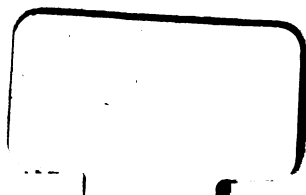


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SHAKESPEARE'S

MACBETH



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MACBETH

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INTRODUCTION.

THE tragedy of "Macbeth"—one of the grandest and most wonderful creations of Shakespeare's genius—appeared in print for the first time in the folio of 1623, the earliest published collection of the dramatist's plays.

The plot is derived from two independent and wholly unrelated stories in Holinshed's "Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland" (1587), a curious collection of superstitious legends, unreliable traditions, and a very few facts. The play is in no sense historical, though Duncan, King of Scotland, was treacherously murdered in 1040, and Macbeth was his assassin and successor.

The drama may be thus briefly outlined: Macbeth, Thane of Glamis, kinsman of Duncan, King of Scotland, achieves a signal victory over Norway's king, Sweno, who, embracing the opportunity afforded by a rebellion in Scotland headed by the Thane of Cawdor, had invaded the kingdom. Duncan decrees the death of the traitorous thane, whose title he confers on Macbeth, and dispatches two nobles of the court to advise Macbeth of his new "addition" and advancement.

In the mean time, Macbeth and Banquo, crossing a blasted heath, are suddenly confronted by three witches, or "weird sisters," who successively hail Macbeth as Thane of Glamis, Thane

320391

of Cawdor, and as one who shall be king hereafter ; greet Banquo as " lesser than Macbeth, and greater," that shall be the ancestor of kings, though not a king himself ; and then vanish as suddenly as they had appeared. The messengers from the King then arrive, and salute Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor, assuring him that greater honors await him at the hand of his royal master.

The first prophetic greeting of the witches thus quickly verified, their tempting prediction of regal honors inflames the ambitious desires of Macbeth ; and, being further incited by the inordinate and unscrupulous ambition of his wife, the two contrive the death of their sovereign. An occasion offers when Duncan—with his sons Malcolm and Donalbain, and their retinue—is a guest at their castle ; and they proceed to execute their bloody and perfidious purpose. Lady Macbeth having so drugged the drink of the guardians of Duncan's chamber that they lie in swinish sleep, Macbeth enters the room at dead of night, and with the daggers of the attendants stabs the sleeping king. Dazed by the atrocity of his own act, Macbeth steals from the chamber with the bloody weapons in his hands. He is met by his wife, who seizes the daggers, and replaces them by the side of the snoring grooms, whose faces she smears with blood ; for, as she tells her husband, it must appear that the murder was done by these besotted servants. Malcolm suspects treachery, and flies to England, while Donalbain speeds to Ireland.

Macbeth, the next in succession, assumes the crown ; but his guilty conscience gives him little rest. He suspects and fears all around him. Especially is Banquo the object of his dread and jealous hatred ; and he has Banquo waylaid and killed. Still harassed by " horrible imaginings," Macbeth seeks the weird sisters, and demands that they unfold to him his future fate ; where-

upon three apparitions present themselves to his disordered mind. One warns him to beware of Macduff; the second urges him to be bold and resolute, as none of woman born has power to harm him; and the third assures him he shall never be vanquished till Birnam Wood shall come to Dunsinane. Then Banquo's ghost appears with the semblances of eight kings, the long line of Banquo's descendants, future successors to the crown which Macbeth wears. Although his fear of Macduff is somewhat allayed by the utterances of the second apparition, in order to "make assurance doubly sure" Macbeth sends to Macduff's castle, and, failing to find him, has his wife and children put to death.

The opening of the fifth act is a sleepwalking scene, in which Lady Macbeth enters in her nightdress, holding a lighted taper in her hand, fast asleep, though her eyes are open, and entirely unconscious of her surroundings. Here, in the presence of her astounded physician and her waiting woman, she betrays in fitful mutterings and disconnected sentences the dread secret of the terrible crime in which she had participated. The death of Lady Macbeth, who, "as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands took off her life," occurs before the dénouement of the tragedy.

Macduff having joined Malcolm in England, they raise an army there, unite with a force of Scots already in arms to resist Macbeth, and prepare to besiege the usurper in his stronghold on Dunsinane Hill. As they pass Birnam Wood, Malcolm, in order to conceal the numbers of his force, commands that his followers cut branches from the trees, and that each soldier bear one before him on the march. An astonished sentinel on the walls reports to Macbeth in the castle that, looking towards Birnam, he saw the wood begin to move. Terrified by the announcement, Macbeth at once sallies out with his garrison, gives battle to the besiegers,

and meets Macduff, whom he would have avoided, but who challenges him to personal combat. Macbeth replies that it would be labor lost; that he bears a charmed life, invulnerable to the assaults of any man born of woman. Macduff then reveals the extraordinary circumstances of his birth, and demands that Macbeth fight, or yield. Though appalled by the disclosure, and cursing the "juggling fiends" who had deceived him, Macbeth does not yield, but with the courage of despair will fight to the last, and tells Macduff to do his worst. They encounter. Macbeth is slain; and Malcolm, the rightful heir to the crown, is proclaimed King of Scotland.

Professor Dowden ("Shakespeare") remarks of this tragedy: "While in 'Romeo and Juliet,' and in 'Hamlet,' we feel that Shakespeare now began and now left off, and refined upon or brooded over his thoughts, 'Macbeth' seems as if struck out at a heat, and imagined from first to last with unabated fervor. It is like a sketch by a great master, in which everything is executed with rapidity and power, and a subtlety of workmanship which has become instinctive. The theme of the drama is the gradual ruin, through yielding to evil within and evil without, of a man who, though from the first tainted by base and ambitious thoughts, yet possessed elements in his nature of possible honor and loyalty. The contrast between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, united by their affections, their fortunes, and their crime, is made to illustrate and light up the character of each. Macbeth has physical courage, but moral weakness, and is subject to excited imaginative fears. His faint and intermittent loyalty embarrasses him: he would have the gains of crime without its pains. But when once his hands are dyed in blood, he hardly cares to withdraw

them; and the same fears which had tended to hold him back from murder now urge him on to double and treble murders, until slaughter, almost reckless, becomes the habit of his reign. At last the gallant soldier of the opening of the play fights for his life with a wild and brutelike force. His whole existence has become joyless and loveless, and yet he clings to existence.

“Lady Macbeth is of a finer and more delicate nature. Having fixed her eye upon an end,—the attainment for her husband of Duncan’s crown,—she accepts the inevitable means; she nerves herself for the terrible night’s work by artificial stimulants; yet she cannot strike the sleeping King, who resembles her father. Having sustained her weaker husband, her own strength gives way; and in sleep, when her will cannot control her thoughts, she is piteously afflicted by the memory of one stain of blood upon her little hand. At last her thread of life snaps suddenly. Macbeth, whose affection for her was real, has sunk too far into the apathy of joyless crime to feel deeply her loss.

“Banquo, the loyal soldier, praying for restraint of evil thoughts, which enter his mind as they had entered that of Macbeth, but which work no evil there, is set over against Macbeth, as virtue is set over against disloyalty.

“The witches are the supernatural beings of terror, in harmony with Shakespeare’s tragic period, as the fairies of the ‘*Midsummer-Night’s Dream*’ are the supernatural beings of his days of fancy and frolic, and as Ariel is the supernatural genius of his later period. There is at once a grossness, a horrible reality about the witches, and a mystery and grandeur of evil influence.”

