

Original Text

Modern Text

Act 1, Scene 1

Thunder and lightning. Enter three WITCHES

FIRST WITCH

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

SECOND WITCH

When the hurly-burly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

THIRD WITCH

5 That will be ere the set of sun.

FIRST WITCH

Where the place?

SECOND WITCH

Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH

There to meet with Macbeth.

FIRST WITCH

I come, Graymalkin!

SECOND WITCH

10 Paddock calls.

THIRD WITCH

Anon.

ALL

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

Exeunt

Thunder and lightning. Three WITCHES enter

FIRST WITCH

When should the three of us meet again? Will it be in thunder, lightning, or rain?

SECOND WITCH

We'll meet when the noise of the battle is over, when one side has won and the other side has lost.

THIRD WITCH

That will happen before sunset.

FIRST WITCH

Where should we meet?

SECOND WITCH

Let's do it in the open field.

THIRD WITCH

We'll meet Macbeth there.

The WITCHES hear the calls of their spirit friends or "familiars," which look like animals—one is a cat and one is a toad.

FIRST WITCH

(calling to her cat) I'm coming, Graymalkin!

SECOND WITCH

My toad, Paddock, calls me.

THIRD WITCH

(to her spirit) I'll be right here!

ALL

Fair is foul, and foul is fair. Let's fly away through the fog and filthy air.

They exit.

Act 1, Scene 2

Alarum 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.

MALCOLM

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

CAPTAIN

Doubtful it stood,
As two spent swimmers that do cling together

Sounds of a trumpet and soldiers fighting

offstage. KING DUNCAN enters with his sons MALCOLM and DONALBAIN, LENNOX, and a number of attendants. They meet a wounded and bloody CAPTAIN.

DUNCAN

Who is this bloody man? Judging from his appearance, I bet he can tell us the latest news about the revolt.

MALCOLM

This is the brave sergeant who fought to keep me from being captured. Hail, brave friend! Tell the king what was happening in the battle when you left it.

CAPTAIN

For a while you couldn't tell who would win. The armies were like two exhausted swimmers

Original Text

And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald—
 10 Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
 The multiplying villainies of nature
 Do swarm upon him—from the Western Isles
 Of kerns and gallowglasses is supplied,
 And fortune, on his damnèd quarrel smiling,
 15 Showed like a rebel's whore. But all's too weak,
 For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—
 Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel,
 Which smoked with bloody execution,
 Like valor's minion carved out his passage
 20 Till he faced the slave;
 Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
 Till he unseamed him from the nave to th' chops,
 And fixed his head upon our battlements.

DUNCAN

O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!

Act 1, Scene 2, Page 2**CAPTAIN**

25 As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
 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,
 30 Compelled these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
 But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,
 With furbished arms and new supplies of men,
 Began a fresh assault.

DUNCAN

Dismayed not this our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

CAPTAIN

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

DUNCANSo well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
 They smack of honor both. Go get him surgeons.*Exit CAPTAIN with attendants**Enter ROSS and ANGUS*

45 Who comes here?

MALCOLM

The worthy thane of Ross.

LENNOX**Modern Text**

clinging to each other and struggling in the water,
 unable to move. The villainous rebel Macdonwald
 was supported by foot soldiers and horsemen
 from Ireland and the Hebrides, and Lady Luck
 was with him, smiling cruelly at his enemies as if
 she were his whore. But Luck and Macdonwald
 together weren't strong enough. Brave Macbeth,
 laughing at Luck, chopped his way through to
 Macdonwald, who didn't even have time to say
 good-bye or shake hands before Macbeth split
 him open from his navel to his jawbone and stuck
 his head on our castle walls.

DUNCAN

My brave relative! What a worthy man!

CAPTAIN

But in the same way that violent storms always
 come just as spring appears, our success against
 Macdonwald created new problems for us. Listen
 to this, King: as soon as we sent those Irish
 soldiers running for cover, the Norwegian king
 saw his chance to attack us with fresh troops and
 shiny weapons.

DUNCAN

Didn't this frighten our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

CAPTAIN

The new challenge scared them about as much
 as sparrows frighten eagles, or rabbits frighten a
 lion. To tell you the truth, they fought the new
 enemy with twice as much force as before; they
 were like cannons loaded with double
 ammunition. Maybe they wanted to take a bath in
 their enemies' blood, or make that battlefield as
 infamous as Golgotha, where Christ was
 crucified, I don't know. But I feel weak. My
 wounds must be tended to.

DUNCANYour words, like your wounds, bring you honor.
 Take him to the surgeons.*The CAPTAIN exits, helped by attendants.**ROSS and ANGUS enter.*

Who is this?

MALCOLMThe worthy **Thane** of Ross.**LENNOX**

Original Text

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

Modern Text

His eyes seem frantic! He looks like someone
with a strange tale to tell.

Act 1, Scene 2, Page 3**ROSS**

God save the king.

DUNCAN

Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

ROSS

From Fife, great king,
Where the Norway banners flout the sky
50 And fan our people cold.
Norway himself, with terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict,
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapped in proof,
55 Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish spirit; and to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

DUNCAN

Great happiness!

ROSS

That now
Sweno, the Norway's king, craves composition.
60 Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursed at Saint Colme's Inch
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

DUNCAN

No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest: go pronounce his present death,
65 And with his former title greet Macbeth.

ROSS

I'll see it done.

DUNCAN

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

Exeunt

ROSS

God save the king!

DUNCAN

Where have you come from, worthy thane?

ROSS

Great king, I've come from Fife, where the
Norwegian flag flies, mocking our country and
frightening our people. Leading an enormous
army and assisted by that disloyal traitor, the
thane of Cawdor, the king of Norway began a
bloody battle. But outfitted in his battle-weathered
armor, Macbeth met the Norwegian attacks shot
for shot, as if he were the goddess of war's
husband. Finally he broke the enemy's spirit, and
we were victorious.

DUNCAN

Great happiness!

ROSS

So now Sweno, the Norwegian king, wants a
treaty. We told him we wouldn't even let him bury
his men until he retreated to Saint Colme's Inch
and paid us ten thousand dollars.

DUNCAN

The thane of Cawdor will never again betray me.
Go announce that he will be executed, and tell
Macbeth that Cawdor's titles will be given to him.

ROSS

I'll get it done right away.

DUNCAN

The thane of Cawdor has lost what the noble
Macbeth has won.

They all exit.

Act 1, Scene 3

Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES

FIRST WITCH

Where hast thou been, sister?

SECOND WITCH

Killing swine.

THIRD WITCH

Sister, where thou?

FIRST WITCH

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,

Thunder. The three WITCHES enter.

FIRST WITCH

Where have you been, sister?

SECOND WITCH

Killing pigs.

THIRD WITCH

And you, sister?

FIRST WITCH

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap and

Original Text

5 And munched, and munched, and munched. "Give me,"

quoth I.

"Aroint thee, witch!" the rump-fed runnion cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' th' *Tiger*;
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,

10 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,

15 And the very ports they blow,
All the quarters that they know
I' th' shipman's card.
I'll drain him dry as hay.

Sleep shall neither night nor day

20 Hang upon his penthouse lid.
He shall live a man forbid.
Weary sev'nights nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 2

Though his bark cannot be lost,
25 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.

Drum within

THIRD WITCH

30 A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.

ALL

(dancing together in a circle) The weird sisters, hand
in

hand,

Posters of the sea and land,

35 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.

Modern Text

munched away at them. "Give me one," I said.
"Get away from me, witch!" the fat woman cried.
Her husband has sailed off to Aleppo as master
of a ship called the *Tiger*. I'll sail there in a kitchen
strainer, turn myself into a tailless rat, and do
things to him—

SECOND WITCH

I'll give you some wind to sail there.

FIRST WITCH

How nice of you!

THIRD WITCH

And I will give you some more.

FIRST WITCH

I already have control of all the other winds, along
with the ports from which they blow and every
direction on the sailor's compass in which they
can go. I'll drain the life out of him. He won't catch
a wink of sleep, either at night or during the day.
He will live as a cursed man. For eighty-one
weeks he will waste away in agony.

Although I can't make his ship disappear, I can
still make his journey miserable. Look what I have
here.

SECOND WITCH

Show me, show me.

FIRST WITCH

Here I have the thumb of a pilot who was
drowned while trying to return home.

A drum sounds offstage.

THIRD WITCH

A drum, a drum! Macbeth has come.

ALL

(dancing together in a circle) We weird sisters,
hand in hand, swift travelers over the sea and
land, dance around and around like so. Three
times to yours, and three times to mine, and three
times again, to add up to nine. Enough! The
charm is ready.

MACBETH and BANQUO enter.

MACBETH

(to BANQUO) I have never seen a day that was
so good and bad at the same time.

Original Text

BANQUO

- How far is 't called to Forres?—What are these
- 40 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,
- 45 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.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 3

MACBETH

Speak, if you can: what are you?

FIRST WITCH

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

SECOND WITCH

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

FIRST WITCH

Hail!

SECOND WITCH

Hail!

THIRD WITCH

- 65 Hail!

FIRST WITCH

Lesser than Macbeth and greater.

SECOND WITCH

Not so happy, yet much happier.

THIRD WITCH

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

Modern Text

BANQUO

How far is it supposed to be to Forres? (*he sees the WITCHES*) What are these creatures? They're so withered-looking and crazily dressed. They don't look like they belong on this planet, but I see them standing here on Earth. (*to the WITCHES*) Are you alive? Can you answer questions? You seem to understand me, because each of you has put a gruesome finger to her skinny lips. You look like women, but your beards keep me from believing that you really are.

MACBETH

Speak, if you can. What kind of creatures are you?

FIRST WITCH

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

SECOND WITCH

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

THIRD WITCH

All hail, Macbeth, the future king!

BANQUO

My dear Macbeth, why do you look so startled and afraid of these nice things they're saying? (*to the WITCHES*) Tell me honestly, are you illusions, or are you really what you seem to be? You've greeted my noble friend with honors and talk of a future so glorious that you've made him speechless. But you don't say anything to me. If you can see the future and say how things will turn out, tell me. I don't want your favors and I'm not afraid of your hatred.

FIRST WITCH

Hail!

SECOND WITCH

Hail!

THIRD WITCH

Hail!

FIRST WITCH

You are lesser than Macbeth but also greater.

SECOND WITCH

You are not as happy as Macbeth, yet much happier.

THIRD WITCH

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

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 4

Original Text

FIRST WITCH

70 Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH

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

WITCHES vanish

BANQUO

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

MACBETH

Into the air, and what seemed corporal
Melted, as breath into the wind. Would they had
stayed.

BANQUO

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

MACBETH

Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO

You shall be king.

