: Both of you

Know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS: True, my lord.

MACBETH:

So is he mine, and in such bloody distance^o
That every minute of his being thrusts^o
Against my near^st of life.^o And though I could

With barefaced power^o sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch it,^o yet I must not,
For^o certain friends that are both his and mine,

Whose loves I may not drop, but wail^o his fall
Who^o I myself struck down. And thence it is
That I to your assistance do make love,^o
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.^o Within this hour at most
I will advise^o you where to plant yourselves.

Acquaint you with the perfect spy^o ^o the time,
The moment on^t, for^t must be done tonight,
And something from^o the palace: always thought^o
That I require a clearness.^o And with him —
To leave no rubs^o nor baches in the work —

113. tugged with: pulled about by (as in wrestling). 114. set: risk, stake. 117. distance: (1) hostility, enemy (2) interval of distance between fencers. 118. thrusts: (As in fencing.) supreme royal authority. 121. And . . . avouch it: and use my mere wish as my justification. 122. For: because of, for the sake of. 123. wail: i.e., I must lament. 124. Who: whom. 125. to . . . make love: woo your aid. 129. Your . . . you: i.e., enough; I can see your determination in your faces. 130. advise: instruct. 131–32. with . . . on t: with full and precise instructions as to when it is to be done. spy: eavesdropper. 133. something from: some distance removed from. thought: being borne in mind. 134. clearness: freedom from suspicion. 135. rubs: defects, rough spots.

Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate^o
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart;^o
I'll come to you anon.

BOTH MURDERERS: We are resolved, my lord.

MACBETH:

I'll call upon you straight. Abide within.
It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out tonight.

Exeunt [Murders].

[Exit.]

ACT 3, SCENE 2^o

Enter Macbeth's Lady and a Servant.

LADY MACBETH:

Is Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT:

Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.

LADY MACBETH:

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

SERVANT:

Madam, I will.

Exit.

LADY MACBETH:

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

Enter Macbeth.

How now, my lord? Why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest^o fancies your companions making,
Using^o those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without^o all remedy
Should be without regard.^o What's done is done.

139. Resolve yourselves apart: make up your minds in private conference. ACT 3, SCENE 2. Location: The palace. 7. content: contentedness. 9. Than . . . joy: than by destroying. achieve only an apprehensive joy. 11. sorriest: most despicable or wretched. 12. Using: keeping company with, entertaining. 13. without: beyond. 14. without regard: not pondered upon.

MACBETH:

We have scorched^o the snake, not killed it.

She'll close^o and be herself, whilst our poor malice^o
Remains in danger of her former tooth.^o

But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer.^o
Ere we will cut 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,^o
Than on the torture^o of the mind to lie

In restless ecstasy.^o Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.

Treason has done his worst; nor steel,^o nor poison,
Malice domestic,^o foreign levy,^o nothing

Can touch him further.

LADY MACBETH:

Come on,

Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks.^o
Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight.

MACBETH:

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

Let your remembrance apply^o to Banquo;

Present him eminence,^o both with eye and tongue —
Unsafe the while, that we

Must lave our honors in these flattering streams^o
And make our faces vizards^o 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^o not eterne.^o

MACBETH:

There's^o comfort yet; they are assailable.

Then be thou jocund. Ere the bar hath flown

His cloistered^o flight, ere to black Hecate's^o summons

The shard-borne^o beetle with his drowsy hums

Hath rung night's yawning^o 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,^o

Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling^o night,

Scarf up^o the tender eye of pitiful^o day,

And with thy bloody and invisible hand

Cancel and rear to pieces that great bond^o
Which keeps me pale!^o Light thickens,^o

And the crow^o makes wing to th' rooky^o wood;

Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,

Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.^o

Thou marvell'st at my words, but hold thee still.

Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.

So, prithee, go with me.

*Exeunt.*ACT 3, SCENE 3^o*Enter three Murderers.*

FIRST MURDERER:

But who did bid thee join with us?

THIRD MURDERER:

Macbeth.

15. scorched: slashed, cut. 16. close: head, close up again. poor malice: feeble hostility; 17. her former tooth: her fang, just as before. 18. let... suffer: let the universe itself fall apart, both heaven and earth perish. 22. to gain... to peace: to gain contentedness through satisfied ambition, have sent to eternal rest. 33. torture: rack. 24. ecstasy: frenzy; troops abroad (against Scotland). 30. Gentle... looks: my noble lord, smooth over your rough looks. 33. Let... apply: remember to pay special attention. 34. eminence: favor; 35-36. Unsafe... streams: i.e., we are unsafe at present and so must put on a show of flattering cordiality to make our reputation look clean, or, we are unsafe so long as we must flatter thus. (*Lave* means "wash.") 37. vizards: masks.

41. nature's copy: lease of life (i.e., by copyhold or lease subject to cancellation); also, the individual human being made from nature's mold. eterne: perpetual. 42. There's: i.e., in that thought there is. 44. cloistered: i.e., in and among buildings. Hecate: goddess of night and witchcraft, as in 2.1.53. 45. shard-borne: borne on shards, or horry wing cases; or, *shard-born*, bred in cow-droppings (shards). 46. yawning: drowsy. 48. chuck: (A term of endearment.) 49. seeling: eye-closing. (Night is pictured here as a falconer sewing up the eyes of day lest it should struggle against the deed that is to be done.) 50. Scarf up: handhold. pitiful compassion: 52. bond: i.e., bond by which Banquo and Fleance hold their lives from nature, or moral law against murder, or bond of prophecy. 53. pale: pallid from fear (with a suggestion perhaps of *paled*, "fenced in"). thickens: grows opaque and dim. 54. crow: rooky: full of rooks. 56. to... rouse: besit themselves to hunt their prey. ACT 3, SCENE 3. Location: A park near the palace.

SECOND MURDERER: [*to the First Murderer*]

He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers
Our offices⁵ and what we have to do
To⁶ the direction just.⁶

FIRST MURDERER: Then stand with us.

The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.
Now spurs the latest⁷ traveler apace

To gain the timely⁸ inn, and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

THIRD MURDERER:

Hark, I hear horses.

BANQUO (*within*):

Give us a light there, ho!

SECOND MURDERER:

Then 'tis he. The rest

That are within the note of expectation⁹

Already are i' the court.

FIRST MURDERER:

His horses go about.¹⁰

THIRD MURDERER:

Almost a mile; but he does usually —

So all men do — from hence to th' palace gate

Make it their walk.

Enter Banquo and Fleance, with a torch.

SECOND MURDERER:

A light, a light!

THIRD MURDERER:

'Tis he.

FIRST MURDERER:

Stand to t.

BANQUO:

It will be rain tonight.

FIRST MURDERER:

Let it come down!

[*They attack Banquo*]

BANQUO:

O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!

Thou mayst revenge. — O slave!

[*He dies. Fleance escapes.*]

THIRD MURDERER:

Who did strike out the light?

FIRST MURDERER:

Was 't not the way?¹¹

THIRD MURDERER:

There's but one down; the son is fled.

SECOND MURDERER:

We have lost best half of our affair.

FIRST MURDERER:

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

*Exeunt.*¹²

ACT 3, SCENE 4¹³

Banquet prepared. Enter Macbeth, Lady [Macbeth], Ross, Lennox, Lords, and attendants.

MACBETH:

You know your own degrees;¹⁴ sit down. At first

And last¹⁵, the hearty welcome.

[*They sit.*]

LORDS:

Thanks to Your Majesty.

MACBETH:

Ourselves will mingle with society¹⁶

And play the humble host.

Our hostess keeps her state,¹⁷ but in best time¹⁸

We will require her welcome.¹⁹

LADY MACBETH:

Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends,

For my heart speaks they are welcome.

Enter First Murderer [to the door].

MACBETH:

See, they encounter²⁰ thee with their hearts' thanks.

Both sides are even.²¹ Here I'll sit i' the midst.

2-3. He . . . officers: we need not mistrust this man, since he states exactly our duties (as told us by Macbeth). 4. To: according to. just: exactly. (That is, one can tell he comes from Macgood time. 12. within . . . expectation: in the list of those expected. 14. go about: i.e., can walk from the palace gate to the castle).

25. way: i.e., thing to do. s.d. *Exeunt*: (Presumably, the murderers drag the body of Banquo offstage as they go.) ACT 3, SCENE 4. Location: A room of state in the palace. 1. degrees: ranks (as a determinant of seating). 1-2. At . . . last: once for all. 3. mingle with society: i.e., leave the chair of state and circulate among the guests. 5. keeps her state: remains in her canopied chair of state. in best time: when it is most appropriate. 6. require her welcome: call upon her to give the welcome. 9. encounter: respond to. 10. even: full, with equal numbers on both sides.

Be large^o in mirth: anon we'll drink a measure^o
The table round. [*He goes to the Murderer.*] There's blood upon thy face.