“This tragedy,” says Gervinus (“*Shakespeare Commentaries*,” translation of F. E. Bunnett, London, 1875), “has ever been re-

garded and criticised with distinguishing preference among Shakespeare's works. If perhaps no other play can vie with 'Hamlet' in philosophical insight into the nature and worth of the various powers at work in man; . . . if none can compare with 'Othello' in profundness of design and careful carrying out of the characters; if none with 'Lear' in the power of contending passions, and none with 'Cymbeline' in the importance of moral principles, 'Macbeth' in like manner stands forth uniquely preëminent in the splendor of poetic and picturesque diction and in the living representation of persons, times, and places. How grandly do the mighty forms rise; how naturally do they move in heroic style!

"Locally we are transported into the Highlands of Scotland, where everything appears tinged with superstition, full of tangible intercommunion with the supernatural world and prognostics of the moral life by signs in the animate and inanimate kingdom; while, in uniformity with this, men are credulous in belief, and excitable in fancy; where they speak with strong expression, with highly poetical language, and with unusual imagery. . . . This mastery over the general representation of time and place is rivaled by the pictures of single circumstances and situations. Sir Joshua Reynolds justly admired that description of the martyr's resort to Macbeth's dwelling as a charming image of repose, following, by way of contrast, the lively picture of the fight. More justly still has praise been always lavished on the powerful representation of the horrible in that night wandering of Lady Macbeth, in the banquet scene, and in the dismal creation of the weird sisters. And far above all this is the speaking truth of the scenes at the murder of Duncan; . . . the fearful whispered conference, in the horrible dimness of which the pair arrange and complete their atrocious project; the heartrending portrai-

ture of Macbeth's state of mind at the deed itself; the uneasy, half-waking condition of the sacrificed attendants, one of whom dreams on of the evening's feast, the other, in paralyzed consciousness, seems to anticipate the impending atrocity.

"In the witches, Shakespeare has made use of the popular belief in evil geniuses and in adverse persecutors of mankind, and has produced a similar but darker race of beings, just as he made use of the fairies in 'Midsummer-Night's Dream.' They are simply the embodiment of inward temptation. . . . Macbeth, in meeting them, has to struggle against no external power, but only with his own nature. . . . Within himself the evil spirits dwell which allure him with the delusions of his aspiring mind. They approach him as he stands on the highest step of his fortunes, his power, and his valor. The rebellion he has just crushed places him above the weak Duncan, who is powerless to help himself; the newly attained rank of Thane of Cawdor increases his influence, and suggests to him the consideration of how far more successfully he could have played the part of traitor than the deposed chief who bore the title before him; to this there is added the opportunity of Duncan's visit and the influence of his wife.

"Banquo is opposed to Macbeth as a complementary character, and this contrast is displayed at once in the relations of both to the witches' temptation. Banquo has the same heroic courage, the same merit, and the same claims as Macbeth: it is natural, therefore, that the same ambitious thoughts should arise in one as in the other. But in Banquo they arise in a calmer nature, susceptible of the finest discretion, and therefore they do not master him as they do Macbeth. . . . Like Macbeth, he has temptations to struggle against; but he withstands them with

more powerful self-government. He has tempting dreams which trouble him; he drives them away by prayer that they may not come again: he does more than pray,—he struggles against sleep itself, that he may escape them. Waking, his spirit masters the 'cursed thoughts,' while in sleep nature pays tribute to the blood by giving way to these dreams. In his unrest he meets Macbeth. The guiltless man confesses his dreams; the guilty denies further thoughts on the weird sisters; he who at first had himself wished for free interchange of thought now avoids it. That Banquo should know what he knows is oppressive to Macbeth; the unconscientious man feels burdened by the presence of the conscientious one, the evil by the good, the envious by the successful. Banquo might have been his good angel; but, avoiding intercourse with him, Macbeth falls under the influence of his evil genius, his wife.

"The complete antitype to her husband's irritable and imaginative nature, Lady Macbeth is calm in judgment and cold in blood. No supernatural temptation approaches her, but only the substantial one in her husband's letter. No warning voice of conscience, no forebodings of terrible consequences, alarm her as they did Macbeth before the deed; while it is being perpetrated, she remains circumspect, deliberate, ready for dissimulation; after it, she would have been able speedily to forget what had happened. . . . A will of uncommon firmness renders her in a remarkable manner mistress of herself. She knows that by dissimulation, foresight, and cunning, she could commit and conceal the fatal deed in question. She scorns the bare idea that she could fail. She goes through her part so perfectly that no suspicion falls on her. . . . Her husband contents her only when he conceives the idea of creating for himself the opportunity which now offers

itself unexpectedly. She urges him to snatch as prey what may be the gift of destiny. . . . Knowing her consort well, she arrogates to herself the manly part for which she endeavors to screw up her nature that she may herself perpetrate the murder. Macbeth, she says, is only to look up clear, and leave all the rest to her; she makes the plans, and talks of herself and him, both of whom are to have a share in the work; she drugs the servants and lays their daggers ready. . . . She would even give the blow with her own hands; but at the moment itself her overwrought nature gives way. Those 'compunctious visitings of nature' which she had banished from herself shake her when she traces in the sleeping King a resemblance to her father; and the woman must leave that business to a man, which needs more than man to execute it."

Hazlitt ("Characters of Shakespeare's Plays," New York, 1845), in a critical notice of this play, remarks: "'Macbeth' (generally speaking) is done upon a stronger and more systematic principle of contrast than any other of Shakespeare's plays. It moves upon the verge of an abyss, and is a constant struggle between life and death. The action is desperate and the reaction is dreadful. It is a huddling together of fierce extremes, a war of opposite natures which of them shall destroy the other. There is nothing but what has a violent end or violent beginnings. The lights and shades are laid on with a determined hand; the transitions from triumph to despair, from the height of terror to the repose of death, are sudden and startling; every passion brings in its fellow-contrary, and the thoughts pitch and jostle against each other as in the dark. The whole play is an unruly chaos of strange and forbidden things, where the ground rocks under our

feet. Shakespeare's genius here took its full swing, and trod upon the farthest bounds of nature and passion. This circumstance will account for the abruptness and violent antitheses of the style, the throes and labor which run through the expression, and from defects will turn them into beauties,—‘So fair and foul a day,’ etc. ; ‘Such welcome and unwelcome news together ;’ ‘Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it.’ The scene before the castle gate follows the appearance of the witches on the heath, and is followed by a midnight murder. . . . In Lady Macbeth's speech, ‘Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had done't,’ there is murder and filial piety together ; and in urging him [her husband] to fulfill his vengeance against the defenseless King, her thoughts spare the blood of neither infants nor old age. The description of the witches is full of the same contradictory principle,—they are neither of the earth nor the air, but both ; ‘they should be women, but their beards forbid it ;’ they take all the pains possible to lead Macbeth on to the height of his ambition, only to betray him ‘in deepest consequence,’ and, after showing him all the pomp of their art, discover their malignant delight in his disappointed hopes by that bitter taunt, ‘Why stands Macbeth thus amazedly ?’”

MACBETH.

PERSONS OF THE PLAY.