MACBETH

And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

BANQUO

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

Enter ROSS and ANGUS

Modern Text

FIRST WITCH

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH

Wait! You only told me part of what I want to know. Stay and tell me more. I already know I am the thane of Glamis because I inherited the position when my father, Sinel, died. But how can you call me the thane of Cawdor? The thane of Cawdor is alive, and he's a rich and powerful man. And for me to be the king is completely impossible, just as it's impossible for me to be thane of Cawdor. Tell me where you learned these strange things, and why you stop us at this desolate place with this prophetic greeting? Speak, I command you.

The WITCHES vanish.

BANQUO

The earth has bubbles, just like the water, and these creatures must have come from a bubble in the earth. Where did they disappear to?

MACBETH

Into thin air. Their bodies melted like breath in the wind. I wish they had stayed!

BANQUO

Were these things we're talking about really here? Or are we both on drugs?

MACBETH

Your children will be kings.

BANQUO

You will be the king.

MACBETH

And thane of Cawdor too. Isn't that what they said?

BANQUO

That's exactly what they said. Who's this?

ROSS and ANGUS enter.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 5

ROSS

90 The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success, and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his. Silenced with that,
95 In viewing o'er the rest o' the selfsame day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make,
Strange images of death. As thick as tale
Can post with post, and every one did bear
100 Thy praises in his kingdom's great defense,

ROSS

The king was happy to hear of your success, Macbeth. Whenever he hears the story of your exploits in the fight against the rebels, he becomes so amazed it makes him speechless. He was also shocked to learn that on the same day you fought the rebels you also fought against the army of Norway, and that you weren't the least bit afraid of death, even as you killed everyone around you. Messenger after messenger delivered news of your bravery to the king with praise for how you defended his

Original Text

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

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

BANQUO

What, can the devil speak true?

MACBETH

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

ANGUS

Who was the thane lives yet,
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was
combined
With those of Norway, or did line the rebel
115 With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
He labored in his country's wrack, I know not;
But treasons capital, confessed and proved,
Have overthrown him.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 6

MACBETH

(aside) Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!
The greatest is
120 behind. *(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

That, trusted home,
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange.
125 And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray 's
In deepest consequence.
(to ROSS and ANGUS) Cousins, a word, I pray you.

BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS move to one side

MACBETH

130 *(aside)* Two truths are told,

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country.

ANGUS

The king sent us to give you his thanks and to
bring you to him. Your real reward won't come
from us.

ROSS

And to give you a taste of what's in store for you,
he told me to call you the thane of Cawdor. So
hail, thane of Cawdor! That title belongs to you
now.

BANQUO

(shocked) Can the devil tell the truth?

MACBETH

The thane of Cawdor is still alive. Why are you
putting his clothes on me?

ANGUS

The man who was the thane of Cawdor is still
alive, but he's been sentenced to death, and he
deserves to die. I don't know whether he fought
on Norway's side, or if he secretly aided the
rebels, or if he fought with both of our enemies.
But his treason, which has been proven, and to
which he's confessed, means he's finished.

MACBETH

(to himself) It's just like they said—now I'm the
thane of Glamis and the thane of Cawdor. And
the best part of what they predicted is still to
come. *(to ROSS and ANGUS)* Thank you for the
news. *(speaking so that only BANQUO can
hear)* Aren't you beginning to hope your children
will be kings? After all, the witches who said I
was thane of Cawdor promised them nothing
less.

BANQUO

If you trust what they say, you might be on your
way to becoming king, as well as thane of
Cawdor. But this whole thing is strange. The
agents of evil often tell us part of the truth in
order to lead us to our destruction. They earn our
trust by telling us the truth about little things, but
then they betray us when it will damage us the
most. *(to ROSS and ANGUS)* Gentlemen, I'd like
to have a word with you, please.

ROSS, ANGUS, and BANQUO move to one
side.

MACBETH

(to himself) So far the witches have told me two

Original Text

As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme. *(to ROSS and ANGUS)* I
thank you, gentlemen.
(aside) This supernatural soliciting
135 Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am thane of Cawdor.
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
140 And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 7

My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man
That function is smothered in surmise,
145 And nothing is but what is not.

BANQUO

Look how our partner's rapt.

MACBETH

(aside) If chance will have me king, why, chance
may crown me
Without my stir.

BANQUO

New honors come upon him,
150 Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mold
But with the aid of use.

MACBETH

(aside) Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

BANQUO

Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

MACBETH

155 Give me your favor. My dull brain was wrought
With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are registered where every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king.
(aside to BANQUO) Think upon what hath chanced,
160 and, at more time,
The interim having weighed it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.

BANQUO

Very gladly.

MACBETH

Till then, enough. *(to ROSS and ANGUS)* Come,
friends.

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things that came true, so it seems like this will
culminate in my becoming
king. *(to ROSS and ANGUS)* Thank you,
gentlemen. *(to himself)* This supernatural
temptation doesn't seem like it can be a bad
thing, but it can't be good either. If it's a bad
thing, why was I promised a promotion that
turned out to be true? Now I'm the thane of
Cawdor, just like they said I would be. But if this
is a good thing, why do I find myself thinking
about murdering King Duncan, a thought so
horrifying that it makes my hair stand on end and
my heart pound inside my chest? The dangers
that actually threaten me here and now frighten
me less than the horrible things I'm imagining.

Even though it's just a fantasy so far, the mere
thought of committing murder shakes me up so
much that I hardly know who I am anymore. My
ability to act is stifled by my thoughts and
speculations, and the only things that matter to
me are things that don't really exist.

BANQUO

Look at Macbeth—he's in a daze.

MACBETH

(to himself) If fate wants me to be king, perhaps
fate will just make it happen and I won't have to
do anything.

BANQUO

(to ROSS and ANGUS) Macbeth is not used to
his new titles. They're like new clothes: they
don't fit until you break them in over time.

MACBETH

(to himself) One way or another, what's going to
happen is going to happen.

BANQUO

Good Macbeth, we're ready when you are.

MACBETH

I beg your pardon; I was distracted. Kind
gentlemen, I won't forget the trouble you've
taken for me whenever I think of this day. Let's
go to the king. *(speaking so that
only BANQUO can hear)* Think about what
happened today, and when we've both had time
to consider things, let's talk.

BANQUO

Absolutely.

MACBETH

Until then, we've said
enough. *(to ROSS and ANGUS)* Let's go, my

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Exeunt
friends.

They all exit.

Act 1, Scene 4

*Flourish. Enter KING
DUNCAN, LENNOX, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, and
attendants*

DUNCAN

Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission yet returned?

MALCOLM

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

DUNCAN

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

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS
15 *(to MACBETH)* O worthiest cousin,
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserved,
20 That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! Only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

MACBETH

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

DUNCAN

Welcome hither.
I have begun to plant thee, and will labor
30 To make thee full of growing. *(to BANQUO)* Noble
Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known

*A trumpet fanfare sounds. KING
DUNCAN, LENNOX, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN,
and their attendants enter.*

DUNCAN

Has the former thane of Cawdor been executed
yet? Haven't the people in charge of that come
back?

MALCOLM

My king, they haven't come back yet. But I spoke
with someone who saw Cawdor die, and he said
that Cawdor openly confessed his treasons,
begged your highness's forgiveness, and
repented deeply. He never did anything in his
whole life that looked as good as the way he died.
He died like someone who had practiced how to
toss away his most cherished possession as if it
were a worthless piece of garbage.

DUNCAN

There's no way to read a man's mind by looking
at his face. I trusted Cawdor completely.

MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS enter.
(to MACBETH) My worthiest kinsman! Just this
moment I was feeling guilty for not having
thanked you enough. You have done so much for
me so fast that it has been impossible to reward
you properly. If you deserved less, then perhaps
my payment would have matched your deeds! All
I can say is that I owe you more than I can ever
repay.

MACBETH

The opportunity to serve you is its own reward.
Your only duty, your highness, is to accept what
we owe you. Our duty to you and your state is like
the duty of children to their father or servants to
their master. By doing everything we can to
protect you, we're only doing what we should.

DUNCAN

You are welcome here. By making you thane of
Cawdor, I have planted the seeds of a great
career for you, and I will make sure they
grow. *(to BANQUO)* Noble Banquo, you deserve
no less than Macbeth, and everyone should know

Original Text

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

MACBETH

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

DUNCAN

My worthy Cawdor!

Act 1, Scene 4, Page 3

MACBETH

- 50 *(aside)* The prince of Cumberland! That is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
Let not light see my black and deep desires.
The eye wink at the hand, yet let that be
55 Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

DUNCAN

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

Flourish. Exeunt

Act 1, Scene 5

Enter LADY MACBETH, alone, with a letter

LADY MACBETH

(reading) "They met me in the day of success, and I
have learned by the perfectest report they have more

Modern Text

it. Let me bring you close to me and give you the
benefit of my love and good will.

BANQUO

Then if I accomplish anything great, it will be a
credit to you.

DUNCAN

My joy is so overwhelming it brings tears to my
eyes. My sons, relatives, lords, and all those
closest to me, I want you to witness that I will
bestow my kingdom on my eldest son, Malcolm.
Today I name him the prince of Cumberland. But
Malcolm isn't going to be alone in receiving
honors—titles of nobility will shine like stars on all
of you who deserve them. *(to MACBETH)* And
now, let's go to your castle at Inverness, where I
will become even more obliged to you because of
your hospitality.

MACBETH

I'm not happy unless I can be working for you. I
will go ahead and bring my wife the good news
that you are coming. With that, I'll be off.

DUNCAN

My worthy Cawdor!

MACBETH

(to himself) Malcolm is now the prince of
Cumberland! To become king myself, I'm either
going to have to step over him or give up,
because he's in my way. Stars, hide your light so
no one can see the terrible desires within me. I
won't let my eye look at what my hand is doing,
but in the end I'm still going to do that thing I'd be
horrified to see.

Exit

MACBETH exits.

DUNCAN

*(to BANQUO, in the middle of a conversation we
haven't heard)* You're right, Banquo. Macbeth is
every bit as valiant as you say, and I am satisfied
with these praises of him. Let's follow after him,
now that he has gone ahead to prepare our
welcome. He is a man without equal.

Trumpet fanfare. They exit.

LADY MACBETH

"The witches met me on the day of my victory in
battle, and I have since learned that they have

Original Text

in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. While I stood rapt in the wonder of it came missives from the king, who all-hailed me 'Thane of Cawdor,' by which title, before, these weird sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time with 'Hail, king that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou might'st not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

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

Enter **SERVANT**

Modern Text

supernatural knowledge. When I tried desperately to question them further, they vanished into thin air. While I stood spellbound, messengers from the king arrived and greeted me as the thane of Cawdor, which is precisely how the weird sisters had saluted me before calling me 'the future king!' I thought I should tell you this news, my dearest partner in greatness, so that you could rejoice along with me about the greatness that is promised to us. Keep it secret, and farewell."