MURDERER:

'Tis Banquo's, then.

MACBETH:

'Tis better thee without than he within.^o
Is he dispatched?

MURDERER:

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

MACBETH:

Thou art the best o' the curthroats.

Yet he's good that did the like for Fleance:

If thou didst it, thou art the nonparcell.^o

MURDERER:

Most royal sir, Fleance is scaped.

MACBETH:

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

But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd,^o confined, bound in
To saucy^o doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

MURDERER:

Ay, my good lord. Safe in a ditch he abides,
With twenty trenched gashes on his head,

The least a death to nature.

MACBETH:

Thanks for that.

There the grown serpent lies; the worm^o that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,

No teeth for th' present. Get thee gone. Tomorrow

We'll hear ourselves^o again.

LADY MACBETH:

My royal lord,

You do not give the cheer.^o The feast is sold

That is not often youched, while 'tis a-making,

'Tis given with welcome.^o To feed were best at home;^o

Exit Murderer.

11. large: liberal, free. measure: i.e., cup filled to the brim for a toast. 14. 'Tis . . . within: it is better for you to have his blood on you than he to have it within him. 19. the nonparcell: without equal. 22. founded: firmly established. 23. broad and general: unconfined. casing: enclosing, enveloping. 24. cribbed: shut in. 25. saucy: sharp, impudent, inopportune. 29. worm: small serpent. 32. hear ourselves: confer. 33. give the cheer: welcome your guests. 33-35. is sold . . . welcome: seems grudgingly given, as if in return for money, unless it is often accompanied with assurances of welcome while it is in progress. 35. To feed . . . home: mere eating is best done at home.

From thence,^o the sauce to meat^o is ceremony;
Meeting were bare^o without it.

Enter the Ghost of Banquo, and sits in Macbeth's place.

MACBETH:

Sweet remembrancer!

Now, good digestion wait on^o appetite,

And health on both!

LENNOX:

May 't please Your Highness sit?

MACBETH:

Here had we now our country's honor roofed!^o

Were the graced person of our Banquo present,

Who may I^o rather challenge for^o 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: [*seeing his place occupied*]

The table's full.

LENNOX:

Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH:

Where?

LENNOX:

Here, my good lord. What is 't that moves Your Highness?

MACBETH:

Which of you have done this?

LORDS:

What, my good lord?

MACBETH:

Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake

LORDS:

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.

LORDS:

The fit is momentary; upon a thought^o
He will again be well. If much you note him
You shall offend him^o and extend^o his passion.

ROSS:

Gentlemen, rise. His Highness is not well.

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And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat.

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And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat.

LORDS:

The fit is momentary; upon a thought^o
He will again be well. If much you note him
You shall offend him^o and extend^o his passion.

ROSS:

Gentlemen, rise. His Highness is not well.

[*They start to rise.*]

36. From thence: away from home, dining in company. meat: food. 37. Meeting were bare: gatherings of friends would be undisturbed. 38. wait on: attend. 40. roofed: under one roof. 42. Who may I: whom I hope I may. challenge for: reprove for. 55. upon a thought: in a moment. 57. offend him: make him worse. extend: prolong.

Feed, and regard him not. — [*She confers apart with Macbeth*] Are you a man?

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

LADY MACBETH: O, proper stuff! This is the very painting of your fear.

This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said, Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts, Impostors to true fear, would well become A woman's story at a winter's fire, Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself! Why do you make such faces? When all's done, You look but on a stool.

MACBETH: Prithce, 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.

LADY MACBETH: What, quite unmanned in folly?

MACBETH: If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH: Fie, for shame!

MACBETH: Blood hath been shed ere now, i' th' olden time, Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal; Ay, and since too, murders have been performed Too terrible for the ear. The time has been That, when the brains were out, the man would die, And there an end; but now they rise again With twenty mortal murders on their crowns.

[*Exit Ghost.*]

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.

[*He is given wine.*]

Enter Ghost.

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

LORDS: Our duties and the pledge.

MACBETH: [*Seeing the Ghost*] Avant, and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee! Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold; Thou hast no speculation in those eyes Which thou dost glare with!

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

MACBETH: What man dare, I dare.

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

[*Exit Ghost.*] Why, so; being gone, I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

83- push . . . stools: usurp our places at feasts (with a suggestion of usurpation of the throne.)
92- thirst: desire to drink 93- all to all: all good wishes to all, or, let all drink to everyone else. Our . . . pledge: in drinking the toast you just proposed, we offer our homage.
96- speculation: power of sight 102- armed: armor-plated Hyrcan: of Hyrcania, in ancient times a region near the Caspian Sea 103- nerves: sinews 105- the desert: some solitary place 106- If . . . then: i.e., if then I tremble 107- The baby of a girl: a baby girl, or, girl's doll.

60- O, proper stuff! O, nonsense! 62- air-drawn: made of thin air, or floating disembodied in space 63- flaws: gusts, outbursts 64- to: compared with, become: befit 66- Authorized by: told on the authority of 71- charnel houses: depositories for bones or bodies 77- Ere . . . weal: before the institution of law cleansed the commonwealth of violence and made it gentle humane: (This spelling, interchangeable with *human*, carries both meanings: "appertaining to humankind" and "befitting humanity.") 82- mortal murders: deadly wounds, crowns: heads

LADY MACBETH:

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting
With most admired¹¹⁰ disorder.

MACBETH:

Can such things be,

And overcome¹¹¹ us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange

Even to the disposition that I owe,¹¹²

When now I think you can behold such sights

And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks

When mine is blanched with fear.

ROSS:

What sights, my lord?

LADY MACBETH:

I pray you, speak not. He grows worse and worse;
Question¹¹³ enrages him. At once,¹¹⁴ good night.

Stand not upon the order of your going,¹¹⁵

But go at once.¹¹⁶

LENNOX:

Good night, and better health

Attend His Majesty!

LADY MACBETH: A kind good night to all!

MACBETH:

It will have blood, they say; blood will have blood.
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak;¹¹⁷

Augurs¹¹⁸ and understood relations¹¹⁹ have
By maggotpiles and choughs¹²⁰ and rooks brought forth¹²¹

The secret¹²² man of blood.¹²³ What is the night?¹²⁴

LADY MACBETH:

Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

MACBETH:

How sayst thou¹²⁵ that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?

LADY MACBETH: Did you send to him, sir?

111. admired: wondered at. disorder: lack of self-control. 112. overcome: come over.
113-14. You make . . . owe: you cause me to feel I do not know my own nature (which I had
presumed to be that of a brave man.) 119. Question: talk. At once: to you all; now.
120. Stand . . . going: i.e., do not take the time to leave in ceremonious order of rank, as you
entered. 121. at once: all together and now. 124. Stones . . . speak: i.e., even inanimate
nature speaks in such a way as to reveal the unnatural act of murder. 125. Augurs: prophecies.
the parts of nature: reports able to be interpreted or understood, or the hidden ties that link
brought forth: revealed. 127. man of blood: murderer. the night: i.e., the time of night.
129. How sayst thou: what do you say to the fact.

130

MACBETH:

I hear it by the way;¹³¹ but I will send.

There's not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant feed.¹³² I will tomorrow —

And betimes¹³³ I will — to the Weird Sisters.

More shall they speak, for now I am bent¹³⁴ to know

By the worst means the worst. For mine own good
All causes¹³⁵ shall give way: I am in blood

Stepped in so far that, should I wade no more,¹³⁶
Returning were¹³⁷ as tedious as go¹³⁸ o'er.

Strange things I have in head, that will to hand,
Which must be acted ere they may be scanned.¹³⁹

LADY MACBETH:

You lack the season¹⁴⁰ of all natures, sleep.

MACBETH:

Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse¹⁴¹
Is the initiate fear¹⁴² that wants hard use.¹⁴³

We are yet but young in deed.

Exeunt. 145

ACT 3, SCENE 5

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting Hecate.

FIRST WITCH:

Why, how now, Hecate? You look angrily.¹⁴⁶

HECATE:

Have I not reason, belchams¹⁴⁷ 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 close¹⁴⁸ contriver of all harms,

Was never called to bear my part

Or show the glory of our art?

And, which is worse, all you have done

131. by the way: indirectly. 133. feed: i.e., paid to spy. 134. betimes: (1) early (2) while
there is still time. 135. bent: determined. 137. All causes: all other considerations.
138. should . . . more: even if I were to wade no farther. 139. were: would be. go: going.
141. acted . . . scanned: put into performance even before there is time to scrutinize them.
142. season: preservative. 143. strange and self-abuse: strange self-delusion. 144. initiate
fear: fear experienced by a novice. wants hard use: lacks toughening experience. ACT 3,
SCENE 5. Location: A heath. (This scene is probably by another author.) 1. angrily: angrily,
angry. 2. belchams: hags. 7. close: secret.