DUNCAN, King of Scotland.	An English Doctor.
MALCOLM, } <i>his sons.</i>	A Scotch Doctor.
DONALBAIN, }	A Soldier.
MACBETH, } <i>generals of the King's</i>	A Porter.
BANQUO, } <i>army.</i>	An Old Man.
MACDUFF, }	LADY MACBETH.
LENNOX, }	LADY MACDUFF.
ROSS, }	Gentlewoman attending on Lady Mac-
MENTEITH, } <i>noblemen of Scotland.</i>	beth.
ANGUS, }	HECATE.
CAITHNESS, }	Three Witches.
FLEANCE, <i>son to Banquo.</i>	Apparitions.
SIWARD, Earl of Northumberland,	Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers,
<i>general of the English forces.</i>	Murderers, Attendants, and
Young SIWARD, <i>his son.</i>	Messengers.
SEYTON, <i>an officer attending on Mac-</i>	
<i>beth.</i>	
Boy, <i>son to Macduff.</i>	

SCENE: *Scotland; England.*

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Desert Place.*

Thunder and Lightning. Enter three Witches.

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

Second Witch. When the hurlyburly's¹ done,
When the battle's lost and won.

¹ Tumult.

Third Witch. That will be ere the set of sun.

First Witch. Where the place ?

Second Witch. Upon the heath.

Third Witch. There to meet with Macbeth.

First Witch. I come, Graymalkin!¹

Second Witch. Paddock² calls.

Third Witch. Anon.

All. Fair is foul, and foul is fair ;

Hover through the fog and filthy air.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *A Camp near Forres.*

Alarum within. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Sergeant.

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

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

Sergeant. Doubtful it stood ;
As two spent swimmers, that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald—
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villainies of nature
Do swarm upon him—from the Western Isles³
Of kerns and gallowglasses⁴ is supplied ;

¹ Cat.

² Toad. Cats and toads were supposed to be familiar spirits of witches.

³ The Hebrides.

⁴ "Of kerns," etc., i.e., with kerns and gallowglasses, who are thus described in Hunter's note, quoted by Furness (*Variorum Shakespeare*, vol. ii.):

And Fortune, on his damned quarrel smiling,
 Show'd like a rebel's wench: but all's too weak;
 For brave Macbeth—well he deserves that name—
 Disdaining Fortune, with his brandish'd steel,
 Which smok'd with bloody execution,
 Like valor's minion¹ carv'd out his passage
 Till he fac'd the slave;
 And ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
 Till he unseam'd him from the nave to the chaps,²
 And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

Duncan. O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!

Sergeant. As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
 Shipwrecking storms and direful thunders break,³
 So from that spring whence comfort seem'd to come
 Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark:
 No sooner justice had, with valor arm'd,
 Compell'd these skipping kerns to trust their heels,
 But the Norway lord, surveying vantage,⁴
 With furbish'd arms and new supplies of men
 Began a fresh assault.

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

Sergeant. Yes;
 As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
 If I say sooth,⁵ I must report they were

“ Their foot [speaking of the Milesian race, the ancient inhabitants of Ireland] were of two sorts, the heavy and light armed; the first were called Galloglachs, armed with a helmet and coat of mail bound with iron rings, and wore a long sword. . . . The light-armed infantry, called Keherns, fought with bearded javelins and short daggers.”

¹ Favorite.

² Cheeks.

³ “ As whence,” etc. The allusion is to the vernal equinox, when the sun, beginning its reflex course towards us, occasions, by its increasing warmth, the disastrous equinoctial storms.

⁴ “ Surveying vantage,” i.e., perceiving an opportunity.

⁵ Truth.

As cannons overcharg'd with double cracks ;
 So they doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe.
 Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
 Or memorize ¹ another Golgotha,²

I cannot tell—www.libtool.com.cn
 But I am faint ; my gashes cry for help.

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

[*Exit Sergeant, attended.*]

Who comes here ?

Enter Ross.

Malcolm. The worthy Thane ³ of Ross.

Lennox. What a haste looks through his eyes ! So should he
 look

That seems to speak things strange.

Ross. God save the King !

Duncan. Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane ?

Ross. From Fife, great King ;

Where the Norwegian banners flout the sky
 And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
 With terrible numbers,
 Assisted by that most disloyal traitor
 The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict ;
 Till that Bellona's bridegroom,⁴ lapp'd in proof,⁵
 Confronted him with self-comparisons,⁶
 Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,

¹ Make memorable.

² See Matt. xxvii. 33.

³ An ancient Scotch title of nobility.

⁴ "Bellona's bridegroom," i.e., Macbeth. Bellona, or Enyo, as described by the Latin poets, was the wife or sister of Mars. She attended him in battle, drove his chariot, and watched over his safety generally.

⁵ "Lapp'd in proof," i.e., clad or wrapped in armor proof against all blows.

⁶ "Selfsame comparisons ; as well armed and endued with equal courage.

Curbing his lavish spirit; and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.

Duncan. Great happiness!

Ross.

That now

Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;¹
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursed, at Saint Colme's Inch,²
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

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

Ross. I'll see it done.

Duncan. What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *A Heath near Forres.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

First Witch. Where hast thou been, sister?

Second Witch. Killing swine.

Third Witch. Sister, where thou?

First Witch. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munch'd and munch'd and munch'd. "Give me,"
quoth I.

"Aroint³ thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon⁴ cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger;
But in a sieve⁵ I'll thither sail,

¹ "Craves composition," i.e., sues for terms of peace.

² A small island, now called Inchcolm, lying in the Firth of Edinburgh, on which, as Dyce notes, are the remains of an abbey dedicated to St. Colomb. "Inch" or "Inche" signifies island in the Erse and Irish languages, and there are numerous islands on the coast of Scotland having names with this affix.

³ Begone! avaunt!

⁴ "Rump-fed ronyon," i.e., an ill-fed, ill-conditioned, scabby woman.

⁵ Steevens quotes from the Life of Dr. Fian—a notable sorcerer burned at Edinburgh, January, 1591—how "that he and a number of witches together went to sea, each one in a riddle or sieve."

And, like a rat without a tail,¹
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,
And the very ports they blow,²
All the quarters that they know
I' the shipman's card.³

I will drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his penthouse lid;⁴
He shall live a man forbid;⁵
Weary se'nnights⁶ nine times nine
Shall he dwindle, peak,⁷ and pine;
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tost.
Look what I have.

Second Witch. Show me, show me.

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

[*Drum within.*]

Third Witch. A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.

All. The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters⁸ of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about;

¹ It was supposed that when a witch took the form of an animal, the tail would be lacking.

² "I myself have," etc., i. e., I myself control the other winds, and the very ports upon which they blow.

³ "Shipman's card," i. e., a circular card on which, radiating from its center, are painted the points of the compass. Over this, suspended at the center on a pivot, the magnet turns which determines the ship's course.

⁴ "Penthouse lid," i. e., the eyelid (figuratively).

⁵ Bewitched.

⁶ Sevensnights; weeks.

⁷ Grow thin.

⁸ Rapid travelers.

Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again to make up nine.¹
Peace! the charm's wound úp.

Enter MACBETH and BANQUO.

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

Banquo. How far is't call'd to Forres?—What are these
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't?—Live you? or are you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips. You should be women,
And yet your beards² forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

Macbeth. Speak, if you can. What are you?

First Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of
Glamis!

Second Witch. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of
Cawdor!

Third Witch. All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king here-
after!

Banquo. Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?—I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical,³ or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having⁴ and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal;⁵ to me you speak not.

¹ The witches here join hands, and dance round and round in a circle.

² The witches of Shakespeare's day were supposed to have beards. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Sir Hugh, the Welsh parson, says, "I think the 'oman is a witch indeed. I like not when a 'oman has a great peard."

³ "That is, creatures of fantasy or imagination" (JOHNSON).

⁴ Possession.