(she looks up from the letter) You are thane of Glamis and Cawdor, and you're going to be king, just like you were promised. But I worry about whether or not you have what it takes to seize the crown. You are too full of the milk of human kindness to strike aggressively at your first opportunity. You want to be powerful, and you don't lack ambition, but you don't have the mean streak that these things call for. The things you want to do, you want to do like a good man. You don't want to cheat, yet you want what doesn't belong to you. There's something you want, but you're afraid to do what you need to do to get it. You want it to be done for you. Hurry home so I can persuade you and talk you out of whatever's keeping you from going after the crown. After all, fate and witchcraft both seem to want you to be king.

A **SERVANT** enters.

Act 1, Scene 5, Page 2

What is your tidings?

SERVANT

The king comes here tonight.

LADY MACBETH

Thou 'rt mad to say it.

20 Is not thy master with him, who, were 't so,
 Would have informed for preparation?

SERVANT

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

LADY MACBETH

Give him tending.
 He brings great news.

Exit **SERVANT**

The raven himself is hoarse
 That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan

What news do you bring?

SERVANT

The king is coming here tonight.

LADY MACBETH

You must be crazy to say that! Isn't Macbeth with the king, and wouldn't Macbeth have told me in advance so I could prepare, if the king were really coming?

SERVANT

I'm sorry, but it's the truth. Macbeth is coming. He sent a messenger ahead of him who arrived here so out of breath that he could barely speak his message.

LADY MACBETH

Take good care of him. He brings great news.

The **SERVANT** exits.

So the messenger is short of breath, like a hoarse raven, as he announces Duncan's entrance into

Original Text

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

Modern Text

my fortress, where he will die. Come, you spirits that assist murderous thoughts, make me less like a woman and more like a man, and fill me from head to toe with deadly cruelty! Thicken my blood and clog up my veins so I won't feel remorse, so that no human compassion can stop my evil plan or prevent me from accomplishing it! Come to my female breast and turn my mother's milk into poisonous acid, you murdering demons, wherever you hide, invisible and waiting to do evil! Come, thick night, and cover the world in the darkest smoke of hell, so that my sharp knife can't see the wound it cuts open, and so heaven can't peep through the darkness and cry, "No! Stop!"

Act 1, Scene 5, Page 3

Enter MACBETH

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

MACBETH

My dearest love,

- 50 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,
55 Look like the time. Bear welcome in your eye,
Your hand, your tongue. Look like th' innocent flower,
But be the serpent under 't. He that's coming
Must be provided for; and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch,
- 60 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.

To alter favor ever is to fear.

- 65 Leave all the rest to me.

*Exeunt**MACBETH enters.*

Great thane of Glamis! Worthy thane of Cawdor!
You'll soon be greater than both those titles, once
you become king! Your letter has transported me
from the present moment, when who knows what
will happen, and has made me feel like the future
is already here.

MACBETH

My dearest love, Duncan is coming here tonight.

LADY MACBETH

And when is he leaving?

MACBETH

He plans to leave tomorrow.

LADY MACBETH

That day will never come. Your face betrays
strange feelings, my lord, and people will be able
to read it like a book. In order to deceive them,
you must appear the way they expect you to look.
Greet the king with a welcoming expression in
your eyes, your hands, and your words. You
should look like an innocent flower, but be like the
snake that hides underneath the flower. The king
is coming, and he's got to be taken care of. Let
me handle tonight's preparations, because
tonight will change every night and day for the
rest of our lives.

MACBETH

We will speak about this further.

LADY MACBETH

You should project a peaceful mood, because if
you look troubled, you will arouse suspicion.

Leave all the rest to me.

They exit.

Original Text

Modern Text

Act 1, Scene 6

*hautboys and torches. Enter KING
DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNO
OX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and attendants*

*The stage is lit by
torches. Hautboys play. DUNCAN enters, together
with MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNO
X, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and their
attendants.*

DUNCAN

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

DUNCAN

This castle is in a pleasant place. The air is sweet
and appeals to my refined senses.

BANQUO

This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve,
5 By his loved mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here. No jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendant bed and procreant cradle.
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed,
1 The air is delicate.

BANQUO

The fact that this summer bird, the house martin,
builds his nests here proves how inviting the
breezes are. There isn't a single protrusion in the
castle walls where these birds haven't built their
hanging nests to sleep and breed. I've noticed that
they always like to settle and mate where the air is
the nicest.

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Enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH enters.

DUNCAN

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

DUNCAN

Look, here comes our honored hostess! Sometimes
the love my subjects bring me is inconvenient, but I
still accept it as love. In doing so, I'm teaching you
to thank me for the inconvenience I'm causing you by
being here, because it comes from my love to you.

LADY MACBETH

All our service,
1 In every point twice done and then done double,
5 Were poor and single business to contend
Against those honors deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house. For those of old,
And the late dignities heaped up to them,
We rest your hermits.

LADY MACBETH

Everything we're doing for you, even if it were
doubled and then doubled again, is nothing
compared to the honors you have brought to our
family. We gladly welcome you as our guests, with
gratitude for both the honors you've given us before
and the new honors you've just given us.

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Act 1, Scene 6, Page 2

DUNCAN

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

DUNCAN

Where is Macbeth, the thane of Cawdor? We
followed closely after him. I hoped to arrive here
before him, but he rides swiftly. And his great
love, which is as sharp as his spur, helped him
beat us here. Fair and noble hostess, we are your
guests 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.

LADY MACBETH

We are your servants, your highness, and as
always our house and everything in it is at your
disposal, for after all, we keep it in your trust and
we're glad to give you back what's yours.

DUNCAN**DUNCAN**

Original Text

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

Exeunt

Modern Text

Give me your hand. Bring me to my host,
 Macbeth. I love him dearly, and I shall continue to
 favor him. Whenever you're ready, hostess.

They all exit.

Act 1, Scene 7

*Hautboys. Torches. Enter a sewer and divers
 servants with dishes and service over the stage.
 Then enter MACBETH*

MACBETH
 If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
 It were done quickly. If the assassination
 Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
 With his surcease success; that but this blow
 5 Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
 But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
 We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases
 We still have judgment here, that we but teach
 Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
 10 To plague th' inventor: this even-handed justice
 Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice
 To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
 First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
 Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
 15 Who should against his murderer shut the door,
 Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
 Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
 So clear in his great office, that his virtues
 Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
 20 The deep damnation of his taking-off;
 And pity, like a naked newborn babe,
 Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
 25 That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
 To prick the sides of my intent, but only
 Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
 And falls on th' other.

*Hautboys play. The stage is lit by torches. A
 butler enters, and various servants carry utensils
 and dishes of food across the stage.
 Then MACBETH enters.*

MACBETH
 If this business would really be finished when I
 did the deed, then it would be best to get it over
 with quickly. If the assassination of the king could
 work like a net, sweeping up everything and
 preventing any consequences, then the murder
 would be the be-all and end-all of the whole affair,
 and I would gladly put my soul and the afterlife at
 risk to do it. But for crimes like these there are still
 punishments in this world. By committing violent
 crimes we only teach other people to commit
 violence, and the violence of our students will
 come back to plague us teachers. Justice, being
 equal to everyone, forces us to drink from the
 poisoned cup that we serve to others. The king
 trusts me in two ways. First of all, I am his
 kinsman and his subject, so I should always try to
 protect him. Second, I am his host, so I should be
 closing the door in his murderer's face, not trying
 to murder him myself. Besides, Duncan has been
 such a humble leader, so free of corruption, that
 his virtuous legacy will speak for him when he
 dies, as if angels were playing trumpets against
 the injustice of his murder. Pity, like an innocent
 newborn baby, will ride the wind with winged
 angels on invisible horses through the air to
 spread news of the horrible deed to everyone
 everywhere. People will shed a flood of tears that
 will drown the wind like a horrible downpour of
 rain. I can't spur myself to action. The only thing
 motivating me is ambition, which makes people
 rush ahead of themselves toward disaster.

Act 1, Scene 7, Page 2

Enter LADY MACBETH

How now! What news?

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

MACBETH
 30 Hath he asked for me?

LADY MACBETH enters.

What news do you have?

LADY MACBETH
 He has almost finished dinner. Why did you leave
 the dining room?

MACBETH
 Has he asked for me?

Original Text**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 bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,

35 Not 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 green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard

40 To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"

45 Like the poor cat i' th' adage?

MACBETH

Prithee, peace:

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

LADY MACBETH

What beast was 't, then,

That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;

50 And to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both.
They have made themselves, and that their fitness
now

55 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.

Act 1, Scene 7, Page 3**MACBETH**

If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH

We fail?

60 But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
65 That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt of reason

Modern Text**LADY MACBETH**

Don't you know he has?

MACBETH

We can't go on with this plan. The king has just
honored me, and I have earned the good opinion
of all sorts of people. I want to enjoy these honors
while the feeling is fresh and not throw them
away so soon.

LADY MACBETH

Were you drunk when you seemed so hopeful
before? Have you gone to sleep and woken up
green and pale in fear of this idea? From now on
this is what I'll think of your love. Are you afraid to
act the way you desire? Will you take the crown
you want so badly, or will you live as a coward,
always saying "I can't" after you say "I want to"?
You're like the poor cat in the old story.

MACBETH

Please, stop! I dare to do only what is proper for a
man to do. He who dares to do more is not a man
at all.

LADY MACBETH

If you weren't a man, then what kind of animal
were you when you first told me you wanted to do
this? When you dared to do it, that's when you
were a man. And if you go one step further by
doing what you dared to do before, you'll be that
much more the man. The time and place weren't
right before, but you would have gone ahead with
the murder anyhow. Now the time and place are
just right, but they're almost too good for you. I
have suckled a baby, and I know how sweet it is
to love the baby at my breast. But even as the
baby was smiling up at me, I would have plucked
my nipple out of its mouth and smashed its brains
out against a wall if I had sworn to do that the
same way you have sworn to do this.

MACBETH

But if we fail—

LADY MACBETH

We, fail? If you get your courage up, we can't fail.
When Duncan is asleep—the day's hard journey
has definitely made him tired—I'll get his two
servants so drunk that their memory will go up in
smoke through the chimneys of their brains.
When they lie asleep like pigs, so drunk they'll be
dead to the world, what won't you and I be able to
do to the unguarded Duncan? And whatever we

Original Text

A limbeck only: when in swinish sleep
Their drenchèd natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon

- 70 The unguarded Duncan? What not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?

MACBETH

Bring forth men-children only,
For thy undaunted mettle should compose
Nothing but males. Will it not be received,

- 75 When we have marked with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done 't?

Act 1, Scene 7, Page 4

LADY MACBETH

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

MACBETH

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

Exeunt

Modern Text

do, we can lay all the blame on the drunken
servants.

MACBETH

May you only give birth to male children, because
your fearless spirit should create nothing that isn't
masculine. Once we have covered the two
servants with blood, and used their daggers to
kill, won't people believe that they were the
culprits?