10

5

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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 Acheron¹⁵
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 th' air. This night I'll spend
Unto a dismal²⁰ and a fatal end.
Great business must be wrought ere noon.
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;²⁵
I'll catch it ere it come to ground,
And that, distilled by magic sleights,
Shall raise such artificial sprites,³⁰
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion.³⁵
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear.
And you all know, security⁴⁰
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.
Hark! I am called. My little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me.

Music and a song.

FIRST WITCH: *Sing within, "Come away, come away," etc.* 35
Come, let's make haste. She'll soon be back again. *[Exit.]*
Exeunt.

ACT 3, SCENE 6^o

Enter Lennox and another Lord.

LENNOX:
My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther.^o Only I say

15. Acheron: the river of sorrows in Hades; here, hell itself. 21. dismal: disastrous, ill-omened. 24. profound: i.e., heavily pendant, ready to drop off. 27. artificial sprites: spirits produced by magical arts. 29. confusion: ruin. 31. security: overconfidence. s.d. Come away etc.: (The song occurs in Thomas Middleton's *The Witch*) ACT 3, SCENE 6. Location: Somewhere in Scotland. 1-2. My... farther: what I've just said has coincided with your own thought. I needn't say more; you can surmise the rest.

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

LORD: The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of^o the most pious Edward^o with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect.^o Thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid,^o
To wake Northumberland^o and warlike Siward,
That by the help of these — with Him above
To ratify the work — we may again
Give to our tables meat,^o sleep to our nights,

3. borne: carried on. 4. of: by. marry... dead: i.e., to be sure, this pity occurred after Duncan died, not before. 8. cannot... thought: can help thinking. 10. fact: deed, crime. 11. straight: straightway, at once. 12. pious: holy, loyal, sonlike. 13. thralls: slaves. 17. borne all things well: managed everything cleverly. 19. an't if it: should; would be sure to. 21. from broad words: on account of plain speech. 22. His presence: i.e., to be present. 24. bestows himself: is quartered, has taken refuge. 35. holds... birth: withholds the birth-right (i.e., the Scottish crown). 27. Of: by. Edward: Edward the Confessor, King of England. 29. his high respect: the high respect paid to him. (Being out of fortune has not lessened the dignity with which Malcolm is received in England.) 30. upon his aid: in aid of Malcolm. 31. wake Northumberland: rouse the people of Northumberland. 34. meat: food.

Free from our feasts and banquets' bloody knives,
Do faithful homage, and receive free' honors —
All which we pine for now. And this report
Hath so 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, t' hold what distance
His wisdom can provide.° Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under° a hand accursed!

LORD:

I'll send my prayers with him.

Exeunt.

ACT 4, SCENE 1°

[*A cauldron.] Thunder. Enter the three Witches.*

FIRST WITCH:

Thrice the brinded° cat hath mewed.

SECOND WITCH:

Thrice, and once the hedgepig° whined.

THIRD WITCH:

Harpier° cries, "Tis time, 'tis time!

35. Free . . . banquets: free our feasts and banquets from. 36. free: freely bestowed, or, pertaining to freedom. 38. exasperate the King: exasperated Macbeth. 41. with . . . I: i.e., when Macduff answered the messenger curly with a refusal. 42. cloudy: frowning, scowling, as if to say. 44. clogs: encumbers, loads. 45-46. Advise . . . provide: warn him (Macduff) to keep what safe distance he can (from Macbeth). 49-50. suffering country: Under: country suffering under. ACT 4, SCENE 1. Location: A cavern (see 3.5.15). In the middle, a boiling cauldron (provided presumably by means of the trapdoor, see 4.1.106). The trapdoor must also be used in this scene for the apparitions. 1. brinded: marked by streaks (as by fire), brindled. 2. hedgepig: hedgehog. 3. Harpier: The name of a familiar spirit, probably derived from *harpis*: cries: i.e., gives the signal to begin.

FIRST WITCH:

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

ALL: [*As they dance round the cauldron*]

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

SECOND WITCH:

Filler° of a fenny° snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork° and blindworm's° sting,
Lizard's leg and owl's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL:

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

THIRD WITCH:

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy,° maw and gulf°
Of the rained° salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digged i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall° of goat, and slips° of yew°
Slivered° in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-delivered by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab.°

7-8. Days . . . got: for thirty-one days and nights has exuded venom formed during sleep. 12. Filler: slice. fenny: inhabiting fens or swamps. 16. fork: forked tongue. blindworm: slowworm, a harmless burrowing lizard. 23. mummy: mummified flesh made into a magical potion. maw and gulf: gullet and stomach. 24. rained: ravenous, or glutted with prey (?). 27. Gall: the secretion of the liver, bile. slips: cuttings for grafting or planting. yew: (A tree often planted in churchyards and associated with mourning.) 28. Slivered: broken off (as a branch). 31. Ditch . . . drab: born in a ditch of a harlot. 32. slab: viscous.

Add thereto a tiger's chauldron³³
For th' ingredience³⁴ of our cauldron.

ALL:

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

SECOND WITCH:

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

Enter Hecate to the other three Witches.

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.³⁵

Music and a song: "Black spirits," etc.

[*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,³⁶ and midnight hags?
What is 't you do?

ALL:

A deed without a name.

MACBETH:

I conjure you, by that which you profess,
How'er you come to know it, answer me.
Though you unite the winds and let them fight
Against the churches, though the yeasty³⁷ waves
Confound³⁸ and swallow navigation up,
Though bladed corn³⁹ be lodg'd⁴⁰ and trees blown down,

Though castles topple on their warders' heads,
Though palaces and pyramids do slope⁴¹
Their heads to their foundations, though the treasure
Of nature's germens⁴² tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken,⁴³ 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;⁴⁴ grease that's sweaten⁴⁵
From the murderer's gibbet⁴⁶ throw
Into the flame.

ALL: Come high or low,⁴⁷
Thyself and office⁴⁸ defy show!

Thunder. First Apparition, an armed Head.

MACBETH: Tell me, thou unknown power —

FIRST WITCH: Hear his speech, but say thou naught.

FIRST APPARITION: Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff,
Beware the Thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

MACBETH: *He descends.*
Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks:
Thou hast harped⁴⁹ my fear aright. But one word more —

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

57: slope: bend. 59. nature's germens: seed or elements from which all nature operates.

60. sicken: be surfeited, grow faint with horror and nausea at its own excess. 65. nine far-

row: litter of nine. sweaten: sweated. 66. gibbet: gallows. 67. high or low: of the upper

or lower air, from under the earth or in hell, or of whatever rank. 68. office: function. s.d.

armed Head: (Perhaps symbolizes the head of Macbeth cut off by Macduff and presented by

him to Malcolm, or else the head of Macduff, armed in rebellion against Macbeth.) s.d. *He*

descends. (i.e., by means of the trapdoor.) 74. harped: hit, touched (as in touching a harp to

make it sound.)

75

Thunder. Second Apparition, a bloody Child.

SECOND APPARITION: Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

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

SECOND APPARITION:

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

MACBETH:

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

Thunder. Third Apparition, a Child crowned, with a tree in his hand.

What is this

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

ALL:

Listen, but speak not to it.

THIRD 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.

MACBETH:

That will never be.

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

Descends.

80

85

90

Descends.

95

100

s.d. *bloody Child*: Symbolizes Macduff untimely ripped from his mother's womb; see 5.8.15-16.) 84. take a bond of: get a guarantee from (i.e., by killing Macduff, to make doubly sure he can do no harm). s.d. *Child*... *hann*: Symbolizes Malcolm, the royal child; the tree anticipates the cutting of boughs in Birnam Wood, 5.4.) 87. like: in the likeness of the tree 88-89. round And top: crown. 95. impress: press into service, like soldiers. 96. bodements: prophecies. 97. Rebellious dead: i.e., Banquo and his lineage (?). 99. lease of nature: natural period, full life span. 100. mortal custom: death, the common lot of humanity.

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.

[The cauldron descends.] Hauntings.

105

Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise^o is this?

FIRST WITCH:

Show!

SECOND WITCH:

Show!

THIRD WITCH:

Show!

ALL:

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

110

A show of eight Kings and Banquo last; [the eighth King] with a glass in his hand.

MACBETH:

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo. Down!
Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs. And thy hair,
Thou other^o gold-bound brow, is like the first.
A third is like the former. Filthy hags,

115

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

What, will the line stretch out to th' crack of doom?^o

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^o and treble scepters^o carry.

120

Horrible sight! Now I see it's true,

For the blood-boltered^o Banquo smiles upon me

And points at them for his.^o *[The apparitions vanish.]* What, is this so?