⁵ "Rapt withal," i. e., carried away with it, as in ecstasy.

If you can look into the seeds of time,
 And say which grain will grow and which will not,
 Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
 Your favors nor your hate.

First Witch. Hail!

Second Witch. Hail!

Third Witch. Hail!

First Witch. Lesser¹ than Macbeth, and greater.

Second Witch. Not so happy, yet much happier.

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

First Witch. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail !

Macbeth. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more.

By Sinel's death I know I am Thane of Glamis ;
 But how of Cawdor ? The Thane of Cawdor lives,
 A prosperous gentleman ; and to be king
 Stands not within the prospect of belief,
 No more than to be Cawdor. Say from whence
 You owe² this strange intelligence ; or why
 Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
 With such prophetic greeting. Speak, I charge you.

[*Witches vanish.*]

Banquo. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
 And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd ?

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

Banquo. Were such things here as we do speak about ?
 Or have we eaten on the insane root³
 That takes the reason prisoner ?

¹ Double comparatives and superlatives are often met with in Elizabethan writers.

² Own ; have.

³ " Insane root," i.e., the root which causes insanity. Shakespeare probably alludes to the hemlock. From Greene's *Never too Late* (1616), Steevens quotes : " You have eaten of the roots of hemlock, that makes men's eyes conceit unseen objects."

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?

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Enter Ross and ANGUS.

Ross. The King hath happily receiv'd, Macbeth,
The news of thy success; and when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his. Silenc'd with that,¹
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 tale²
Came post with post; and every one did bear
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defense,
And pour'd them down before him.

Angus. We are sent

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

Ross. And, for an earnest of a greater honor,
He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor;
In which addition,³ hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.

Banquo. What, can the devil speak true?

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

Angus. Who was the thane lives yet,

¹ "Silenc'd with that," i.e., silenced with wonder. "Wrapped in silent wonder at the deeds performed by Macbeth" is Malone's explanation.

² "As thick as tale," i.e., as fast as they could be told.

³ Title.

But under heavy judgment bears that life
 Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combin'd
 With those of Norway, or did line¹ the rebel
 With hidden help and vantage, or that with both
 He labor'd in his country's wreck, I know not;
 But treasons capital, confess'd and prov'd,
 Have overthrow'n him.

Macbeth. [Aside] Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor.
 The greatest is behind. [To Ross and Angus] Thanks for your
 pains.

[To Banquo] Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
 When those that gave the Thane of Cawdor to me
 Promis'd no less to them?

Banquo. That, trusted home,²
 Might yet enkindle you unto³ the crown,
 Besides the Thane of Cawdor. But 'tis strange;
 And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
 The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
 Win us with honest⁴ trifles, to betray's
 In deepest consequence. —
 Cousins, a word, I pray you.

Macbeth. [Aside] Two truths are told,
 As happy prologues to the swelling act
 Of the imperial theme. — I thank you, gentlemen.
 [Aside] This supernatural solliciting⁵
 Cannot be ill, cannot be good. If ill,
 Why hath it given me earnest of success,
 Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor.
 If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
 Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,
 And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,

¹ Sustain.

² "Trusted home," i.e., trusted to the fullest extent.

³ "Enkindle you unto," i.e., incite you to hope for.

⁴ Truthful. ⁵ Incitement.

Against the use of nature? Present fears
 Are less than horrible imaginings;
 My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,¹
 Shakes so my single² state of man that function
 Is smother'd in surmise, and nothing is
 But what is not.³

Banquo. Look how our partner's rapt.

Macbeth. [*Aside*] If chance will have me king, why, chance
 may crown me

Without my stir.

Banquo. New honors come upon him,
 Like our strange garments, cleave not to their 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. Give me your favor; my dull brain was wrought
 With things forgotten. Kind gentlemen, your pains
 Are register'd where every day I turn
 The leaf to read them. Let us towards the King. —
 Think upon what hath chanc'd, and, at more time,
 The interim having weigh'd it,⁴ let us speak
 Our free hearts each to other.

Banquo. Very gladly.

Macbeth. Till then, enough. — Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*]

¹ "Is but fantastical," i.e., is as yet imagined only.

² Individual.

³ "That function is," etc. This passage Dr. Johnson paraphrases: "All powers of action are oppressed and crushed by one overwhelming image in the mind, and nothing is present to me but that which is really future. Of things now about me I have no perception, being intent wholly on that which has yet no existence."

⁴ "The interim having weigh'd it," i.e., having considered it in the interval.

SCENE IV. *Forres. The Palace.*

Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, and Attendants.

Duncan. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not Those in commission¹ yet return'd?

Malcolm. My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke²
With one that saw him die; who did report
That very frankly he confess'd his treasons,
Implor'd your highness' pardon, and set forth
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed³
As 'twere a careless trifle.

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

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin!
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before,
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee. Would thou hadst less deserv'd,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! only I have left to say,
More is thy due than more than all can pay.

Macbeth. The service and the loyalty I owe,

¹ "Those in commission," i.e., those to whom the business of the execution was committed.

² Participles thus curtailed are frequent in Shakespeare.

³ Owned.

In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part
Is to receive our duties; and our duties
Are to your throne and state, children and servants;
Which do but what they should, by doing everything
Safe towards¹ your love and honor.

Duncan.

Welcome hither!

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

Banquo.

There if I grow,

The harvest is your own.

Duncan.

My plenteous joys,

Wanton in 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
The Prince of Cumberland;² which honor must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,
And bind us further to you.

Macbeth. The rest is labor, which is not us'd for you:³

I'll be myself the harbinger,⁴ and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach,
So humbly take my leave.

¹ " Safe towards," i. e., with a sure regard to.

² By giving to Malcolm the title of the Prince of Cumberland, Duncan indicated that this son was to succeed him upon the throne.

³ " The rest," etc., i. e., when not in your service, rest itself is labor.

⁴ Forerunner; here used in the original sense of an officer of the royal household, whose duty it was to ride in advance of the king and the royal party, and engage lodgings for them in any place where they were to stop.

Duncan. My worthy Cawdor !

Macbeth. [*Aside*] The Prince of Cumberland ! that is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. — Stars, hide your fires ;
Let not light see my black and deep desires ;
The eye wink at the hand ; yet let that be,¹
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

[*Exit.*

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

[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

SCENE V. *Inverness. Macbeth's Castle.*

Enter LADY MACBETH, *reading a letter.*

Lady Macbeth. "They met me in the day of success ; and I have
learned, by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal
knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made
themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the
wonder of it, came missives² 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 great-
ness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing by being ignorant
of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell."

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor ; and shalt be
What thou art promis'd. Yet do I fear thy nature ;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great ;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness³ should attend it ; what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily ; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win. Thou'dst have, great Glamis,

¹ Take place.

² Messengers.

³ Wickedness.

That which cries, "Thus thou must do, if thou have it;"
 And that which rather thou dost fear to do,
 Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,
 That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
 And chas'tise with the valor of my tongue
 All that impedes thee from the golden round
 Which fate and metaphysical¹ aid doth seem
 To have thee crown'd withal.—

Enter a Messenger.

What is your tidings?

Messenger. The King comes here to-night.

Lady Macbeth. Thou'rt mad to say it:

Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,
 Would have inform'd for preparation.

Messenger. So please you, it is true; our Thane is coming.

One of my fellows had the speed of him,
 Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
 Than would make up his message.

Lady Macbeth.