LADY MACBETH

Who could think it happened any other way?
We'll be grieving loudly when we hear that
Duncan has died.

MACBETH

Now I'm decided, and I will exert every muscle in
my body to commit this crime. Go now, and
pretend to be a friendly hostess. Hide with a false
pleasant face what you know in your false, evil
heart.

They exit.

Act 2, Scene 1

*Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE, with a torch before
him*

BANQUO

How goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE

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

BANQUO

And she goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE

I take 't 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO

- Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;
5 Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep. Merciful powers,
Restrain in me the cursèd thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose.

Enter MACBETH and a SERVANT with a torch

Give me my sword. Who's there?

MACBETH

- 10 A friend.

*BANQUO enters with FLEANCE, who lights the
way with a torch.*

BANQUO

How's the night going, boy?

FLEANCE

The moon has set. The clock hasn't struck yet.

BANQUO

The moon sets at twelve, right?

FLEANCE

I think it's later than that, sir.

BANQUO

Here, take my sword. The heavens are being
stingy with their light. Take this, too. I'm tired and
feeling heavy, but I can't sleep. Merciful powers,
keep away the nightmares that plague me when I
rest!

*MACBETH enters with a SERVANT, who carries
a torch.*

Give me my sword. Who's there?

MACBETH

A friend.

Original Text

BANQUO

What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed.
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,

15 By the name of most kind hostess, and shut up
In measureless content.

MACBETH

Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect,
Which else should free have wrought.

Act 2, Scene 1, Page 2

BANQUO

All's well.

I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:

20 To you they have showed some truth.

MACBETH

I think not of them.

Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that
business,
If you would grant the time.

BANQUO

At your kind'st leisure.

MACBETH

If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,

25 It shall make honor for you.

BANQUO

So I lose none

In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counselled.

MACBETH

Good repose the while!

BANQUO

30 Thanks, sir: the like to you!

Exeunt BANQUO and FLEANCE

MACBETH

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

Exit SERVANT

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch
35 thee.

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? Or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
40 Proceeding from the heat-oppressèd brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable

Modern Text

BANQUO

You're not asleep yet, sir? The king's in bed. He's
been in an unusually good mood and has granted
many gifts to your household and servants. This
diamond is a present from him to your wife for her
boundless hospitality. *(he hands MACBETH a
diamond)*

MACBETH

Because we were unprepared for the king's visit,
we weren't able to entertain him as well as we
would have wanted to.

BANQUO

Everything's OK. I had a dream last night about
the three witches. At least part of what they said
about you was true.

MACBETH

I don't think about them now. But when we have
an hour to spare we can talk more about it, if
you're willing.

BANQUO

Whenever you like.

MACBETH

If you stick with me, when the time comes, there
will be something in it for you.

BANQUO

I'll do whatever you say, as long as I can do it
with a clear conscience.

MACBETH

Rest easy in the meantime.

BANQUO

Thank you, sir. You do the same.

BANQUO and FLEANCE exit.

MACBETH

(to the SERVANT) Go and tell your mistress to
strike the bell when my drink is ready. Get
yourself to bed.

The SERVANT exits.

Is this a dagger I see in front of me, with its
handle pointing toward my hand? *(to the
dagger)* Come, let me hold you. *(he grabs at the
air in front of him without touching anything)* I
don't have you but I can still see you. Fateful
apparition, isn't it possible to touch you as well as
see you? Or are you nothing more than a dagger
created by the mind, a hallucination from my
fevered brain? I can still see you, and you look as

Original Text

- As this which now I draw.
 Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going,
 And such an instrument I was to use.
- 45 Mine eyes are made the fools o' th' other senses,
 Or else worth all the rest. I see thee still,
 And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
 Which was not so before. There's no such thing.
 It is the bloody business which informs
- 50 Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half-world
 Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
 The curtained sleep. Witchcraft celebrates
 Pale Hecate's offerings, and withered murder,
 Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf,
- 55 Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
 Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,
- 60 And take the present horror from the time,
 Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives.
 Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

Modern Text

real as this other dagger that I'm pulling out now. *(he draws a dagger)* You're leading me toward the place I was going already, and I was planning to use a weapon just like you. My eyesight must either be the one sense that's not working, or else it's the only one that's working right. I can still see you, and I see blood splashes on your blade and handle that weren't there before. *(to himself)* There's no dagger here. It's the murder I'm about to do that's making me think I see one. Now half the world is asleep and being deceived by evil nightmares. Witches are offering sacrifices to their goddess Hecate. Old man murder, having been roused by the howls of his wolf, walks silently to his destination, moving like [Tarquin](#), as quiet as a ghost. *(speaking to the ground)* Hard ground, don't listen to the direction of my steps. I don't want you to echo back where I am and break the terrible stillness of this moment, a silence that is so appropriate for what I'm about to do. While I stay here talking, Duncan lives. The more I talk, the more my courage cools.

Act 2, Scene 1, Page 3

A bell rings

I go, and it is done. The bell invites me.
 Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
 That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

Exit

A bell rings.

I'm going now. The murder is as good as done. The bell is telling me to do it. Don't listen to the bell, Duncan, because it summons you either to heaven or to hell.

MACBETH *exits.*

Act 2, Scene 2

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
 5 bellman,
 Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it.
 The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
 Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugged
 their possets,
 That death and nature do contend about them,
 Whether they live or die.

MACBETH

(within) Who's there? What, ho!

LADY MACBETH

- Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
 10 And 'tis not done. Th' attempt and not the deed
 Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;

LADY MACBETH *enters.*

LADY MACBETH

The alcohol that got the servants drunk has made me bold. The same liquor that quenched their thirst has fired me up. Listen! Quiet! That was the owl that shrieked, with a scary "good night" like the bells they ring before they execute people. Macbeth must be killing the king right now. The doors to Duncan's chamber are open, and the drunk servants make a mockery of their jobs by snoring instead of protecting the king. I put so many drugs in their drinks that you can't tell if they're alive or dead.

MACBETH

(from offstage) Who's there? What is it?

LADY MACBETH

Oh no, I'm afraid the servants woke up, and the murder didn't happen. For us to attempt murder and not succeed would ruin us. *(She hears a*

Original Text

He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done 't.

Enter MACBETH, with bloody daggers

My husband!

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

15 I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

Did not you speak?

MACBETH

When?

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 2

LADY MACBETH

Now.

MACBETH

As I descended?

LADY MACBETH

Ay.

MACBETH

Hark! Who lies i' th' second chamber?

LADY MACBETH

Donalbain.

MACBETH

20 *(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!"

25 That they did wake each other. I stood and heard
them.

But they did say their prayers, and addressed them
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH

There are two lodged together.

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

30 Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH

But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?

Modern Text

noise.) Listen to that! I put the servants' daggers
where Macbeth would find them. He couldn't
have missed them. If Duncan hadn't reminded me
of my father when I saw him sleeping, I would
have killed him myself.

MACBETH enters carrying bloody daggers.

My husband!

MACBETH

I have done the deed. Did you hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH

I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

Didn't you say something?

MACBETH

When?

LADY MACBETH

Just now.

MACBETH

As I came down?

LADY MACBETH

Yes.

MACBETH

Listen! Who's sleeping in the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH

Donalbain.

MACBETH

(looking at his bloody hands) This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH

That's a stupid thing to say.

MACBETH

One of the servants laughed in his sleep, and one
cried, "Murder!" and they woke each other up. I
stood and listened to them, but then they said
their prayers and went back to sleep.

LADY MACBETH

Malcolm and Donalbain are asleep in the same
room.

MACBETH

One servant cried, "God bless us!" and the other
replied, "Amen," as if they had seen my bloody
hands. Listening to their frightened voices, I
couldn't reply "Amen" when they said "God bless
us!"

LADY MACBETH

Don't think about it so much.

MACBETH

But why couldn't I say "Amen"? I desperately

Original Text

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.

Modern Text

needed God’s blessing, but the word “Amen”
stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH

We can’t think that way about what we did. If we
do, it’ll drive us crazy.

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 3

MACBETH

35 Methought I heard a voice cry, “Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep”—the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,
The death of each day’s life, sore labor’s bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature’s second course,
40 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,
45 You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there. Go carry them and smear
50 The sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

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

Exit

Knock within

MACBETH

I thought I heard a voice cry, “Sleep no more!
Macbeth is murdering sleep.” Innocent sleep.
Sleep that soothes away all our worries. Sleep
that puts each day to rest. Sleep that relieves the
weary laborer and heals hurt minds. Sleep, the
main course in life’s feast, and the most
nourishing.

LADY MACBETH

What are you talking about?

MACBETH

The voice kept crying, “Sleep no more!” to
everyone in the house. “Macbeth has murdered
sleep, and therefore Macbeth will sleep no more.”

LADY MACBETH

Who said that? Why, my worthy lord, you let
yourself become weak when you think about
things in this cowardly way. Go get some water
and wash this bloody evidence from your hands.
Why did you carry these daggers out of the
room? They have to stay there. Go take them
back and smear the sleeping guards with the
blood.

MACBETH

I can’t go back. I’m afraid even to think about
what I’ve done. I can’t stand to look at it again.

LADY MACBETH

Coward! Give me the daggers. Dead and
sleeping people can’t hurt you any more than
pictures can. Only children are afraid of scary
pictures. If Duncan bleeds I’ll paint the servants’
faces with his blood. We must make it seem like
they’re guilty.

LADY MACBETH exits.

A sound of knocking from offstage.

Act 2, Scene 2, Page 4

MACBETH

Whence is that knocking?
How is ’t with me when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? Ha! They pluck out mine eyes.
60 Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather

MACBETH

Where is that knocking coming from? What’s
happening to me, that I’m frightened of every
noise? (*looking at his hands*) Whose hands are
these? Ha! They’re plucking out my eyes. Will all
the water in the ocean wash this blood from my

Original Text

The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

Enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

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

Knock within

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 within

70 Hark! More knocking.
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

MACBETH

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

Knock within

75 Wake Duncan with thy knocking. I would thou
couldst.

Exeunt

Act 2, Scene 3

Enter a PORTER. Knocking within

PORTER

Here's a knocking indeed! If a man were porter of
hell-gate, he should have old turning the key.

Knock within

Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' th' name of
Beelzebub? Here's a farmer that hanged himself on
the expectation of plenty. Come in time, have napkins
enough about you, here you'll sweat for 't.

Knock within

Knock, knock! Who's there, in th' other devil's name?
Faith, here's an equivocator that could swear in both
the scales against either scale, who committed
treason enough for God's sake, yet could not
equivocate to heaven. O, come in, equivocator.

Knock within

5 Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an
English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French
hose. Come in, tailor. Here you may roast your goose.

Modern Text

hands? No, instead my hands will stain the seas
scarlet, turning the green waters red.

LADY MACBETH enters.

LADY MACBETH

My hands are as red as yours, but I would be
ashamed if my heart were as pale and weak.