106. noise: music. s.d. *eight Kings*: Banquo was the supposed ancestor of the Stuart dynasty, ending in King James VI of Scotland and James I of England, the *eighth King* here; *glass*: (magic) mirror (also in line 119). 114. other: i.e., second. 116. Start: badge from their sockets. 117. th' crack of doom: the thunder-peal of Doomsday at the end of time. 121. twofold balls: (A probable reference to the double coronation of James at Seon and Westminster, as King of England and Scotland.) treble scepters: (Probably refers to James's assumed title as King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland.) 123. blood-boltered: having his hair matted with blood. 124. for his: as his descendants.

FIRST WITCH:

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

143

Music: The Witches dance, and vanish.

MACBETH:

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

Enter Lennox.

LENNOX:

What's Your Grace's will?

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MACBETH:

Saw you the Weird Sisters?

LENNOX:

No, my lord.

MACBETH:

Came they not by you?

MACBETH:

No, indeed, my lord.

Infected be the air whereton they ride.
 And damned all those that trust them! I did hear
 The galloping of horse.^o Who was 't came by?

140

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: [*aside*]

Time, thou anticipat'st^o my dread exploits.
 The flighty^o purpose never is o'ertook

145

Unless the deed go with it.^o From this moment
 The very firstlings of my heart shall be
 The firstlings of my hand.^o And even now,
 To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
 The castle of Macduff I will surprise,^o
 Seize upon Fife, give to th' edge o' the sword
 His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
 That trace him in his line.^o 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.

150

ACT 4, SCENE 2^o*Enter Macduff's Wife, 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.^o

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^o in a place
 From whence himself does fly? He loves us not,
 He wants the natural touch:^o for the poor wren,
 The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
 Her young ones in her nest,^o 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.

10

5

Fx.unt.

155

125–32. *Ay* . . . *pay*: (These lines are assumed to have been written by someone other than Shakespeare.) 126. *amazedly*: stunned. 127. *spirits*: spirits. 130. *antic round*: grotesque dance in a circle. 132. *pay*: repay. 140. *horse*: horses. 144. *thou anticipat'st*: you forestall (since by allowing time to pass without my acting, I have lost an opportunity). 145. *flighty*: fleeing.

146. *Unless* . . . *it*: unless the execution of the deed accompanies the conception of it immediately. 147–48. *The very* . . . *hand*: the first-born promptings of my heart will be the purposes I will first act upon. 150. *surprise*: seize without warning. 153. *trace* . . . *line*: follow him in the line of inheritance. Act 4, Scene 2. Location: Fife. Macduff's castle. 3–4. *When* . . . *traitors*: even when we have committed no treasonous act, our fearful responses make us look guilty (since fleeing to the English court is in itself treasonous). 7. *titles*: possessions to which he has title. 9. *wants* . . . *touch*: lacks the natural instinct (to protect one's family). 11. *Her* . . . *nest*: when her young ones are in the nest.

ROSS:

My dearest coz,¹⁴I pray you, school¹⁵ yourself. But, for¹⁶ your husband,

He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows

The fits¹⁷ of the season.¹⁸ I dare not speak much further,

But cruel are the times when we are traitors

And do not know ourselves,¹⁹ when we hold rumorFrom what we fear,²⁰ yet know not what we fear.

But float upon a wild and violent sea

Each way and none.²¹ I take my leave of you;Shall²² not be long but²³ 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:

Fathered he is, and yet he's fatherless.

ROSS:

I am so much a fool, should I stay longer

It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.²⁴

I take my leave at once.

LADY MACDUFF:

Sirrah,²⁵ 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,²⁶ the pitfall nor the gin.²⁷

SON:

Why should I, Mother? Poor birds they are not set for.²⁸

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

LADY MACDUFF:

Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for a father?

SON:

Nay, how will you do for a husband?

LADY MACDUFF:

Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

SON:

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.²⁹

SON:

And be all traitors that do so?

LADY MACDUFF:

Every one that does so is a traitor,

And must be hanged.

SON:

And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

LADY MACDUFF:

Every one.

SON:

Who must hang them?

LADY MACDUFF:

Why, the honest men.

SON: Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers

enough to bear 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!

14. coz: kinswoman. 15. school: control. for: as for. 17. fits of the season: violent convulsions of the time. 18-19. are traitors . . . ourselves: are accused of treason without recognizing ourselves as such, or are alienated from one another by a climate of fear and suspected treason. 19-20. hold . . . From what we fear: believe every fearful rumor on the basis of what we fear might be. 22. Each . . . none: being tossed this way and that without any real progress. 23. Shall: it shall. but: before. 29. I . . . discomfort: I should disgrace my address to a child.) 36. lime: birdlime (a sticky substance put on branches to snare birds). gin: snare. 37. Poor . . . for: i.e., traps are not set for poor birds, as you call me.

48. swears and lies: swears an oath and breaks it (though the boy may understand *swears* to mean "uses profanity").

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER:

Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
 Though in your state of honor I am perfect.⁶⁴
 I doubt⁶⁵ some danger does approach you nearly.
 If you will take a homely⁶⁶ man's advice,
 Be not found here. Hence with your little ones!
 To fight you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
 To do worse⁶⁷ to you were fell⁶⁸ cruelty:
 Which is too nigh your person.⁶⁹ Heaven preserve you!
 I dare abide no longer.

LADY MACDUFF:

Whither should I fly?
 I have done no harm. But I remember now
 I am in this earthly world, where to do harm
 Is often laudable, to do good sometimes
 Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas,
 Do I put up that womanly defense
 To say I have done no harm?

Enter Murderers.

FIRST MURDERER:

What are these faces?
 Where is your husband?

LADY MACDUFF:

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

FIRST MURDERER:

He's a traitor.

SON:

Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain!

FIRST MURDERER:

Young fry⁷⁰ of treachery!

What you egg?⁷¹

SON:

Run away, I pray you!

He has killed me, Mother.

*[He dies.]**[Exit [Lady Macduff] crying "Murder!" followed by the Murderers with the Son's body.]*

86

75

70

65

ACT 4, SCENE 3^o*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 mortal¹ sword, and like good men
 Bestride² our downfall'n birthdom.³ Each new morn
 New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
 Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds⁴
 As if it felt with Scotland and yelled out
 Like syllable of dolor.⁵

MALCOLM:

What I believe, I'll wait;

What know, believe;⁶ and what I can redress,
 As I shall find the time to friend,⁷ I will.

What you have spoke it may be so, perchance.

This tyrant, whose sole⁸ name blisters our tongues,
 Was once thought honest. You have loved him well;

He hath not touched you yet.⁹ I am young;¹⁰ but something
 You may deserve of him through me,¹¹ and wisdom¹²
 To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
 T' appease an angry god.

MACDUFF:

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM:

But Macbeth is.
 A good and virtuous nature may recoil¹³
 In an imperial charge.¹⁴ But I shall crave your pardon.
 That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose.¹⁵

MALCOLM:

But Macbeth is.
 A good and virtuous nature may recoil¹³
 In an imperial charge.¹⁴ But I shall crave your pardon.
 That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose.¹⁵

MALCOLM:

But Macbeth is.
 A good and virtuous nature may recoil¹³
 In an imperial charge.¹⁴ But I shall crave your pardon.
 That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose.¹⁵

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15

64. in . . . honor: with your honorable state. perfect: perfectly acquainted. 65. doubt: fear. 66. homely: plain. 69. To do worse: i.e., actually to harm you. fell: savage. 70. Which . . . person: i.e., which savage cruelty is all too near at hand. 82. fry: spawn, progeny.

ACT 4, SCENE 3. Location: England. Before King Edward the Confessor's palace. 3. mortal: deadly. 4. Bestride: stand over in defense. birthdom: native land. 6. that it resounds: so cried out with a similar cry of pain. 8-9. What . . . believe: i.e., what I believe to be unjust in Scotland I will grieve for, and anything I am certain to be true I will believe. (But one must be cautious in these duplicitous times.) 10. to friend: opportune, congenial. 12. sole: mere. 14. He . . . yet: i.e., the fact that Macbeth hasn't hurt you yet makes me suspicious of your loyalty. young: i.e., inexperienced. 14-15. something . . . me: i.e., you may win favor with Macbeth by delivering me to him. 15. wisdom: i.e., it would be worldly-wise. 20. recoil: give way; fall back (as in the firing of a gun). 21. In . . . charge: under pressure from royal command. (Charge puns on the idea of a quantity of powder and shot for a gun, as in recoil.) 22. That . . . transpose: my suspicious thoughts cannot change you from what you are, cannot make you evil.

Angels are bright still, though the brightest²³ fell.
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.²⁴

MACDUFF: I have lost my hopes.²⁵

MALCOLM: Perchance even there²⁶ where I did find my doubts,²⁷
Why in that rawness²⁸ left you wife and child,
Those precious motives,²⁹ those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,
But mine own safeties.³⁰ You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

MACDUFF: Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis³¹ sure,
For goodness dare not check³² thee; wear thou thy wrongs,³³
The title is affeered!³⁴ 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.³⁵

MALCOLM: Be not offended.
I speak not as in absolute fear³⁶ 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 withal³⁷
There would be hands uplifted in my right;³⁸
And here from gracious England³⁹ 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.