Give him tending;

He brings great news.— [*Exit Messenger.*]

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
 Under my battlements.— Come, you spirits
 That tend on mortal² thoughts, unsex me here,
 And fill me from the crown to the toe topful
 Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;
 Stop up the access and passage to remorse,³
 That no compunctious visitings of nature
 Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
 The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
 And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
 Wherever in your sightless substances
 You wait on Nature's mischief!— Come, thick night,

¹ Supernatural.

² Deadly.

³ Compassion.

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!"—

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Enter MACBETH.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
 Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
 Thy letters have transported me beyond
 This ignorant present,¹ and I feel now
 The future in the instant.

Macbeth. My dearest love,

Duncan comes here to-night.

Lady Macbeth. And when goes hence?

Macbeth. To-morrow,—as he purposes.

Lady Macbeth. O, never

Shall sun that morrow see!

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
 May read strange matters. To beguile the time,
 Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye,
 Your hand, your tongue; look like the innocent flower,
 But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
 Must be provided for; and you shall put
 This night's great business into my dispatch,²
 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.³

Leave all the rest to me.

[*Exeunt.*

¹ "This ignorant present," i.e., this present which knows nothing of the future.

² Management.

³ "To alter favor," etc., i.e., to change countenance indicates fear in you, and causes it in others.

SCENE VI. *Before Macbeth's Castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, ANGUS, and Attendants.

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

Banquo. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet,¹ does approve,
By his lov'd mansionry, that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here; no jutting, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign² of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observ'd,
The air is delicate.

Enter LADY MACBETH.

Duncan. See, see, our honor'd hostess!—
The love that follows us sometime³ is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God 'ild us⁴ for your pains,
And thank us for your trouble.

Lady Macbeth. All our service,
In every point twice done and then done double,
Were poor and single⁵ business to contend
Against those honors, deep and broad, wherewith
Your Majesty loads our house. For those of old,
And the late dignities heap'd up to them,
We rest your hermits.⁶

¹ Martin, a bird of the swallow kind. Its nest of mud is built beneath the caves and sheltered projections of lofty buildings, especially in the well protected angles of the cornices and gables of temples, towers, castles, etc.

² Corner or angle.

³ Sometimes.

⁴ "'Ild us," a contraction of "yield us," i.e., reward us.

⁵ Weak.

⁶ "We rest your hermits," i.e., "we, as hermits or beadsmen, will always pray for you" (STEEVENS).

Duncan. Where's the Thane of Cawdor ?
 We cours'd him at the heels, and had a purpose
 To be his pur'veyor;¹ but he rides well,
 And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp² him
 To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess,
 We are your guest to-night.

Lady Macbeth. Your servants ever
 Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,³
 To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
 Still to return your own.

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

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII. *Macbeth's Castle.*

Hautboys and torches. Enter a Sewer,⁴ and divers Servants with dishes and service, and pass over the stage. Then enter MACBETH.

Macbeth. If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
 It were done quickly: if th' assassination
 Could trammel up the consequence, and catch
 With his⁵ surcease⁶ success; that but this blow
 Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
 But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
 We'd jump the life to come.⁷ But in these cases
 We still have judgment here, that⁸ we but teach

1 "To be his purveyor," i.e., to be in advance of him. A purveyor is properly one sent ahead of a party to obtain food for them.

2 Helped.

3 "In compt," i.e., accountable.

4 An upper servant who prepared and served the table; a head waiter.

5 Its: "assassination" is the antecedent.

6 Ending.

7 "If th' assassination," etc., i.e., if the murder, when done, could insure complete success here in this life, "upon this bank and shoal of time," we would risk the life to come.

8 Since.

Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
 To plague the inventor. This even-handed justice
 Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice
 To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
 First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
 Strong both against the deed; then as his host,
 Who should against his murderer shut the door,
 Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
 Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
 So clear in his great office, that his virtues
 Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd, against
 The deep damnation of his taking off;
 And pity, like a naked newborn babe,
 Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim,¹ hors'd
 Upon the sightless couriers of the air,²
 Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
 That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
 To prick the sides of my intent, but only
 Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
 And falls on th' other—

Enter LADY MACBETH.

How now! what news?

Lady Macbeth. He has almost supp'd. Why have you left
 the chamber?

Macbeth. Hath he ask'd for me?

Lady Macbeth. Know you not he has?

Macbeth. We will proceed no further in this business.
 He hath honor'd me of late, and I have bought³
 Golden opinions from all sorts of people,

¹ "A naked newborn babe," etc. "Either like a mortal babe, terrible in helplessness, or like heaven's child angels, mighty in love and compassion" (REV. C. E. MOBERLY).

² "Sightless couriers of the air," i.e., the invisible winds.

³ Gained.

Which would ¹ be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

Lady Macbeth. Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat i' the adage? ²

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;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, ³ and yet you would make both;
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you.

Macbeth. If we should fail, —

Lady Macbeth. We fail!
But screw your courage to the sticking place, ⁴
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep, —

¹ Should.

² "Letting 'I dare not,'" etc. Boswell (as quoted by Furness) notes that "the adage 'The cate would eat fish, and would not wete her feete,' is among Heywood's Proverbs (1566)."

³ Accord.

⁴ "But screw," etc. Probably a metaphor from the tuning of a stringed instrument.

Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
 Soundly invite him,—his two chamberlains
 Will I with wine and wassail so convince,¹
 That memory, the warder of the brain,
 Shall be a fume, and the receipt² of reason
 A limbeck³ only. When in swinish sleep
 Their drenched natures lie, as in a death,
 What cannot you and I perform upon
 The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
 His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
 Of our great quell?⁴

Macbeth. Bring forth men children only;
 For thy undaunted mettle should compose
 Nothing but males. Will it not be receiv'd,⁵
 When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
 Of his own chamber, and us'd their very daggers,
 That they have done't?

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

Macbeth. I am settled, and bend up
 Each corporal agent⁶ to this terrible feat.
 Away, and mock the time with fairest show;
 False face must hide what the false heart doth know. [*Exeunt.*]

¹ "With wine and wassail so convince," i.e., with drink and carousing so overcome.

² Receptacle.

³ An alembic; a still, or rather the cap of a still.

⁴ Murder.

⁵ Believed.

⁶ "Each corporal agent," i.e., every faculty of the body.

ACT II.

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SCENE I. *Court of Macbeth's Castle.*

Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing 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 husbandry¹ in heaven ;
Their candles are all out.—Take thee that, too.
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,²
And yet I would not sleep.—Merciful Powers,
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose !—

Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch.

Give me my sword.—

Who's there ?

Macbeth. A friend.

Banquo. What, sir, not yet at rest ? The king's abed—
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess³ to your offices.⁴
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess—and shut up
In measureless content.⁵

Macbeth.

Being unprepar'd,

¹ Thrift.

² " A heavy summons," etc., i. e., a strong disposition to sleep is upon me.

³ Gifts of money.

⁴ The servants' departments.

⁵ " Shut up in measureless content," i. e., retiring to sleep most happy, and contented with everything around him.

Our will became the servant to defect,
Which else should free have wrought.¹

Banquo.

All's well.

I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters ;
To you they have show'd some truth.

Macbeth.

I think not of them.

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

Banquo.

At your kind'st leisure.

Macbeth. If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,²
It shall make honor for you.

Banquo.

So I lose none

In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchis'd and allegiance clear,
I shall be counsel'd.

Macbeth.

Good repose the while !

Banquo. Thanks, sir ; the like to you !