A sound of knocking from offstage.

I hear someone knocking at the south entry. Let's
go back to our bedroom. A little water will wash
away the evidence of our guilt. It's so simple!
You've lost your resolve.

A sound of knocking from offstage.

Listen! There's more knocking. Put on your
nightgown, in case someone comes and sees
that we're awake. Snap out of your daze.

MACBETH

Rather than have to think about my crime, I'd
prefer to be completely unconscious.

A sound of knocking from offstage.

Wake Duncan with your knocking. I wish you
could!

They exit.

*A sound of knocking from offstage. A PORTER ,
who is obviously drunk, enters.*

PORTER

This is a lot of knocking! Come to think of it, if a
man were in charge of opening the gates of hell to
let people in, he would have to turn the key a lot.

A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock, knock, knock! (*pretending he's the
gatekeeper in hell*) Who's there, in the devil's
name? Maybe it's a farmer who killed himself
because grain was cheap. (*talking to the
imaginary farmer*) You're here just in time! I hope
you brought some handkerchiefs; you're going to
sweat a lot here.

A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's
name? Maybe it's some slick, two-faced con man
who lied under oath. But he found out that you
can't lie to God, and now he's going to hell for
perjury. Come on in, con man.

A sound of knocking from offstage.

Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Maybe it's an
English tailor who liked to skimp on the fabric for
people's clothes. But now that tight pants are in

Original Text

Modern Text

fashion he can't get away with it. Come on in, tailor. You can heat your iron up in here.

Knock within

A sound of knocking from offstage.

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 2

Knock, knock! Never at quiet. What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further. I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.

Knock within

Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter.

Opens the gate

*Enter **MACDUFF** and **LENNOX***

MACDUFF

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

PORTER

10 'Faith sir, we were carousing till the second cock. And drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

MACDUFF

What three things does drink especially provoke?

PORTER

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

MACDUFF

I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

Knock, knock! Never a moment of peace! Who are you? Ah, this place is too cold to be hell. I won't pretend to be the devil's porter anymore. I was going to let someone from every profession into hell.

A sound of knocking from offstage.

I'm coming, I'm coming! Please, don't forget to leave me a tip.

*The **PORTER** opens the gate.*

***MACDUFF** and **LENNOX** enter.*

MACDUFF

Did you go to bed so late, my friend, that you're having a hard time getting up now?

PORTER

That's right sir, we were drinking until 3 A.M., and drink, sir, makes a man do three things.

MACDUFF

What three things does drink make a man do?

PORTER

Drinking turns your nose red, it puts you to sleep, and it makes you urinate. Lust it turns on but also turns off. What I mean is, drinking stimulates desire but hinders performance. Therefore, too much drink is like a con artist when it comes to your sex drive. It sets you up for a fall. It gets you up but it keeps you from getting off. It persuades you and discourages you. It gives you an erection but doesn't let you keep it, if you see what I'm saying. It makes you dream about erotic experiences, but then it leaves you asleep and needing to pee.

MACDUFF

I believe drink did all of this to you last night.

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 3

PORTER

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

MACDUFF

15 Is thy master stirring?

*Enter **MACBETH***

Our knocking has awaked him. Here he comes.

PORTER

It did, sir. It got me right in the throat. But I got even with drink. I was too strong for it. Although it weakened my legs and made me unsteady, I managed to vomit it out and laid it flat on the ground.

MACDUFF

Is your master awake?

***MACBETH** enters.*

Our knocking woke him up. Here he comes.

Original Text

LENNOX

Good morrow, noble sir.

MACBETH

Good morrow, both.

MACDUFF

Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH

Not yet.

MACDUFF

He did command me to call timely on him.

20 I have almost slipped the hour.

MACBETH

I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF

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

MACBETH

The labor we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.

MACDUFF

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

Exit MACDUFF

LENNOX

Goes the king hence today?

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 4

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,
30 Lamentings heard i' th' air, strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatched to the woeful time. The obscure bird
Clamored the livelong night. Some say the Earth
35 Was feverous and did shake.

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!

MACBETH & LENNOX

What's the matter?

Modern Text

LENNOX

Good morning, noble sir.

MACBETH

Good morning to both of you.

MACDUFF

Is the king awake, worthy thane?

MACBETH

Not yet.

MACDUFF

He commanded me to wake him up early. I've
almost missed the time he requested.

MACBETH

I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF

I know the burden of hosting him is both an honor
and a trouble, but that doesn't mean it's not a
trouble just the same.

MACBETH

The work we enjoy is not really work. This is the
door.

MACDUFF

I'll wake him, because that's my job.

MACDUFF exits.

LENNOX

Is the king leaving here today?

MACBETH

He is. He told us to arrange it.

LENNOX

The night has been chaotic. The wind blew down
through the chimneys where we were sleeping.
People are saying they heard cries of grief in the
air, strange screams of death, and terrible voices
predicting catastrophes that will usher in a woeful
new age. The owl made noise all night. Some
people say that the earth shook as if it had a
fever.

MACBETH

It was a rough night.

LENNOX

I'm too young to remember anything like it.

MACDUFF enters, upset.

MACDUFF

Oh, horror, horror, horror! This is beyond words
and beyond belief!

MACBETH & LENNOX

What's the matter?

Original Text

MACDUFF

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

MACBETH

What is 't you say? "The life"?

LENNOX

Mean you his majesty?

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 5

MACDUFF

- 45 Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak.
See, and then speak yourselves.

Exeunt MACBETH and LENNOX

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum bell. Murder and treason!

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

Bell rings. Enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

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

MACDUFF

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

Enter BANQUO

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

LADY MACBETH

Woe, alas!
What, in our house?

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 6

BANQUO

- 65 Too cruel any where.
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,

Modern Text

MACDUFF

The worst thing imaginable has happened. A murderer has broken into God's temple and stolen the life out of it.

MACBETH

What are you talking about? "The life"?

LENNOX

Do you mean the king?

MACDUFF

Go into the bedroom and see for yourself. What's in there will make you freeze with horror. Don't ask me to talk about it. Go look and then do the talking yourselves.

MACBETH and LENNOX exit.

Wake up, wake up! Ring the alarm bell. Murder and treason! Banquo and Donalbain, Malcolm! Wake up! Shake off sleep, which looks like death, and look at death itself! Get up, get up, and look at this image of doomsday! Malcolm! Banquo! Get up from your beds as if you were rising out of your own graves, and walk like ghosts to come witness this horror. Ring the bell.

A bell rings. LADY MACBETH enters.

LADY MACBETH

What's going on? Why is that terrifying trumpet calling together everyone who's sleeping in the house? Speak up and tell me!

MACDUFF

Oh gentle lady, my news isn't fit for your ears. If I repeated it to you, it would kill you as soon as you heard it.

BANQUO enters.

Oh Banquo, Banquo, the king has been murdered!

LADY MACBETH

How horrible! What, in our own house?

BANQUO

It would be a terrible event no matter where it happened. Dear Macduff, I beg you, tell us you were lying and say it isn't so.

MACBETH and LENNOX reenter, with ROSS.

MACBETH

If I had only died an hour before this event I could

Original Text

I had lived a blessed time, for from this instant
 70 There's nothing serious in mortality.
 All is but toys. Renown and grace is dead.
 The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
 Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN

DONALBAIN

What is amiss?

MACBETH

75 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.

MACDUFF

Your royal father's murdered.

MALCOLM

Oh, by whom?

LENNOX

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

MACBETH

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

Modern Text

say I had lived a blessed life. Because from this moment on, there is nothing worth living for. Everything is a sick joke. The graceful and renowned king is dead. The wine of life has been poured out, and only the dregs remain.

MALCOLM and DONALBAIN enter.

DONALBAIN

What's wrong?

MACBETH

You are, but you don't know it yet. The source from which your royal blood comes has been stopped.

MACDUFF

Your royal father is murdered.

MALCOLM

Who did it?

LENNOX

It seems that the guards who were supposed to be protecting his chamber did it. Their hands and faces were all covered with blood. So were their daggers, which we found on their pillows, unwiped. They stared at us in confusion. No one's life should have been entrusted to them.

MACBETH

And yet I still regret the anger that drove me to kill them.

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 7

MACDUFF

Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH

Who can be wise, amazed, temp'rate, and furious,
 Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man.
 Th' expedition of my violent love
 90 Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
 His silver skin laced with his golden blood,
 And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature
 For ruin's wasteful entrance; there, the murderers,
 Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers
 95 Unmannerly breeched with gore. Who could refrain,
 That had a heart to love, and in that heart
 Courage to make 's love known?

LADY MACBETH

Help me hence, ho!

MACDUFF

Look to the lady.

MALCOLM

(aside to DONALBAIN) Why do we hold our
 100 tongues,
 That most may claim this argument for ours?

MACDUFF

What did you do that for?

MACBETH

Is it possible to be wise, bewildered, calm, furious, loyal, and neutral all at once? Nobody can do that. The violent rage inspired by my love for Duncan caused me to act before I could think rationally and tell myself to pause. There was Duncan, his white skin all splattered with his precious blood. The gashes where the knives had cut him looked like wounds to nature itself. Then right next to him I saw the murderers, dripping with blood, their daggers rudely covered in gore. Who could have restrained himself, who loved Duncan and had the courage to act on it?

LADY MACBETH

Help me out of here, quickly!

MACDUFF

Take care of the lady.

MALCOLM

(speaking so that only DONALBAIN can hear) Why are we keeping quiet? The two of us have the most to say in this matter.

Original Text

DONALBAIN

(*aside to MALCOLM*) What should be spoken here,
where our fate,
Hid in an auger-hole, may rush and seize us?
Let's away. Our tears are not yet brewed.

MALCOLM

(*aside to DONALBAIN*) Nor our strong sorrow
105 Upon the foot of motion.

BANQUO

Look to the lady.

Exit LADY MACBETH, attended

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 8

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

MACDUFF

And so do I.

ALL

So all.

MACBETH

Let's briefly put on manly readiness,
115 And meet i' th' hall together.

ALL

Well contented.

Exeunt all but MALCOLM and DONALBAIN

MALCOLM

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

DONALBAIN

To Ireland, I. Our separated fortune
120 Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles. The near in blood,
The nearer bloody.

MALCOLM

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

Modern Text

DONALBAIN

(*speaking so that only MALCOLM can hear*) What
are we going to say here, where danger may be
waiting to strike at us from anywhere? Let's get
out of here. We haven't even begun to weep
yet—but there will be time for that later.

MALCOLM

(*speaking so that only DONALBAIN can
hear*) And the time hasn't come yet for us to turn
our deep grief into action.

BANQUO

Take care of the lady.

LADY MACBETH is carried out.

When we're properly dressed for the cold, let's
meet and discuss this bloody crime to see if we
can figure anything out. Right now we're shaken
up by fears and doubts. I'm putting myself in
God's hands, and with his help I plan to fight
against the secret plot that caused this
treasonous murder.