23. the brightest: i.e., Lucifer. 24-25. Though . . . so: even though evil puts on the appearance of good so often as to cast that appearance into deep suspicion, yet goodness must go on against Macbeth. 26. Perchance even there: i.e., hopes of persuading Malcolm to lead the cause in hand. doubts: i.e., fears such as that Macduff may covertly be on Macbeth's side. 27. rawness: unprotected condition. (Malcolm suggests that Macduff's leaving his family unprotected could be construed as more evidence of his not having anything to fear from Macbeth.) 28. motives: persons inspiring you to cherish and protect them; incentives to offer strong protection. 30-31. Let . . . safeties: may it be true that my suspicions of your lack of honor are accounted wear . . . wrongs: continue to enjoy your wrongfully gained powers. 35. affected: confirmed; certified. 38. to boot: in addition. 39. absolute fear: complete mistrust. 42. withal: in addition. 43. right cause. 44. England: i.e., the King of England.

More suffer, and more sundry⁴⁰ ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF: What should he be?⁴¹

MALCOLM: It is myself I mean, in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted⁴²
'That, when they shall be opened,' black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless harms.

MACDUFF: Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned
In evils to top⁴³ Macbeth.

MALCOLM: I grant him bloody,
Luxurious,⁴⁴ avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden,⁴⁵ 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 continent⁴⁶ impediments would o'erbear
That did oppose my will.⁴⁷ Better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

MACDUFF: Boundless intemperance
In nature⁴⁸ is a tyranny; it hath been
Th' untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet⁴⁹
To take upon you what is yours. You may
Convey⁵⁰ your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold;⁵¹ the time you may so hoodwink.⁵²
We have willing dames enough. There cannot be
That vulture in you to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined.

40. more sundry: in more various. 50. What . . . be?: whom could you possibly mean? 52. grafted: (1) engrained; indissolubly mixed (2) grafted like a plant that will then open or unfold. 53. opened: unfolded (like a bud). 56. my confineless harms: the boundless injuries I shall inflict. 58. top: surpass. 59. Luxurious: lecherous. 60. Sudden: violent, passionate. 65. continent: (1) chaste (2) restraining; containing. 66. will: lust (also in line 89). 68. nature: human nature. 70. yet: nevertheless. 72. Convey: manage with secrecy. 73. cold: chaste. the time . . . hoodwink: you may thus deceive the age. hoodwink: blind-fold.

MACDUFF: With this there grows
 In my most ill-composed affection, such
 A stanchless⁷⁸ avarice that, were I king,
 I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
 Desire his⁷⁹ jewels and this other's⁸⁰ 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
 Sicks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
 Than summer-seeming⁸¹ lust, and it hath been
 The sword⁸² of our slain kings. Yet do not fear;
 Scotland hath foisons⁸³ to fill up your will
 Of your mere own. All these are portable,⁸⁴
 With other graces weighed.⁸⁵

MALCOLM:
 But I have none. The king-becoming graces,
 As justice, verity, temperance, stanchness,
 Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,⁸⁶
 Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
 I have no relish⁸⁷ of them, but abound
 In the division⁸⁸ of each several⁸⁹ crime,
 Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
 Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
 Uproar⁹⁰ 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 untitled⁹¹ tyrant bloody-scepter'd,

When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
 Since that the truest issue of thy throne
 By his own interdiction⁹² stands accurs'd
 And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
 Was a most sainted king; the queen that bore thee,
 Oft⁹³ ner upon her knees than on her feet,
 Died every day she lived. Fare thee well.
 These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
 Hath banished me from Scotland. O my breast,⁹⁴
 Thy hope ends here!

MACDUFF: Macduff, this noble passion,
 Child of integrity,⁹⁵ hath from my soul
 Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
 To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth
 By many of these trains⁹⁶ hath sought to win me
 Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me⁹⁷
 From overcredulous haste. But God above
 Deal between thee and me! For even now
 I put myself to thy direction and
 Unspeak my own detraction,⁹⁸ here abjure
 The taints and blames I laid upon myself
 For⁹⁹ strangers to my nature. I am yet
 Unknown to woman,¹⁰⁰ 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 upon¹⁰¹ myself. What I am truly
 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,¹⁰² was setting forth.
 Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness
 Be like our warranted quarrel!¹⁰³ — Why are you silent?

78. ill-composed affection: evil disposition. 79. stanchless: insatiable. 80. his: one man's, this other's; another's. 81. that so that. 82. summer-seeming: appropriate to youth (and lessening in later years). 83. sword: i.e., cause of overthrow. 84. foisons: resources, plenty, counbalanced. 85. lowliness: humility. 86. relish: flavor or trace. 87. division: subdivisions, various possible forms. 88. separate. 89. uproar: throw into an uproar. 90. untitled: lacking rightful title, usurping.

108. interdiction: debarring of self. 109. does blaspheme his breed: defames his breeding, i.e., is a disgrace to his royal lineage. 112. Died . . . lived: lived a life of daily mortification. 114. breast: heart. 116. Child of integrity: a product of your integrity of spirit. 119. trains: plots, artifices. 120. modest . . . me: wise prudence holds me back. 124. mine own detraction: my detraction of myself. 126. For: as. 127. Unknown to woman: a virgin. 132. upon: against. 136. at a point: prepared. 137-38. the chance . . . quarrel: may the chance of success be proportionate to the justice of our cause.

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^o his cure. Their malady convinces^o
The great essay of art:^o but at his touch —
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand —
They presently^o amend.

MALCOLM:

I thank you, Doctor.

MACDUFF:

What's the disease he means?

MALCOLM:

'Tis called the evil.^o
A most miraculous work in this good king,
Which often, since my here-remain^o in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits^o heaven
Himself best knows: but strangely-visited^o people,
All swoll'n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere^o despair of surgery, he cures,
Hanging a golden stamp^o about their necks
Put on with holy prayers; and 'tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction.^o With this strange virtue^o
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne
That speak him full of grace.

Enter Ross.

MACDUFF:

See who comes here.

MALCOLM:

My countryman,^o but yer I know^o him not.

143. stay: wait for. convinces: conquers. 144. essay of art: efforts of medical skill.
146. presently: immediately. 147. evil: i.e., scrofula, supposedly cured by the royal touch.
James I claimed this power. 149. here-remain: stay. 150. solicits: prevails by prayer with.
151. strangely-visited: afflicted by strange diseases. 153. mere: utter. 154. stamp: minted
coin. 156-57. To . . . benediction: to his royal successors he bequeathes this healing blessed-
ness. 157. virtue: healing power. 161. My countryman: (So identified by his dress.) know:
recognize.

MACDUFF:

My ever-gentle^o cousin, welcome hither.

MALCOLM:

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

ROSS:

Sir, amen.

MACDUFF:

Stands Scotland where it did?

ROSS:

Alas, poor country

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot

Be called our mother, but our grave; where nothing

But who^o knows nothing is once^o seen to smile;

Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air

Are made, not marked;^o where violent sorrow seems

A modern ecstasy.^o The dead man's knell

Is there scarce asked for who, and good men's lives

Expire before the flowers^o in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.^o

MACDUFF:

O, relation^o

Too nice,^o and yet too true!

MALCOLM:

What's the newest grief?

ROSS:

That of an hour's age doth hiss^o the speaker;

Each minute teems^o a new one.

MACDUFF:

How does my wife?

ROSS:

Why, well.^o

MACDUFF:

Well too.

ROSS:

The tyrant has not battered at their peace?

ROSS:

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

MACDUFF:

Be not niggard of your speech. How goes 't?

162. gentle: noble. 163. betimes: speedily. 167-68. nothing But who: nobody except a
person who. 168. once: ever. 170. marked: noticed (because they are so common).
171. modern ecstasy: commonplace emotion. 173. flowers: (Often worn in Elizabethan
caps.) 174. or ere they sicken: before they have had time to fall ill. relation: report.
175. nice: minutely accurate, elaborately phrased. 176. hiss: cause to be hissed (for repeating
state news). 177. teems: teems with, yields. 178. well: (Ross quibbles, in his reluctance to
tell the bad news, on the saying that "the dead are well," i.e., at rest.)

ROSS:

When I came hither to transport the tidings
Which I have heavily^o borne, there ran a rumor
Of many worthy fellows that were out,^o
Which was to my belief witnessed the rather,^o
For that^o I saw the tyrant's power^o afoot.
Now is the time of help. [*To Malcolm.*] Your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff^o their dire distresses.

185

MALCOLM:

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

190

ROSS:

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

195

MACDUFF:

What concern they?
The general cause? Or is it a fee-grief^o
Due to^o 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.

200

ROSS:

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

MACDUFF:

Hum! I guess at it.