[*Exeunt Banquo and Fleance.*]

Macbeth. Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed. — [*Exit Servant.*]
Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle towards my hand ? — Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight ? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain ?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going ;
And such an instrument I was to use. —

¹ " Being unprepar'd," etc., i.e., lack of time for preparation constrained the free working of my will.

² " Cleave to my consent," i.e., join my party when it is established.

Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,
 Or else worth all the rest; — I see thee still,
 And on thy blade and dudgeon¹ gouts² of blood,
 Which was not so before. — There's no such thing;
 It is the bloody business which informs³
 Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half world
 Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
 The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates
 Pale Hecate's⁴ offerings, and wither'd murder,
 Alarum'd⁵ by his sentinel, the wolf,
 Whose howl's his watch,⁶ thus with his stealthy pace,
 With Tarquin's ravishing strides,⁷ towards his design
 Moves like a ghost. — Thou sure and firm-set earth,
 Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
 Thy very stones prate of my whereabouts,
 And take the present horror from the time,
 Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives;
 Words to the heat of deeds too cool breath gives.⁸

[*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.*]

¹ Handle.

² Drops.

³ Creates forms.

⁴ Hecate, according to classic mythology the wife of Pluto and Queen of the infernal regions, was supposed to preside over witchcraft and enchantments, and to control the incantations of evil spirits. Dogs, lambs, and honey were generally offered to her. The word is dissyllabic here (*Hec'ate*), as it always is in Shakespeare's verse.

⁵ Aroused.

⁶ Watchword.

⁷ "Tarquin's ravishing strides," alluding to Sextus Tarquinius, by whom Lucretia, the Roman matron, was dishonored.

⁸ Singular in form for the sake of the rhyme, though having a plural subject. The singular noun "breath," just preceding the verb, makes the violation of a grammatical rule less noticeable.

SCENE II. *The Same.**Enter* LADY MACBETH.

Lady Macbeth. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;

What hath quench'd them hath given me fire. — Hark ! Peace ! —
It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good night.¹ He is about it;
The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores ; I have drugg'd their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

Macbeth. [*Within*] Who's there ? what, ho !

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

Enter MACBETH.

My husband !

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

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

Macbeth. When ?

Lady Macbeth. Now.

Macbeth. As I descended ?

Lady Macbeth. Ay.

Macbeth. Hark !
Who lies i' the second chamber ?

Lady Macbeth. Donalbain.

Macbeth. This is a sorry sight. [*Looking on his hands.*]

¹ The hooting of the owl is even now heard by many persons with superstitious dread, as an ominous cry.

Lady Macbeth. A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

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

That they did wake each other; I stood and heard them;
But they did ~~say their prayers, and~~ address'd¹ them
Again to sleep.

Lady Macbeth. There are two lodg'd together.

Macbeth. One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen!" the other,
As² they had seen me with these hangman's hands,
Listening their fear. I could not say "Amen!"
When they did say "God bless us!"

Lady Macbeth. Consider it not so deeply.

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

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

Macbeth. Methought I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep,"—the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravel'd³ sleeve⁴ of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great Nature's second course,⁵
Chief nourisher in life's feast,—

Lady Macbeth. What do you mean?

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

Lady Macbeth. Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy
thane,
You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?

¹ Prepared.

² As if.

³ Tangled.

⁴ Soft floss or silk.

⁵ "Second course," i.e., the chief course at the feast.

They must lie there; go carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

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

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

Macbeth. Whence is that knocking?
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean¹ wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.²

Reënter LADY MACBETH.

Lady Macbeth. My hands are of your color, but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [*Knocking 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.³ [*Knocking within.*] Hark! more
knocking.
Get on your nightgown,⁴ lest occasion call us,

¹ The ancient mythologists tell us, that, when Jupiter assigned to each of his brothers a separate portion of the universe, he decreed that Neptune should be given all the waters upon the face of nature, and be sole monarch of the ocean.

² "The multitudinous seas," etc., i.e., change the innumerable waves of the ocean to a carnation hue, making its natural green color a uniform red.

³ "Your constancy," etc., i.e., your resolution has forsaken you.

⁴ Dressing gown, as we should say.

And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

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

[*Knocking within.*]

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The Same.*

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.¹ [*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub? — Here's a farmer that hang'd himself on the expectation of plenty.²—Come in time; have napkins enow³ about you; here you'll sweat for't.—[*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! Who's there, in the other devil's name?—Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven.—O, come in, equivocator.—[*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there?—Faith, here's an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose.⁴—Come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose.⁵—[*Knocking within.*] Knock, knock! never at quiet! What are you?—But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further; I had thought to have let in some of all professions that go the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire.—[*Knocking within.*] Anon, anon! I pray you, remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*]

1 "Have old," etc., i.e., be kept busy unlocking the door. "Old" as an intensive frequently occurs in Shakespeare.

2 Because, with plentiful crops, prices would decline.

3 "Napkins enow," i.e., pocket handkerchiefs enough.

4 Trousers. It is an old joke against tailors, that they always steal from the material given out to them.

5 A tailor's smoothing iron. It received its name from the resemblance of the handle to the neck of a goose.

Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX.

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

Porter. Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock.¹

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

Porter. That it did, sir, i' the 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 cast² him.

Macduff. Is thy master stirring ?

Enter MACBETH.

Our knocking has awak'd him ; here he comes.

Lennox. Good morrow, noble sir.

Macbeth. Good morrow, both.

Macduff. Is the King stirring, worthy thane ?

Macbeth. Not yet.

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

Macbeth. I'll bring you to him.

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

Macbeth. The labor we delight in physics³ pain.
This is the door.

Macduff. I'll make so bold to call,
For 'tis my limited service.⁴

[*Exit.*

Lennox. Goes the King hence to-day ?

Macbeth. He does ;— he did appoint so.

Lennox. The night has been unruly : where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down ; and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air,—strange screams of death,
And prophesying, with accents terrible,

¹ " Till the second cock," i.e., till the cock crew the second time.

² Overthrow. ³ Relieves.

⁴ " My limited service," i.e., service specially assigned to me.

Of dire combustion and confus'd events
 New hatch'd to the woeful time. The ob'scure bird¹
 Clamor'd the livelong night. Some say the Earth
 Was feverous and did shake.

Macbeth.

'Twas a rough night.

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

Reënter MACDUFF.

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

Macbeth. }

Lennox. }

What's the matter?

Macduff. Confusion² now hath made his masterpiece!
 Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
 The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
 The life o' the building!

Macbeth.

What is't you say? the life?

Lennox. Mean you his Majesty?

Macduff. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
 With a new Gorgon.³ Do not bid me speak;
 See, and then speak yourselves.

[*Exeunt Macbeth and Lennox.*]

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum bell.—Murder and treason!—

¹ The owl.

² Destruction.

³ It is fabled that there were three Gorgons, sisters, of whom Medusa, the youngest, was very handsome. Wishing to leave her home, a desolate land, she entreated Minerva to let her go and visit the delightful sunny south. When Minerva refused her request, she reviled the goddess, declaring that nothing but her conviction that mortals would no longer consider her beautiful, if they but once beheld Medusa, could have prompted this denial. This remark so incensed Minerva, that, to punish her for her vanity, the goddess changed Medusa's beautiful curling locks into hissing, writhing serpents, and decreed that one glance into her still beautiful face would suffice to change the beholder into stone. (See GUERBER'S *Myths of Greece and Rome*, p. 242.)

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 !¹ Malcolm ! Banquo !
 As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
 To countenance this horror !²— 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.
 'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak ;
 The repetition, in a woman's ear,
 Would murder as it fell.—

O gentle lady,

Enter BANQUO.