MACDUFF

So will I.

ALL

So will we all.

MACBETH

Let's get dressed quickly and then meet in the
hall.

ALL

Agreed.

*Everyone exits
except MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*

MALCOLM

What are you going to do? Let's not stay here
with them. It's easy for a liar to pretend to feel
sorrow when he actually feels none. I'm going to
England.

DONALBAIN

I'll go to Ireland. We'll both be safer if we go
separate ways. Wherever we go, men will smile
at us while hiding daggers. Our closest relatives
are the ones most likely to murder us.

MALCOLM

We haven't yet encountered that danger, and the
best thing to do is avoid it entirely. With that in
mind, let's get on our horses. We'd better not
worry about saying polite good-byes; we should
just get away quickly. There's good reason to
escape when there's no mercy to be found
anymore.

Original Text

Modern Text

*Exeunt**They exit.*

Act 2, Scene 4

*Enter ROSS with an OLD MAN**ROSS and an OLD MAN enter.***OLD MAN**

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

ROSS

Ha, good father,
 5 Thou seest the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
 Threatens his bloody stage. By th' clock 'tis day,
 And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp.
 Is 't night's predominance or the day's shame
 That darkness does the face of Earth entomb
 10 When living light should kiss it?

OLD MAN

'Tis unnatural,
 Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
 A falcon, tow'ring in her pride of place,
 Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.

ROSS

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

OLD MAN

'Tis said they eat each other.

ROSS

They did so, to th' amazement of mine eyes
 20 That looked upon 't. Here comes the good Macduff.

Enter MACDUFF

Act 2, Scene 4, Page 2

How goes the world, sir, now?

MACDUFF

Why, see you not?

ROSS

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

MACDUFF

Those that Macbeth hath slain.

ROSS

Alas, the day!
 What good could they pretend?

OLD MAN

I can remember the past seventy years pretty well, and in all that time I have seen dreadful hours and strange things. But last night's horrors make everything that came before seem like a joke.

ROSS

Ah yes, old man. You can see the skies. They look like they're upset about what mankind has been doing, and they're threatening the Earth with storms. The clock says it's daytime, but dark night is strangling the sun. Is it because night is so strong, or because day is so weak, that darkness covers the earth when it's supposed to be light?

OLD MAN

It's unnatural, just like the murder that has been committed. Last Tuesday a falcon was circling high in the sky, and it was caught and killed by an ordinary owl that usually goes after mice.

ROSS

And something else strange happened. Duncan's horses, which are beautiful and swift and the best of their breed, suddenly turned wild and broke out of their stalls. Refusing to be obedient as usual, they acted like they were at war with mankind.

OLD MAN

They say the horses ate each other.

ROSS

I saw it with my own eyes. It was an amazing sight. Here comes the good Macduff.

MACDUFF enters.

How are things going now?

MACDUFF

Can't you see for yourself?

ROSS

Does anyone know who committed this horrible crime?

MACDUFF

The servants Macbeth killed.

ROSS

It's too bad he killed them. What good would it have done those men to kill Duncan?

Original Text

MACDUFF

They were suborned.

- 25 Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled, which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.

ROSS

'Gainst nature still!

Thriftless ambition, that will raven up

- 30 Thine own lives' means! Then 'tis most like
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

MACDUFF

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

ROSS

Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFF

- 35 Carried to Colmekill,
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

ROSS

Will you to Scone?

MACDUFF

No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

ROSS

Well, I will thither.

Modern Text

MACDUFF

They were paid to betray their master. Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons, have run away and fled, which makes them the prime suspects.

ROSS

Everything about this is unnatural! What a stupid ambition, causing a son to kill the father who supports him. Then it looks like Macbeth will become king.

MACDUFF

He has already been named king and has left for Scone to be crowned.

ROSS

Where is Duncan's body?

MACDUFF

It was carried to Colmekill to be placed in the tomb of his ancestors, where their bones are kept safe.

ROSS

Are you going to Scone?

MACDUFF

No, cousin, I'm going to Fife.

ROSS

Well, I'll go to Scone.

Act 2, Scene 4, Page 3

MACDUFF

- 40 Well, may you see things well done there. Adieu,
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

ROSS

Farewell, father.

OLD MAN

God's benison go with you and with those
That would make good of bad and friends of foes.

Exeunt

MACDUFF

I hope things go well there. Good-bye! And let's hope things don't get worse.

ROSS

Farewell, old man.

OLD MAN

May God's blessing go with you and with all who turn bad into good, and enemies into friends!

They all exit.

Act 3, Scene 1

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 stand in thy posterity,

- 5 But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well,
10 And set me up in hope? But hush, no more.

BANQUO enters.

BANQUO

Now you have it all: you're the king, the thane of Cawdor, and the thane of Glamis, just like the weird women promised you. And I suspect you cheated to win these titles. But it was also prophesied that the crown would not go to your descendants, and that my sons and grandsons would be kings instead. If the witches tell the truth—which they did about you—maybe what they said about me will come true too. But shhh! I'll shut up now.

D suspicious

Original Text

*Sennet sounded. Enter **MACBETH**, as king, **LADY MACBETH**, as queen, **LENNOX**, **ROSS**, **LORDS, LADIES**, and attendants*

MACBETH

Here's our chief guest.

LADY MACBETH

If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-things unbecoming.

MACBETH

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

BANQUO

Let your highness
Command upon me, to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
Forever knit.

Modern Text

*A trumpet plays. **MACBETH** enters dressed as king, and **LADY MACBETH** enters dressed as queen, together with **LENNOX**, **ROSS**, **LORDS, LADIES**, and their attendants*

MACBETH

(indicating **BANQUO**) Here's our most important guest.

LADY MACBETH

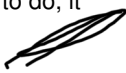
If we forgot him, our big celebration wouldn't be complete, and that wouldn't be any good.

MACBETH

(to **BANQUO**) Tonight we're having a ceremonial banquet, and I want you to be there.

BANQUO

Whatever your highness commands me to do, it is always my duty to do it.



Act 3, Scene 1, Page 2

MACBETH

20 Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO

Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH

We should have else desired your good advice—
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous—
In this day's council, but we'll take tomorrow.

25 Is 't far you ride?

BANQUO

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

MACBETH

Fail not our feast.

BANQUO

30 My lord, I will not.

MACBETH

We hear our bloody cousins are bestowed
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention. But of that tomorrow,
35 When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse. Adieu,
Till your return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

BANQUO

Ay, my good lord. Our time does call upon 's.

MACBETH

Are you going riding this afternoon?

BANQUO

Yes, my good lord.

MACBETH

We would have liked to have heard your good advice, which has always been serious and helpful, at the council today, but we'll wait until tomorrow. Are you riding far?

BANQUO

I'm going far enough that I'll be riding from now until dinner. Unless my horse goes faster than expected, I will be back an hour or two after sunset.

MACBETH

Don't miss our feast.

BANQUO

My lord, I won't miss it.

MACBETH

We hear that the princes, those murderers, have hidden in England and Ireland. They haven't confessed to cruelly murdering their own father, and they've been making up strange lies to tell their hosts. But we can talk more about that tomorrow, when we'll discuss matters of state that concern us both. Hurry up and get to your horse. Good-bye, until you return tonight. Is Fleance going with you?

BANQUO

Yes, my good lord. It's time we hit the road.

** Princes*

Original Text

Modern Text

MACBETH

I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,
 40 And so I do commend you to their backs.
 Farewell.

MACBETH

I hope your horses are fast and surefooted. And
 with that, I send you to them. Farewell.

Exit BANQUO

BANQUO exits.

Let every man be master of his time
 Till seven at night. To make society
 The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
 45 Till suppertime alone. While then, God be with you!

Everybody may do as they please until seven
 o'clock tonight. In order to make your company
 even more enjoyable, I'm going to keep to myself
 until suppertime. Until then, God be with you!

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 3

Exeunt all except MACBETH and a SERVANT

Everyone exits except MACBETH and a SERVANT

Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men
 Our pleasure?

(to the SERVANT) You there, let me have a word
 with you. Are those men waiting for me?

SERVANT

They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

SERVANT

They're waiting outside the palace gate, my lord.

MACBETH

Bring them before us.

MACBETH

Bring them to me.

Exit SERVANT

The SERVANT exits.

50 To be thus is nothing,
 But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo
 Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature
 Reigns that which would be feared. 'Tis much he
 dares,
 55 And to that dauntless temper of his mind
 He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor
 To act in safety. There is none but he
 Whose being I do fear, and under him
 My genius is rebuked, as it is said
 60 Mark Antony's was by Caesar. He chid the sisters
 When first they put the name of king upon me
 And bade them speak to him. Then, prophetlike,
 They hailed him father to a line of kings.
 Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown
 65 And put a barren scepter in my grip,
 Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,
 No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
 For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;
 For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered;
 70 Put rancors in the vessel of my peace
 Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
 Given to the common enemy of man,
 To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
 Rather than so, come fate into the list,
 And champion me to th' utterance. Who's there?

To be the king is nothing if I'm not safe as the
 king. I'm very afraid of Banquo. There's
 something noble about him that makes me fear
 him. He's willing to take risks, and his mind never
 stops working. He has the wisdom to act bravely
 but also safely. I'm not afraid of anyone but him.
 Around him, my guardian angel is frightened, just
 as Mark Antony's angel supposedly feared
 Octavius Caesar. Banquo chided the witches
 when they first called me king, asking them to tell
 him his own future. Then, like prophets, they
 named him the father to a line of kings. They
 gave me a crown and a scepter that I can't pass
 on. Someone outside my family will take these
 things away from me, since no son of mine will
 take my place as king. If this is true, then I've
 tortured my conscience and murdered the
 gracious Duncan for Banquo's sons. I've ruined
 my own peace for their benefit. I've handed over
 my everlasting soul to the devil so that they could
 be kings. Banquo's sons, kings! Instead of
 watching that happen, I will challenge fate to
 battle and fight to the death. Who's there!

Enter SERVANT and two MURDERERS

The SERVANT comes back in with two MURDERERS

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 4

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

Now go to the door and stay there until I call for

Handwritten notes:
 Around.
 Banquo
 friend
 enemy
 regret
 Banquo's children will inherit

Original Text

Modern Text

Exit **SERVANT**

The **SERVANT** exits.

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

you.

Wasn't it just yesterday that we spoke to each other?

FIRST MURDERER

FIRST MURDERER

It was, so please your highness.

It was yesterday, your highness.

MACBETH

MACBETH

Well then, now
 Have you considered of my speeches? Know
 That it was he, in the times past, which held you
 80 So under fortune, which you thought had been
 Our innocent self. This I made good to you
 In our last conference, passed in probation with you,
 How you were borne in hand, how crossed, the
 instruments,
 85 Who wrought with them, and all things else that
 might
 To half a soul and to a notion crazed
 Say, "Thus did Banquo."