ROSS:

Your castle is surprised, your wife and babes
Savagely slaughtered. To relate the manner

205

Were, on the quarry^o of these murdered deer,
To add the death of you.

MALCOLM:

Merciful heaven!

What, man, ne'er pull your hat^o upon your brows;
Give sorrow words. The grief that does not speak
Whispers^o the o'erfraught^o heart and bids it break.

210

MACDUFF:

My children too?

ROSS:

Wife, children, servants, all

That could be found.

MACDUFF:

And I must^o be from thence!

My wife killed too?

ROSS:

I have said.

MALCOLM:

Be comforted.

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

215

MACDUFF:

He has no children.^o All my pretty ones?

Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?

What, all my pretty chickens and their dam

At one fell swoop?^o

220

MALCOLM:

Dispute it^o like a man.

MACDUFF:

I shall do so;

But I must also feel it as a man.

I cannot but remember such things were,

That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on

And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,

They were all struck for thee! Naught^o that I am,

Not for their own demerits, but for mine,

Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

225

MALCOLM:

Be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief

Convert^o to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

230

183. heavily: sadly. 184. Of . . . out: i.e., that many worthy Scots had taken up arms in rebellion against tyranny. 185. witnessed the rather: made the more believable. 186. For that: because, in that. power: army. 189. doff: put off, get rid of. 190. Gracious England: i.e., Edward the Confessor. 192. none: there is none. 193. gives out: tells of, proclaims. 195. would: should. 196. latch: catch (the sound of). 197. fee-grief: a grief with an individual owner, having absolute ownership. 198. Due to: i.e., owned by. 203. possess them with: put them in possession of.

207. quarry: heap of slaughtered deer at a hunt (with a pun on *dear, dirt*). 209. pull your hat: (A conventional gesture of grief.) 211. Whispers: whispers to. o'erfraught: overburdened. 213. must: had to. 217. He has no children: (Referring either to Macbeth, who must not be a father if he can do such a thing, or to Malcolm, who speaks comfortingly without knowing what such a loss feels like to a father.) 220. fell swoop: cruel swoop of the *hell-kite*, bird of prey from hell (with a suggestion too of swoopstake, swcepstake). 221. Dispute: it struggle against. 227. for thee: i.e., as divine punishment for your sins. Naught: wicked. 231. Convert: change.

MACDUFF:

O, I could play the woman with mine eyes
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission.²³⁷ Front to front²³⁸
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him. If he scape,
Heaven forgive him too!"

235

MALCOLM:

²³⁹This time goes manly.
Come, go we to the King. Our power²⁴⁰ is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave.²⁴¹ Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments.²⁴² Receive what cheer you may:
The night is long that never finds the day.

240

*Exeunt.*ACT 5, SCENE 1¹*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,² 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.

5

DOCTOR: A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of
sleep and do the effects of watching!³ In this slumbery agitation,⁴ 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 meet⁵ you should.

GENTLEWOMAN: Neither to you nor anyone, having no witness to confirm
my speech.

10

Enter Lady [Macbeth], with a taper.

234. intermission: delay, interval. Front to front: face to face. 236-37. If... too: if I let him escape, may he find forgiveness not only from me but from Heaven itself! (This is a condition that Macduff will not allow to happen.) 238. power: army. 239. Our... leave: we need only to take our leave (of the English King). 241. Put... Instruments: Set us on as their agents, or, arm themselves. Act 5, Scene 1. Location: Dunsinane; Macbeth's castle. 4. closer: chest or desk. 8. effects of watching: deeds characteristic of waking. agitation: activity. 12. meet: suitable.

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise, and, upon my life, fast
asleep. Observe her. Stand close.⁶

DOCTOR: How came she by that light?

[*They stand aside.*]

GENTLEWOMAN: Why, it stood by her. She has light by her continually.

'Tis her command.

DOCTOR: You see her eyes are open.

20

GENTLEWOMAN: Ay, but their sense are 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.

25

DOCTOR: Hark, she speaks. I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy⁷
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?

30

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.⁸

35

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. O, o, o!

40

DOCTOR: What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.⁹

GENTLEWOMAN: I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the
dignity¹⁰ of the whole body.

DOCTOR: Well, well, well.

45

GENTLEWOMAN: Pray God it be, sir.¹¹
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 's¹²
grave.

50

16. closer: concealed. 26. satisfy: confirm, support. 36. this starting: these startled movements. 37. Go to: (An exclamation of reproof, directed at Lady Macbeth.) 42. sorely charged: heavily burdened. 44. dignity: worth, value. 46. Pray... sir: pray God it will turn out well, as you say, sir (playing on the Doctor's "Will, well", i.e., "dear, dear"). 50. on 's: of his.

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!

DOCTOR: Will she go now to bed?

Exit Lady.

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,⁶
And still⁶ keep eyes upon her. So, good night.
My mind she has mated,⁶ and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN: Good night, good Doctor.

Exeunt.

ACT 5, SCENE 2⁶

Drum and colors. Enter Menteith, Caitness, Angus, Lennox, [and] soldiers.

MENTEITH:

The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.
Revenge's burn in them, for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.⁶

ANGUS:

Near Birnam Wood

Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

CAITNESS:

Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

LENNOX:

For certain, sir, he is not. I have a file⁶
Of all the gentry. There is Siward's son,
And many unrough⁶ youths that even now
Protest⁶ their first of manhood.

MENTEITH:

What does the tyrant?

CAITNESS:

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 unbuckle his distempered⁶ cause
Within the belt of rule.

ANGUS:

Now does he feel
His secret murders striking on his hands;
Now minutely⁶ revolts upbraids⁶ his faith-breach.⁶
Those he commands move only in command,⁶
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 pestered⁶ senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?

CAITNESS:

Well, march we on
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed.
Meet we the med'cine of the sickly weal,⁶
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.⁶

LENNOX:

Or so much as it needs
To dew⁶ the sovereign⁶ flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.

Exeunt, marching.

ACT 5, SCENE 3⁶

Enter Macbeth, Doctor, and attendants.

MACBETH:

Bring me no more reports. Let them "Fly" all!
Till Birnam Wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with⁶ fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know

63. annoyance: i.e., harming herself. 64. still: constantly. 65. mated: bewildered, stupefied. ACT 5, SCENE 2. Location: The country near Dunsinane. 3-5. their... man: their grievous wrongs would awaken even the dead to answer the bloody and grim call to battle. 6. well: no doubt. 8. file: list, roster. 10. unrough: beardless. 11. Protest: assert publicly.

15. distempered: disease-swollen, dropsical. 18. minutely: every minute. upbraids: censures. faith-breach: violation of all trust and sacred vows. 19. in command: under orders. 23. pestered: troubled, tormented. 27. Meet we... weal: i.e., let us join forces with Malcolm, the physician of our sick land. 28-29. pour... of us: i.e., let us shed all our blood as a bloodletting or purge of our country. 30. dew: bedew, water. sovereign: (1) royal (2) medically efficacious. ACT 5, SCENE 3. Location: Dunsinane; Macbeth's castle. 1. them: i.e., the thames. fly: desert. 3. taint with: become imbued or infected with, weakened by.

All mortal consequences⁵ have pronounced me thus:

"Fear not, Macbeth. No man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures!⁶
The mind I sway⁷ by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!⁸
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,⁹
Thou lily-livered boy! What soldiers, patch?¹⁰
Death of thy¹¹ soul! Those linen cheeks of thine
Are counselors to fear.¹² 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 behold¹³ — Seyton, I say! — This push¹⁴
Will cheer¹⁵ me ever, or disseat¹⁶ me now.
I have lived long enough. My way¹⁷ of life
Is fall'n into the sere,¹⁸ the yellow leaf.
And that which should accompany old age,
As¹⁹ honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have, but in their stead
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honor, breath
Which the poor heart would fain deny and dare not.
Seyton!

Enter Seyton.

SEYTON:

What's your gracious pleasure?

MACBETH:

What news more?

SEYTON:

All is confirmed, my lord, which was reported.

MACBETH:

I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hacked.

Give me my armor.

SEYTON:

'Tis not needed yet.

MACBETH:

I'll put it on.

Send out more horses. Skirr²⁰ the country round.

Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor.

How does your patient, Doctor?

DOCTOR:

Not so sick, my lord,

As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies

That keep her from her rest.

Cure her of that.

MACBETH:

Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze²¹ out the written troubles of²² the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious²³ antidote
Cleansse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

DOCTOR:

Therein the patient

Must minister to himself.

MACBETH:

Throw physic²⁴ to the dogs! I'll none of it.