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

Lady Macbeth. Woe, alas !
 What ! in our house ?

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

Reënter MACBETH and LENNOX, with ROSS.

Macbeth. Had I but died an hour before this chance,
 I had liv'd a blessed time ; for, from this instant
 There's nothing serious in mortality ;³
 All is but toys ; renown and grace is dead ;
 The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees⁴
 Is left this vault to brag of.

¹ "The great doom's image," i.e., a sight as terrible as the last judgment.

² "Walk like sprites," etc. Ghosts are the only proper accompaniments to this horror.

³ Human life.

⁴ Dregs of the cask.

Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.

Donalbain. What is amiss ?

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

Macduff. Your royal father's murder'd.

Malcolm. Oh ! by whom ?

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

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

Macduff. Wherefore did you so ?

Macbeth. Who can be wise, amaz'd,¹ temperate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment ? No man.
The expedition² of my violent love
Outran the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin lac'd with his golden blood;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colors of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd with gore.³ 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 tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours ?⁴

¹ Bewildered.

² Haste.

³ "Breech'd with gore," i.e., covered with blood.

⁴ "That most may claim," etc., i.e., who have the greatest interest in the matter.

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 brew'd.

Malcolm. [*Aside to Donalbain*] Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.

Banquo. Look to the lady. —

[*Lady Macbeth is carried out.*]

And when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure,¹ let us meet,
And question² this most bloody piece of work,
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us.
In the great hand of God I stand ; and thence
Against the undivulg'd pretense I fight
Of treasonous malice.

Macduff. And so do I.

All. So all.

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

All. Well contented.

[*Exeunt all but Malcolm and Donalbain.*]

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

Donalbain. To Ireland I ; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer ; where we are
There's daggers in men's smiles ; the near in blood,
The nearer bloody.³

¹ " And when we have," etc., is thus paraphrased by Steevens : " When we have clothed our half-dressed bodies, which may take cold from being exposed to the air."

² Examine thoroughly.

³ " The near in blood," etc., i.e., the nearer the kin, the more the danger to our lives.

Malcolm. This murderous shaft that's shot
Hath not yet lighted, and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away;¹ there's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself when there's no mercy left.

[*Exeunt.*]SCENE IV. *Without the Castle.**Enter Ross and an old Man.*

Old Man. Threescore and ten I can remember well;
Within the volume of which time I've seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings.

Ross. Ah, good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the traveling lamp.²
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb,
When living light should kiss it?

Old Man. 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last
A falcon, towering in her pride of place,³
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at⁴ and kill'd.

Ross. And Duncan's horses,— a thing most strange and certain,—
Beauteous and swift, the minions⁵ of their race,
Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would make
War with mankind.

¹ "Shift away," i.e., get away quietly and quickly.

² "The traveling lamp," i.e., the sun.

³ "Towering," etc., is a phrase of falconry meaning soaring at her highest elevation.

⁴ "Hawk'd at," i.e., pounced upon.

⁵ Chosen darlings.

Old Man. 'Tis said they eat¹ each other.

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

Enter MACDUFF.

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How goes the world, sir, now ?

Macduff.

Why, see you not ?

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

Macduff. Those that Macbeth hath slain.

Ross.

Alas the day !

What good could they pretend ?

Macduff.

They were suborn'd :²

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

Ross.

'Gainst nature still ! —

Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up³

Thine own life's means ! — Then 'tis most like

The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.

Macduff. He is already nam'd, and gone to Scone⁴
To be invested.

Ross.

Where is Duncan's body ?

¹ Old and colloquial form for "ate."

² Bribed; hired.

³ "Ravin up," i.e., eat ravenously.

⁴ "The ancient royal city of Scone, supposed to have been the capital of the Pictish kingdom, lay two miles northward from the present city of Perth. It was the residence of the Scottish monarchs as early as the reign of Kenneth McAlpin, and there was a long series of kings crowned on the celebrated stone inclosed in a chair, now used as the seat of our sovereigns at coronation in Westminster Abbey. This stone was removed to Scone from Dunstaffnage, the yet earlier residence of the Scottish kings, by Kenneth II., soon after the founding of the Abbey of Scone by the Culdees in 838, and was transferred by Edward I. to Westminster Abbey in 1296. This remarkable stone is reported to have found its way to Dunstaffnage from the plain of Luz, where it was the pillow of the patriarch Jacob while he dreamed his dream (!). An aisle of the Abbey of Scone remains. A few poor habitations alone exist on the site of the ancient royal city." (KNIGHT.)

Macduff. Carried to Colme-kill,¹
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors,
And guardian of their bones.

Ross. Will you to Scone ?

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

Ross. Well, I will thither.

Macduff. Well, may you see things well done there ;— adieu !—
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new !²

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.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I. *Forres. A Room in the Palace.*

Enter BANQUO.

Banquo. Thou hast it now,—king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the weird women promis'd ; and, I fear,
Thou play'st most foully for't. Yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—

¹ Colmekill, or Iona, one of the Western Isles (Hebrides), now called Icolmkill. Knight notes that "this little island, only three miles long and one and a half broad, was once the most important spot of the whole cluster of British Isles. It was inhabited by Druids previous to the year 563, when Colum McFelim McFergus, afterwards called St. Columba, landed and began to preach Christianity. A monastery was soon established and a noble cathedral built, of which the ruins still remain. The reputation of these establishments extended over the whole Christian world for some centuries, and devotees of rank strove for admission into them; the records of royal deeds were preserved there, and there the bones of kings reposed."

² "Lest our old robes," etc., i.e., lest things go from bad to worse.

As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—
 Why, by the verities on thee made good,
 May they not be my oracles as well,
 And set me up in hope?—But hush! no more.

*Sennet*¹ 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-thing² unbecoming.

Macbeth. To-night we hold a solemn supper,³ 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.

Macbeth. Ride you this afternoon?

Banquo. Ay, my good lord.

Macbeth. We should have else desir'd your good advice—
 Which still⁴ hath been both grave and prosperous—
 In this day's council; but we'll take to-morrow.
 Is't far you ride?

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

Macbeth. Fail not our feast.

Banquo. My lord, I will not.

Macbeth. We hear our bloody cousins are bestow'd
 In England and in Ireland, not confessing

¹ A signal call, on a trumpet or cornet, for entrance or exit on the stage.

² In every way.

³ "Solemn supper," i.e., state or ceremonious festival.

⁴ Always.

Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
 With strange invention. But of that to-morrow,
 When therewithal we shall have cause of state
 Craving us jointly.¹ Hie you to horse; adieu,
 Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

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

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

Farewell. —

[*Exit Banquo.*]

Let every man be master of his time
 Till seven at night. To make society
 The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
 Till supper time alone; while then,² God be with you! —

[*Exeunt all but Macbeth and an Attendant.*]

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

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

Macbeth. Bring them before us. —

[*Exit Attendant.*]

To be thus is nothing,

But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo
 Stick deep; and in his royalty of nature
 Reigns that which would be fear'd. 'Tis much he dares;
 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 rebuk'd, as, it is said,
 Mark Antony's was by Cæsar.³ He chid the sisters

¹ "Cause of state," etc., i.e., affairs of state calling for our joint consideration.

² "While then," i.e., till then.