Well, did you think about what I said? You should know that it was Banquo who made your lives hell for so long, which you always thought was my fault. But I was innocent. I showed you the proof at our last meeting. I explained how you were deceived, how you were thwarted, the things that were used against you, who was working against you, and a lot of other things that would convince even a half-wit or a crazy person to say, "Banquo did it!"

FIRST MURDERER

FIRST MURDERER

You made it known to us.

You explained it all.

MACBETH

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
 90 That you can let this go? Are you so gospelled
 To pray for this good man and for his issue,
 Whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave
 And beggared yours forever?

I did that and more, which brings me to the point of this second meeting. Are you so patient and forgiving that you're going to let him off the hook? Are you so pious that you would pray for this man and his children, a man who has pushed you toward an early grave and put your family in poverty forever?

FIRST MURDERER

FIRST MURDERER

We are men, my liege.

We are men, my lord.

MACBETH

MACBETH

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

Yes, you're part of the species called men. Just as hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, mutts, shaggy lapdogs, swimming dogs, and wolf-dog crossbreeds are all dogs. But if you list the different kinds of dogs according to their qualities, you can distinguish which breeds are fast or slow, which ones are clever, which ones are watchdogs, and which ones hunters. You can classify each dog according to the natural gifts that separate it from all other dogs. It's the same with men. Now, if you occupy some place in the list of men that isn't down at the very bottom, tell me. Because if that's the case, I will tell you a plan that will get rid of your enemy and bring you closer to me. As long as Banquo lives, I am sick. I'll be healthy when he is dead.

Blame B.G.

Set up Banquo to be killed

Be a man! Sands I'lla I... X

Kill Banquo

Original Text

SECOND MURDERER

I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER

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

MACBETH

Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS

True, my lord.

MACBETH

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

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 6

SECOND MURDERER

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

FIRST MURDERER

Though our lives—

MACBETH

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

BOTH MURDERERS

We are resolved, my lord.

MACBETH

145 I'll call upon you straight. Abide within.

Modern Text

SECOND MURDERER

My lord, I've been so kicked around by the world,
and I'm so angry, that I don't even care what I
do.

FIRST MURDERER

I'm the same. I'm so sick of bad luck and trouble
that I'd risk my life on any bet, as long as it would
either fix my life or end it once and for all.

MACBETH

You both know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS

It's true, my lord.

MACBETH

He's my enemy too, and I hate him so much that
every minute he's alive it eats away at my heart.
Since I'm king, I could simply use my power to
get rid of him. But I can't do that, because he and
I have friends in common whom I need, so I have
to be able to moan and cry over his death in
public even though I'll be the one who had him
killed. That's why I need your help right now. I
have to hide my real plans from the public eye
for many important reasons.

SECOND MURDERER

We'll do what you want us to, my lord.

FIRST MURDERER

Though our lives—

MACBETH

(interrupts him) I can see the determination in
your eyes. Within the next hour I'll tell you where
to go and exactly when to strike. It must be done
tonight, away from the palace. Always remember
that I must be free from suspicion. For the plan to
work perfectly, you must kill both Banquo and his
son, Fleance, who keeps him company. Getting
rid of Fleance is as important to me as knocking
off Banquo. Each of you should make up your
own mind about whether you're going to do this.
I'll come to you soon.

BOTH MURDERERS

We have decided, my lord. We're in.

MACBETH

I'll call for you soon. Stay inside.

why does he have
Banquo?

Original Text

Exeunt MURDERERS

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

Exit

Modern Text

The MURDERERS exit.

The deal is closed. Banquo, if your soul is going
to make it to heaven, tonight's the night.

He exits.

Act 3, Scene 2

*Enter LADY MACBETH 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

5 Madam, I will.

*Exit SERVANT***LADY MACBETH**

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

Enter MACBETH

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

MACBETH

15 We have scorched the snake, not killed it.
She'll close and be herself whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds
suffer,
20 Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
25 In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave.
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.
Treason has done his worst; nor steel nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further.

*LADY MACBETH and a SERVANT enter.***LADY MACBETH**

Has Banquo left the court?

SERVANT

Yes, madam, but he'll be back tonight.

LADY MACBETH

Go tell the king I want to talk to him for a few
minutes.

SERVANT

No problem, madam.

*The SERVANT exits.***LADY MACBETH**

If you get what you want and you're still not
happy, you've spent everything and gained
nothing. It's better to be the person who gets
murdered than to be the killer and be tormented
with anxiety.

MACBETH enters.

What's going on, my lord? Why are you keeping
to yourself, with only your sad thoughts to keep
you company? Those thoughts should have died
when you killed the men you're thinking about. If
you can't fix it, you shouldn't give it a second
thought. What's done is done.

MACBETH

We have slashed the snake but not killed it. It will
heal and be as good as new, and we'll be
threatened by its fangs once again. But the
universe can fall apart, and heaven and earth
crumble, before I'll eat my meals in fear and
spend my nights tossing and turning with these
nightmares I've been having. I'd rather be dead
than endure this endless mental torture and
harrowing sleep deprivation. We killed those men
and sent them to rest in peace so that we could
gain our own peace. Duncan lies in his grave,
through with life's troubles, and he's sleeping
well. We have already done the worst we can do
to him with our treason. After that, nothing can
hurt him further—not weapons, poison, rebellion,
invasion, or anything else.

unhappy
state

Act 3, Scene 2, Page 2

LADY MACBETH**LADY MACBETH**

Original Text

Modern Text

Come on, gentle my lord,
 30 Sleek o'er your rugged looks. Be bright and jovial
 Among your guests tonight.

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

You must leave this.

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

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

MACBETH

There's comfort yet; they are assailable.
 Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
 His cloistered flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
 The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
 45 Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done
 A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH

What's to be done?

Act 3, Scene 2, Page 3

MACBETH

Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
 Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,
 Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day
 50 And with thy bloody and invisible hand
 Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond
 Which keeps me pale. Light thickens, and the crow
 Makes wing to th' rooky wood.
 Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
 55 Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
 Thou marvel'st at my words: but hold thee still.
 Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
 So, prithee, go with me.

Exeunt

Come on, relax, dear. Put on a happy face and
 look cheerful and agreeable for your guests
 tonight.

MACBETH

That's exactly what I'll do, my love, and I hope
 you'll do the same. Give Banquo your special
 attention. Talk to him and look at him in a way
 that will make him feel important. We're in a
 dangerous situation, where we have to flatter him
 and hide our true feelings.

LADY MACBETH

You have to stop talking like this.

MACBETH

Argh! I feel like my mind is full of scorpions, my
 dear wife. You know that Banquo and his son
 Fleance are still alive.

LADY MACBETH

But they can't live forever.

MACBETH

That's comforting. They can be killed, it's true. So
 be cheerful. Before the bat flies through the
 castle, and before the dung beetle makes his little
 humming noise to tell us it's nighttime, a dreadful
 deed will be done.

LADY MACBETH

What are you going to do?

MACBETH

It's better you don't know about it until after it's
 done, when you can applaud it. *(to the
 night)* Come, night, and blindfold the kindhearted
 day. Use your bloody and invisible hand to tear
 up Banquo's lease on life, which keeps me in
 fear. *(to himself)* The sky's getting dark, and the
 crow is returning home to the woods. The gentle
 creatures of the day are falling asleep, while
 night's predators are waking up to look for their
 prey. *(to LADY MACBETH)* You seem surprised
 at my words, but don't question me yet. Bad
 deeds force you to commit more bad deeds. So,
 please, come with me.

They exit.

Act 3, Scene 3

Enter three **MURDERERS**

The two **MURDERERS** enter with a
 third **MURDERER**.

FIRST MURDERER

But who did bid thee join with us?

FIRST MURDERER

But who told you to come here and join us?

*Why is he
 about
 Banquo?*

*Keep
 Banquo
 side
 I going
 crazy*

*She has created a monster
 night = bad*

Original Text

Modern Text

THIRD MURDERER
Macbeth.

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

FIRST MURDERER
Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.
Now spurs the lated traveler apace
To gain the timely inn, and near approaches
10 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 expectation
Already are i' th' court.

FIRST MURDERER
His horses go about.

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

Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE with a torch

THIRD MURDERER
Macbeth.

SECOND MURDERER
We can trust this guy. He was given exactly the
same orders we were.

FIRST MURDERER
Then stay with us. There's still a bit of daylight in
the sky. Now all the late travellers are hurrying to
reach their inns. Banquo is almost here.

THIRD MURDERER
Listen! I hear horses.

BANQUO
(*from offstage*) Hey, give us some light here!

SECOND MURDERER
That must be him. The rest of the king's guests
are already inside.

FIRST MURDERER
You can hear his horses moving around as the
servants take them to the stables.

THIRD MURDERER
It's almost a mile to the palace gate, but Banquo,
like everybody else, usually walks from here to
the palace.

BANQUO and FLEANCE enter with a torch.

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 2

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.

The MURDERERS attack BANQUO

BANQUO
O treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
20 Thou may 'st revenge —O slave!

BANQUO dies. Exit FLEANCE

THIRD MURDERER
Who did strike out the light?

FIRST MURDERER
Was 't not the way?

SECOND MURDERER
Here comes a light! Here comes a light!

THIRD MURDERER
That's him.

FIRST MURDERER
Prepare yourselves.

BANQUO
It will rain tonight.

FIRST MURDERER
Then let the rain come down.

The MURDERERS attack BANQUO.

BANQUO
Oh, this is treachery! Get out of here, good
Fleance, run, run, run! Someday you can get
revenge.—Oh, you bastard!

BANQUO dies. FLEANCE escapes.

THIRD MURDERER
Who put out the light?

FIRST MURDERER
Wasn't that the best thing to do?

foreshadowing dark

Pathetic for Mac

Original Text

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

Modern Text

THIRD MURDERER

There's only one body here. The son ran away.

SECOND MURDERER

We failed in half of our mission.

FIRST MURDERER

Well, let's get out of here and tell Macbeth what we did accomplish.

They exit.

Act 3, Scene 4

*Banquet prepared. Enter **MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, LORDS,** and attendants.*

MACBETH

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

*The **LORDS** sit*

LORDS

Thanks to your majesty.

MACBETH

Ourself will mingle with society
And play the humble host.

- 5 Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time
We will require her welcome.

LADY MACBETH

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

*Enter **FIRST MURDERER** at the door*

MACBETH

- See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
10 Both sides are even. Here I'll sit i' th' midst.
Be large in mirth. Anon we'll drink a measure
The table round.

*(aside to **FIRST MURDERER**)* There's blood upon
thy face.

FIRST MURDERER

'Tis Banquo's then.

MACBETH

- 15 'Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatched?