Come, put mine armor on. Give me my staff.²⁵

Seyton, send out. Doctor, the thanes fly from me. —

Come, sir, dispatch.²⁶ — If thou couldst, Doctor, cast

The water²⁷ of my land, find her disease,

And purge it to a sound and pristine health,

I would applaud thee to the very echo,

5. mortal consequences: what befalls humanity. 8. English epicures: luxury-loving Englishmen (as seen from the Scottish point of view). 9. sway: rule myself. 11. loon: stupid fellow. 14. Go prick . . . fear: i.e., go prick or pinch your pale cheeks to bring some color into them. (The servant's blood has all retired into his lower abdomen on account of his fear, so that he is very pale and there is no blood in his liver, where his courage should have resided — hence *lily-livered*, line 15.) 15. patch: domestic fool. 16. of thy: on your. 17. Arc . . . fear: i.e., teach others to fear. 20. behold: (Macbeth does not finish this thought.) push: effort, crisis. 21. cheer: (With a suggestion of "chair") disseat: dethrone. 22. way: course. 23. sere: dry and withered. 25. As: such as.

36. Skirr: scour. 44. Raze: (Suggesting also *raise*, "erase, obliterate") written troubles of: troubles written on. 45. oblivious: causing forgetfulness. 49. physic: medicine. 50. staff: lance or baton of office. 52. dispatch: hurry. 57–53. cast The water: diagnose disease by the inspection of urine.

That should applaud again. — Pull 't off! I say. —
What rhubarb, senna,⁵⁶ or what purgative drug
Would scour⁵⁷ these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?

DOCTOR:

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

MACBETH:

I will not be afraid of death and bane,
Till Birnam Forest comes to Dunsinane.

DOCTOR:

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

Exeunt [all but the Doctor].

[Exit.]

ACT 5, SCENE 4⁵

Drum and colors. Enter Malcolm, Siward, Macduff, Siward's Son, Mentith, Caitness, Angus, [Lannox, Ross,] and soldiers, marching.

MALCOLM:

Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand
That chambers will be safe.⁶

MENTITH:

We doubt it nothing.⁶

SIWARD:

What wood is this before us?

MENTITH:

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 discovery⁸
Err in report of us.

SOLDIERS:

It shall be done.

SIWARD:

We learn no other but⁹ the confident tyrant
Keeps⁹ still in Dunsinane and will endure⁹
Our setting down before⁹ 't.

MALCOLM:

'Tis his main hope;

56. Pull 't off. (Refers to some part of the armor not properly put on.) 57. senna: a purgative drug. 58. scour: purge, cleanse, rid. 60. it: i.e., the armor not yet put on Macbeth. ACT 5, SCENE 4. Location: Country near Birnam Wood. 2. chambers . . . safe: i.e., we may sleep safely in our bedchambers. nothing: not at all. 6. discovery: scouting reports. 8. no other but: no other news but that. 9. Keeps: remains. endure: allow, not attempt to prevent. 10. setting down before: laying siege to.

For where there is advantage¹⁰ to be given,
Both more and less¹⁰ have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.

MACDUFF:

Let our just censures
Attend the true event,¹⁰ 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.¹⁰
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate¹⁰ —
Towards which advance the war.¹⁰

Exeunt, marching.

ACT 5, SCENE 5¹¹

Enter Macbeth, Seyton, and soldiers, with drum and colors.

MACBETH:

Hang out our banners on the outward walls.
The cry is still, "They come!" Our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn. Here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up.
Were they not forced¹¹ with those that should be ours,
We might have met them dareful,¹¹ bearded to beard,
And beat them backward home.

A cry within of women.

SEYTON:

What is that noise?

It is the cry of women, my good lord.

[*He goes to the door.*]

MACBETH:

I have almost forgot the taste of fears.
The time has been my senses would have cooled¹¹
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair¹¹
Would at a dismal treatise¹¹ rouse and stir

11. advantage: opportunity (i.e., in military operations outside Macbeth's castle in which it is possible for would-be deserters to slip away; in a siege, his forces will be more confined to the castle and under his watchful eye). 12. more and less: high and low. 14-15. Let . . . event: let us postpone judgment about these uncertain matters until we've achieved our goal. 18. What . . . owe: what we only claim to have, as distinguished from what we actually have (or perhaps what we owe as duty). owe: own. 19-20. Thoughts . . . arbitrate: speculating can only convey our sense of hope; blows must decide the actual outcome. 21. war: army. ACT 5, SCENE 5. Location: Dunsinane. Macbeth's castle. 5. forced: reinforced. 6. dareful: boldly, in open battle. 10. cooled: felt the chill of terror. 11. my fell of hair: the hair of my scalp. 12. dismal treatise: sinister story.

As¹³ life were in 't. I have supped full with horrors:
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
Cannot once start me.¹⁴

[*Scyon returns.*]

Wherefore was that cry?

SEYTON:

The Queen, my lord, is dead.

MACBETH:

She should have died hereafter;¹⁵

There would have been a time for such a word.

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow

Creeps in this¹⁶ petty pace from day to day

To the last syllable of recorded time,

And all our yesterdays have lighted¹⁷ fools

The way to dusty¹⁸ 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.¹⁹

Enter a Messenger.

Thou com'st to use thy tongue; thy story quickly:

MESSENGER:

Gracious my lord,

I should report that which I say I saw,

But know not how to do 't.

MACBETH:

Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER:

As I did stand my watch upon the hill,

I looked toward Birnam, and anon, methought,

The wood began to move.

MACBETH:

Liar and slave!

MESSENGER:

Let me endure your wrath if 't be not so.

13. As: as if. 15. start me: make me start. 17. She . . . hereafter: she would have died
some day, or she should have died at some more appropriate time, freed from the relentless
pressures of the moment. 19-28. Tomorrow . . . nothing: (For biblical echoes in this speech,
see Psalms 18:28, 22:15, 90:9; Job 8:9, 14:1-2, 18:6.) 20. this: at this. 22. lighted: (The
metaphor is of a candle used to light one to bed, just as life is a brief transit for wretched mor-
tals to their deathbeds.) 23. dusty: (Since life, made out of dust, returns to dust.)

Within this three mile may you see it coming:
I say, a moving grove.

MACBETH: If thou speak'st false,

Upon the next tree shall thou hang alive

Till famine cling²⁰ thee. If thy speech be sooth,²¹

I care not if thou dost for me as much.

I pull in resolution,²² and begin

To doubt th' equivocation of the fiend

That lies like truth. "Fear not, till Birnam Wood

Do come to Dunsinane," and now a wood

Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!

If this which he avouches does appear,

There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.

I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,

And wish th' estate²³ o' the world were now undone.

Ring the alarm bell! Blow wind, come wrack,²⁴

At least we'll die with harness²⁵ on our back.

Exeunt.

ACT 5, SCENE 6²⁶

Drum and colors. Enter Malcolm, Siward, Macduff, and their army, with boughs.

MALCOLM:

Now near enough. Your leafy screens throw down,

And show²⁷ like those you are. You, worthy uncle,²⁸

Shall with my cousin, your right noble son,

Lead our first battle.²⁹ Worthy Macduff and we

Shall take upon 's what else remains to do.

According to our order.³⁰

SIWARD: Fare you well.

Do we³¹ but find the tyrant's power³² tonight,

Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

MACDUFF:

Make all our trumpets speak! Give them all breath,

Those clamorous harbingers³³ of blood and death.

Exeunt. Alarums continued.

40. cling: cause to shrivel. sooth: truth. 42. pull in resolution: can no longer give free rein
to my self-confident determination. 50. estate: settled order. 51. wrack: ruin. 52. har-
ness: armor. ACT 5, SCENE 6. Location: Dunsinane. Before Macbeth's castle. 2. show:
appear. uncle: i.e., Siward. 4. battle: battalion. 6. order: plan of battle. 7. Do we: if we
do. power: army. 10. harbingers: forerunners.

ACT 5, SCENE 7^o*Enter Macbeth.*

MACBETH:

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

Enter young Seward.

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.

MACBETH:

Thou wast born of woman.

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

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,^o whose arms

Are hired to bear their staves.^o Either thou, Macbeth,

Or else my sword with an unbattered edge

I sheathe again undecided.^o There thou should'st be;^o

By this great clatter one of greatest note

Seems braided.^o Let me find him, Fortune,

And more I beg not.

Enter Malcolm and Seward.

SIWARD:

This way, my lord. The castle's gently rendered;^o

The tyrant's people on both sides do fight,

The noble thanes do bravely in the war,

The day almost itself professes^o yours,

And little is to do.

MALCOLM:

We have met with foes

That strike beside us.^o

SIWARD: Enter, sir, the castle.

*Exeunt Alarums.*ACT 5, SCENE 8^o*Enter Macbeth.*

MACBETH:

Why should I play the Roman fool^o and die

On mine own sword? Whiles I see lives,^o the gashes

Do better upon them.

Enter Macduff.

MACDUFF:

Turn, hellhound, turn!

MACBETH: Of all men else I have avoided thee.

But get thee back! My soul is too much charged

With blood of thine already.

MACDUFF:

I have no words;

My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain

Than terms can give thee out!^o

Fight. Alarums.

ACT 5, SCENE 7. Location: Before Macbeth's castle; the battle action is continuous here.
2. course: bout or round of bearbaiting, in which the bear was tied to a stake and dogs were set upon him. s.d. *young Seward slain*: (In some unspecified way, young Seward's body must be removed from the stage; his own father enters at line 24 and perceives nothing amiss, and in 5.8.38 young Seward is reported *missing* in action. Perhaps Macbeth drags off the body, or perhaps it is removed by soldiers during the alarms.) 18. kerns: (Property, Irish foot soldiers; here, applied contemptuously to the rank and file.)

19. staves: spears. Either thou: i.e., either I find you. 21. undecided: having seen no action, shouldst be: ought to be (judging by the noise). 23. braided: announced. 25. gently rendered: surrendered without fighting. 28. professes: declares itself. 30. strike beside us: fight on our side, or miss us deliberately. ACT 5, SCENE 8. Location: Before Macbeth's castle, as the battle continues; after line 34, within the castle. 1. Roman fool: i.e., suicide, like Brutus, Mark Antony, and others. 2. Whiles . . . lives: i.e., as long as I see any enemy living. 8. give thee out: name you, describe you.

MACBETH: Thou lovest labor.

As easy mayst thou the intrenchant⁹ air

With thy keen sword impress¹⁰ 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: Despair¹¹ thy charm,

And let the angel¹² whom thou still¹³ hast served

Tell thee: Macduff was from his mother's womb

Untimely¹⁴ ripped.

MACBETH:

Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,

For it hath cowed my better part of man!¹⁵

And be these juggling¹⁶ fiends no more believed

That palter with us in a double sense;¹⁷

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!¹⁸

We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,

Painted upon a pole,¹⁹ and underwrit,

"Here may you see the tyrant."²⁰

MACBETH:

I will not yield

To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet

And to be baited with the rabble's curse.

Though Birnam Wood be come to Dunsinane,

And thou opposed, being of no woman born,

Yet I will try the last.²¹ Before my body

I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,

And damned be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"²²

Exunt, fighting. Alarums.

30

35

20

15

10

Enter fighting, and Macbeth slain. [Exit Macduff with Macbeth's body.] Retreat,²³ and flourish. Enter, with drum and colors,²⁴ Malcolm, Siward, Ross, thanes, and soldiers.

MALCOLM: I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

SIWARD:

Some must go off,²⁵ and yet, by these,²⁶ I see

So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

MALCOLM:

Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

ROSS:

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

He only lived but till he was a man,

The which no sooner had his prowess confirmed

In the unshrinking station²⁷ where he fought,

But like a man he died.

SIWARD: Then he is dead?

ROSS:

Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow

Must not be measured by his worth, for then

It hath no end.

SIWARD: Had he his hurts before?

ROSS:

Ay, on the front.

SIWARD: Why then, God's soldier be he!

Had I as many sons as I have hairs

I would not wish them to a fairer death.

And so, his knell is knolled.

MALCOLM: He's worth more sorrow,

And that I'll spend for him.

SIWARD: He's worth no more.

They say he parted²⁸ well and paid his score,²⁹

And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

Enter Macduff, with Macbeth's head.

50

45

40

35

9. intrenchant: that cannot be cut, indivisible. 10. impress: make an impression on. 11. Despair: despair of. 12. angel: evil angel, Macbeth's genius. still: always. 16. Untimely: prematurely, i.e., by caesarean delivery. 18. better . . . man: i.e., courage. 19. juggling: deceiving. 20. palter . . . sense: equivocate with us. 24. gaze o' the time: spectacle or sideshow of the age. 26. Painted . . . pole: i.e., painted on a board or cloth and suspended on a pole. 32. the last: i.e., my last resort; my own strength and resolution.

s.d. *Retreat*: a trumpet call ordering an end to the fighting. *Enter, with drum and colors, etc.*: (The remainder of the play is perhaps imagined as taking place in Macbeth's castle and could be marked as a separate scene. In Shakespeare's theater, however, the shift is so nonrepresentational and without scenic alteration that the action is virtually continuous.) 36. go off: die. by these: to judge by these (assembled). 42. unshrinking station: post from which he did not shrink. 57. parted: departed, died. score: reckoning.

MACDUFF:

Hail, King! For so thou art. Behold where strands⁵⁴
Th' usurper's cursed head. The time is free.⁵⁵

I see thee compassed with thy kingdom's pearl,⁵⁶

That speak my salutation in their minds,

Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:

Hail, King of Scotland!

ALL:

Hail, King of Scotland!

Flourish. 60

MALCOLM:

We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon⁶¹ with your several⁶² loves

And make us even with you.⁶³ My thanks and kinsmen,
Henceforth be eurls, the first that ever Scotland

In such an honor named. What's more to do
Which would be planted newly with the time,⁶⁴

As calling home our exiled friends abroad

That fled the snares of watchful tyranny,

Producing forth⁶⁵ the cruel ministers⁶⁶

Of this dead butcher and his fendlike queen —
Who, as tis thought, by self and violent⁶⁷ hands

Took off her life — this, and what needful else

That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace

We will perform in measure, time, and place.

So, thanks to all at once and to each one,

Whom we invite to see us crowned at Scone.

Flourish. Exeunt omnes.

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TEXTUAL NOTES FOR MACBETH

Copy text: the First Folio. The act and scene divisions follow the Folio text, except that 5.8 is not marked in the Folio.

ACT 1, SCENE 1. 9. s.p. Second Witch: *All*. 10. s.p. Third witch: [not in F]. 11. s.p. All: [at line 9 in F].

ACT 1, SCENE 2. 1. s.p. [and elsewhere] Duncan: *King*. 13. gallowglasses: Gallow-grosses. 14. quarrel: Quarry. 21. ne'er: neet. 26. thunders break: Thunders.

ACT 1, SCENE 3. 32. Weird: weyward [elsewhere in F spelled "weyward" or "weyard"]. 39. Forrest: Soris. 97. death. As: death, as. 98. Came: Can. III. loose: loose.

ACT 1, SCENE 4. 1. Act: Or.

ACT 1, SCENE 5. 1. s.p. [and elsewhere] Lady Macbeth: Lady. 9. lose: loose. 43. it: hit.

ACT 1, SCENE 6. 4. martlet: Butler. 9. most: must.

ACT 1, SCENE 7. 6. shoot: Schoole. 48. do: no. 58. way they: they may.

ACT 2, SCENE 1. 56. strides: sides. 57. sure: sowre.

ACT 2, SCENE 2. 13. s.d.: [at line 8 in F, after "die"].

ACT 2, SCENE 3. 32. s.d.: [after line 31 in F]. 133. neater: neere.

ACT 3, SCENE 1. 76. s.p. Murderers: *Murth*. 116. s.p. Both Murderers: *Murth*. [also at line 140]. 141. s.d. *Exeunt*: [at line 143 in F].

ACT 3, SCENE 3. 7. and: end.

ACT 3, SCENE 4. 79. time: times. 122. s.d. *Exeunt*: *Exit*.

ACT 3, SCENE 6. 24. son: Sonnes. 38. the: their.

ACT 4, SCENE 1. 34. cauldron: Cawdron. 38. s.d. *to*: and. 59. germens: Germaine.

93. Dunsinane: Dunsname. 94. s.d. *Descend*: *Descend*. 98. Birman: Byrnan [also spelled "Birman," "Byrname," and "Birnane" in act 5]. 119. eighth: eight.

ACT 4, SCENE 2. 1. s.p. [and throughout] Lady Macduff: *Mye*. 22. none: none. 67–68. ones . . . methinks: ones / *To* fright you thus. Me thinks. 77. s.d. *Enter Murderers*: [after "What are these faces" in F]. 78. s.p. [and throughout scene] First Murderer: *Mur*.

81. shag-haired: shagge-card.

ACT 4, SCENE 3. 4. downfall: n. downfall. 15. deserve: disscene. 35. Fare: Far. 108. accurst: accurst. 124. detraction, here: detraction. Heere. 134. thy: they. 144. essay: assy.

146. s.d.: [after "imend" in F]. 161. not: nor. 237. time: time.

ACT 5, SCENE 1. 30. fear who: feare? who.

ACT 5, SCENE 3. 41. Cure her: Cure. 54. pristine: pristine. 57. scinn: Gyne. 62. s.d.: [at line 64 in F].

ACT 5, SCENE 4. 16. s.p. Siward: *Sey*.

54. stands: i.e., on a pole. 55. free: released from tyranny. 56. compassed . . . pearl: surrounded by the nobles of your kingdom (literally, the pearls encircling a crown). 62. reckon: come to a reckoning. several: individual. 63. make . . . you: i.e., repay your worthiness. 66. would . . . time: should be established at the commencement of this new era. 69. Producing forth: bringing forward to trial. ministers: agents. 71. self and violent: her own violent.