*The stage is set for a banquet. **MACBETH** enters with **LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, LORDS,** and their attendants.*

MACBETH

You know your own ranks, so you know where to
sit. Sit down. From the highest to the lowest of
you, I bid you a hearty welcome.

*The **LORDS** sit down.*

LORDS

Thanks to your majesty.

MACBETH

I will walk around and mingle with all of you,
playing the humble host. My wife will stay in her
royal chair, but at the appropriate time I will have
her welcome you all.

LADY MACBETH

Say welcome to all of our friends for me, sir, for in
my heart they are all welcome.

*The **FIRST MURDERER** appears at the door.*

MACBETH

And they respond to you with their hearts as well.
The table is full on both sides. I will sit here in the
middle. Be free and happy. Soon we will toast
around the table.

*(approaching the door and speaking to
the **MURDERER**)* There's blood on your face.

FIRST MURDERER

Then it must be Banquo's.

MACBETH

I'd rather see his blood splattered on your face
than flowing through his veins. Did you finish him
off?

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 2

FIRST MURDERER

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

MACBETH

Thou art the best o' th' cutthroats:
Yet he's good that did the like for Fleance.

FIRST MURDERER

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

MACBETH

You are the best of the cutthroats. But whoever
did the same to Fleance must also be good. If

*Banquo is
dead.
2 Hearts*

Original Text

20 If thou didst it, thou art the nonpareil.

FIRST MURDERER

Most royal sir, Fleance is 'scaped.

MACBETH

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

25 But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears.—But Banquo's safe?

FIRST MURDERER

Ay, my good lord. Safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenchèd gashes on his head,
The least a death to nature.

MACBETH

Thanks for that.

30 There the grown serpent lies. The worm that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed;
No teeth for th' present. Get thee gone. Tomorrow
We'll hear ourselves again.

Exit FIRST MURDERER

LADY MACBETH

My royal lord,

You do not give the cheer. The feast is sold

35 That is not often vouched, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome. To feed were best at home;
From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.

Modern Text

you cut both their throats, then you are the
absolute best.

FIRST MURDERER

Most royal sir, Fleance has escaped.

MACBETH

Now I'm scared again. Otherwise I would have
been perfect, as solid as a piece of marble, as
firm as a rock, as free as the air itself. But now
I'm all tangled up with doubts and fears. But
Banquo's been taken care of?

FIRST MURDERER

Yes, my good lord. He's lying dead in a ditch, with
twenty deep gashes in his head, any one of which
would have been enough to kill him.

MACBETH

Thanks for that. The adult snake lies in the ditch.
The young snake that escaped will in time
become poisonous and threatening, but for now
he has no fangs. Get out of here. I'll talk to you
again tomorrow.

The FIRST MURDERER exits.

LADY MACBETH

My royal lord, you're not entertaining the guests.

If you don't make your guests know they're
welcome, they'll feel like they're paying for their
meal. When you just want to eat, it's better to do
that at home. When you're eating out with people,
you need to have a little more ceremony.
Otherwise dinner parties would be boring.

Doubt!
Why are they snaking?

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 3

MACBETH

Sweet remembrancer!

Now, good digestion wait on appetite,

40 And health on both!

LENNOX

May 't please your highness sit.

*Enter the GHOST OF BANQUO, and sits
in MACBETH's place*

MACBETH

Here had we now our country's honor roofed,
Were the graced person of our Banquo present,
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness

45 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

It's nice of you to remind me. (*raising a glass to
toast his guests*) Since good digestion requires a
good appetite, and good health requires both of
those, here's to good appetites, good digestion,
and good health!

LENNOX

Why don't you have a seat, your highness?

*The GHOST OF BANQUO enters and sits
in MACBETH's place.*

MACBETH

We would have all the nobility of Scotland
gathered under one roof, if only Banquo were
here. I hope it turns out that he's late out of
rudeness, and not because something bad has
happened to him.

ROSS

His absence means he's broken his promise, sir.

If it pleases you, your highness, why don't you sit
with us and grace us with your royal company?

Ghost
pretending
not to hear

Original Text

MACBETH

The table's full.

LENNOX

Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH

50 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

(to GHOST) Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake Thy gory locks at me.

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 4

ROSS

55 Gentlemen, rise. His highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH

Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often thus
And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat.
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well. If much you note him,
60 You shall offend him and extend his passion.
Feed and regard him not. (aside to MACBETH) Are
you a man?

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

O proper stuff!

This is the very painting of your fear.

65 This is the air-drawn dagger which you said
Led you to Duncan. Oh, 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!

70 Why do you make such faces? When all's done,
You look but on a stool.

MACBETH

Prithee, see there! Behold! Look! Lo! How say you?
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.
If charnel houses and our graves must send
75 Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites.

Exit **GHOST**

Modern Text

MACBETH

The table's full.

LENNOX

Here's an empty seat, sir.

MACBETH

Where?

LENNOX

(pointing to where the GHOST sits) Here, my good lord. What's wrong, your highness?

MACBETH

(seeing the GHOST) Which one of you did this?

LORDS

What, my good lord?

MACBETH

(to the GHOST) You can't say I did it. Don't shake your bloody head at me.

ROSS

Gentlemen, stand up. His highness is not well.

LADY MACBETH

Sit down, worthy friends. My husband is often like this, and he has been since he was a child. Please stay seated. This is just a brief fit. In a moment he'll be well again. If you pay too much attention to him you'll make him angry, and that will make his convulsions go on longer. Eat your dinner and pay no attention to him. (speaking so that only MACBETH can hear) Are you a man?

MACBETH

Yes, and a brave one, who dares to look at something that would frighten the devil.

LADY MACBETH

Oh, that's nonsense! This is just another one of the hallucinations you always get when you're afraid. This is like that floating dagger you said was leading you toward Duncan. These outbursts of yours don't even look like real fear. They're more like how you would act if you were a woman telling a scary story by the fireside in front of her grandmother. Shame on you! Why are you making these faces? When the vision passes, you'll see that you're just looking at a stool.

MACBETH

Please, just look over there. Look! Look! See! (to the GHOST) What do you have to say? What do I care? If you can nod, then speak too. If the dead are going to return from their graves, then there's nothing to stop the birds from eating the bodies. So there's no point in our burying people.

The **GHOST** vanishes.

madness / guilt

Making excuses for MacB

MAW

more emasculation

Original Text

Modern Text

LADY MACBETH

What, quite unmanned in folly?

LADY MACBETH

What, has your foolishness paralyzed you completely?

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 5

MACBETH

If I stand here, I saw him.

MACBETH

As sure as I'm standing here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH

Fie, for shame!

LADY MACBETH

Nonsense!

MACBETH

Blood hath been shed ere now, i' th' olden time,
Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;

MACBETH

In ancient times, before there were laws to make the land safe and peaceful, a lot of blood was spilled. Yes, and since then murders have been committed that are too awful to talk about. It used to be that when you knocked a man's brains out he would just die, and that would be it. But now they rise from the dead with twenty fatal head wounds and push us off our stools. This haunting business is even stranger than murder.

80 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
85 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.

LADY MACBETH

My worthy lord, your noble friends miss your company.

MACBETH

I do forget.

MACBETH

I forgot about them. *(to the guests)* Don't be alarmed on my account, my most worthy friends. I have a strange disorder, which no longer shocks those who know me well. *(raising his glass to toast the company)* Come, let's drink a toast: love and health to you all. Now I'll sit down. Give me some wine. Fill up my cup.

Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends.
90 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.

Enter the GHOST OF BANQUO

The GHOST OF BANQUO reappears in MACBETH's seat.

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

I drink to the happiness of everyone at the table, and to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss. I wish he were here! Let's drink to everyone here, and to Banquo. Now, everybody, drink

LORDS

Our duties, and the pledge.

LORDS

Hear, hear.

They drink

They drink.

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 6

MACBETH

(seeing the GHOST) Avaunt, and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee.

MACBETH

(to the GHOST) Go! And get out of my sight! Stay in your grave. There's no marrow in your bones, and your blood is cold. You're staring at me with eyes that have no power to see.

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold.
100 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.

LADY MACBETH

Good friends, think of this as nothing more than a strange habit. It's nothing else. Too bad it's spoiling our pleasure tonight.

*Murder is not the end
death & ghosts*

excuse: Althea

haunted

dead stay dead

Original Text

MACBETH

What man dare, I dare.

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,

105 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

110 The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!

Unreal mockery, hence!

Exit GHOST

Why so, being gone,

Why so, being gone,

I am a man again. Pray you sit still.

LADY MACBETH

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,

With most admired disorder.

MACBETH

Can such things be,

115 And overcome us like a summer's cloud,

Without our special wonder? You make me strange

Even to the disposition that I owe,

When now I think you can behold such sights,

And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,

120 When mine is blanched with fear.

ROSS

What sights, my lord?

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 7

LADY MACBETH

I pray you, speak not. He grows worse and worse.

Question enrages him. At once, good night.

Stand not upon the order of your going,

But go at once.

LENNOX

125 Good night, and better health

Attend his majesty!

LADY MACBETH

A kind good night to all!

Exeunt all but MACBETH and LADY MACBETH

MACBETH

It will have blood, they say. Blood will have blood.

130 Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak.

Augurs and understood relations have

By magot pies and choughs and rooks brought forth

The secret'st man of blood.—What is the night?

LADY MACBETH

Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

Modern Text

MACBETH

I am as brave as any other man. Come at me in the form of a rugged Russian bear, an armor-plated rhinoceros, or a tiger from Iran. Take any shape other than the one you have now and I will never tremble in fear. Or come back to life again and challenge me to a duel in some deserted place. If I tremble then, you can call me a little girl. Get out of here, you horrible ghost, you hallucination. Get out!

Not I'm
a brave man!
lol

The GHOST vanishes.

I am a man again. Pray you sit still.

Look, now that it's gone, I'm a man again.

Please, remain seated.

LADY MACBETH

You have ruined our good cheer and disrupted the gathering by making a spectacle of yourself.

MACBETH

(to the guests) Can things like this happen so suddenly without making us all astonished? You make me feel like I don't know myself, when I see you looking at these terrible things and keeping a straight face, while my face has gone white with fear.

ROSS

What things, my lord?

Clearly not fth is
be King

LADY MACBETH

Please, don't speak to him. He's getting worse and worse. Talk makes him crazy. Everybody, please leave right now. Don't bother exiting in the order of your rank, but just leave right away.

LENNOX

Good night. I hope the king recovers soon!

LADY MACBETH

A kind good night to all!

Everyone leaves except MACBETH and LADY MACBETH.

MACBETH

There's an old saying: the dead will have their revenge. Gravestones have been known to move, and trees to speak, to bring guilty men to justice. The craftiest murderers have been exposed by the mystical signs made by crows and magpies. How late at night is it?

LADY MACBETH

It's almost morning. You can't tell whether it's day or night.

Revenge.
superstition