³ Plutarch relates that "Antony had in his house a fortune-telling gypsy, who was skilled in the calculation of nativities. This man, either to oblige Cleopatra, or following the investigation of truth, told Antony that the star of his fortune was eclipsed and obscured by that of Cæsar, and advised him by all means to keep at the greatest distance from that young man. [Octavius

When first they put the name of king upon me,
 And bade them speak to him ; then, prophetlike,
 They hail'd him father to a line of kings.
 Upon my head they plac'd a fruitless crown,
 And put a barren scepter in my gripe,
 Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
 No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
 For Banquo's issue have I fil'd¹ my mind ;
 For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd ;
 Put rancors in the vessel of my peace
 Only for them ; and mine eternal jewel²
 Given to the common enemy of man,
 To make them kings,—the seed of Banquo kings !
 Rather than so, come, Fate, into the list,
 And champion me to the utterance !³—Who's there ?

Reënter Attendant, with two Murderers.

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

[Exit Attendant.]

Was it not yesterday we spoke together ?

First Murderer. It was, so please your highness.

Macbeth.

Well, then, now,

Have you consider'd of my speeches ? Know

is the Cæsar referred to.] 'The Genius of your life,' said he, 'is afraid of his : when it is alone, its bearing is erect and fearless ; when his approaches, it is dejected and depressed.' Indeed, there were many circumstances to justify the conjurer's doctrine ; for in every kind of play, whether they cast lots or cast the die, Antony was still the loser. In their quail fights and cock fights, Cæsar's birds always won."

¹ Defiled.

² "Eternal jewel," i.e., immortal soul.

³ "Champion me," etc., i.e., fight against me to the last. Furness (*Variorum Shakespeare*, vol. ii.) quotes Johnson's note: "À l'outrance (of which 'utterance' of the text is a corruption) is a French phrase of arms. A challenge or combat à l'outrance was the term used when the combatants engaged with an intention to destroy each other, in opposition to trials of skill at festivals or on other occasions, where the contest was only for reputation or a prize."

That it was he in the times past which held you
 So under fortune, which you thought had been
 Our innocent self. This I made good to you
 In our last conference, pass'd in probation with you,¹
 How you were borne in hand,² how cross'd, the instruments,
 Who wrought with them, and all things else that might
 To half a soul and to a notion craz'd
 Say, "Thus did Banquo."

First Murderer. You made it known to us.

Macbeth. I did so, and went further, which is now
 Our point of second meeting. Do you find
 Your patience so predominant in your nature
 That you can let this go? Are you so gospel'd³
 To pray for this good man and for his issue,
 Whose heavy hand hath bow'd you to the grave
 And beggar'd yours forever?

First Murderer. We are men, my liege.

Macbeth. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
 As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
 Shoughs,⁴ water rugs, and demi-wolves are clept⁵
 All by the name of dogs: the valued file⁶
 Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
 The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
 According to the gift which bounteous nature
 Hath in him clos'd, whereby he does receive
 Particular addition, from the bill
 That writes them all alike: and so of men.
 Now, if you have a station in the file,

¹ "Pass'd," etc., i. e., in which it was proved to you in detail.

² "Borne in hand," i. e., beguiled by flattering promises.

³ See Matt. v. 44.

⁴ "Shough" is a dog with rough, shaggy hair. The word is sometimes written, and always pronounced, "shock."

⁵ Called.

⁶ "Valued file," i. e., a list in which names and qualities are specifically designated.

Not i' the worst rank of manhood, say't ;
 And I will put that business in your bosoms,
 Whose execution takes your enemy off,
 Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
 Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
 Which in his death were perfect.

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

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

Macbeth. Both of you
 Know Banquo was your enemy.

Both Murderers. True, my lord.

Macbeth. So is he mine ; and in such bloody distance,¹
 That every minute of his being thrusts
 Against my near'st of life : and though I could
 With barefac'd power sweep him from my sight
 And bid my will avouch it,² yet I must not,
 For³ certain friends that are both his and mine,
 Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
 Whom I myself struck down ; and thence it is,
 That I to your assistance do make love,
 Masking the business from the common eye
 For sundry weighty reasons.

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

First Murderer. Though our lives—

¹ Variance.

² " With barefac'd power," etc., i.e., with arbitrary power destroy him,
 and justify the act by my will.

³ On account of.

Macbeth. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most

I will advise you where to plant yourselves ;
 Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' the time,¹
 The moment on't; for't must be done to-night,
 And something² from the palace; always thought
 That I require a clearness:³ and with him—
 To leave no rubs⁴ nor botches in the work—
 Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
 Whose absence is no less material to me
 Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
 Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart:
 I'll come to you anon.

Both Murderers. We are resolv'd, my lord.

Macbeth. I'll call upon you straight:⁵ abide within.

[*Exeunt Murderers.*]

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

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II. *The Palace.*

Enter LADY MACBETH and a Servant.

Lady Macbeth. Is Banquo gone from court ?

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

Lady Macbeth. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
 For a few words.

Servant. Madam, I will.

[*Exit.*]

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

¹ "The perfect spy," etc., i.e., the exact time when you may expect him.

² Somewhat.

³ "Always thought," etc., i.e., remembering always that I am not to be implicated in the matter.

⁴ Hindrances.

⁵ Immediately.

Enter MACBETH.

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

Macbeth. We have scotch'd ¹ the snake, not kill'd it :
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly : better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy.² Duncan is in his grave ;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well ;
Treason has done his ³ worst : nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing,
Can touch him further.

Lady Macbeth. Come on ;
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks ;
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

Macbeth. So shall I, love ; and so, I pray, be you :
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo ;
Present him eminence,⁴ both with eye and tongue :
Unsafe the while, that we
Must lave our honors in these flattering streams,
And make our faces vizards ⁵ to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

¹ Wounded ; gashed.

² " Ecstasy " is used by Shakespeare for any violent emotion, as anger, sorrow, etc.

³ Its.

⁴ " Present him eminence," i.e., do him all honor.

⁵ Masks.

Lady Macbeth. You must leave this.

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

Lady Macbeth. But in them nature's copy's¹ not eterne.²

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

Lady Macbeth. What's to be done ?

Macbeth. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. — Come, seeling night,
Scarf up the tender eye³ of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond⁴
Which keeps me pale ! — Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood :⁵
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
Whiles⁶ 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.*]

SCENE III. *A Park near the Palace.*

Enter three Murderers.

First Murderer. But who did bid thee join with us ?

Third Murderer. Macbeth.

Second Murderer. He needs not our mistrust,⁷ since he delivers

¹ "Nature's copy," i.e., the "human form divine;" man, the image of his Maker. ² Eternal.

³ "Seeling night," etc., i.e., obscuring night blindfolds the tender eye.

⁴ "That great bond," i.e., Banquo's life.

⁵ "Rooky wood," i.e., wood thronged with rooks. ⁶ While.

⁷ "He needs not our mistrust," i.e., we need have no suspicion of him.

Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.

First Murderer. Then stand with us.

The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day :
Now spurs the lated traveler apace
To gain the timely inn ; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

Third Murderer. Hark ! I hear horses.

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

Second Murderer. Then 'tis he : the rest
That are within the note of expectation ¹
Already are i' the court.

First Murderer. His horses go about.

Third Murderer. Almost a mile : but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Second Murderer. A light, a light !

Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE, with a torch.

Third Murderer. 'Tis he.

First Murderer. Stand to't.

Banquo. It will be rain to-night.

First Murderer. Let it come down.

[*They set upon Banquo.*

Banquo. O, treachery ! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly !
Thou mayst revenge. O slave ! [*Dies. Fleance escapes.*

Third Murderer. Who did strike out the light ?

First Murderer. Was't not the way ?

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

Second Murderer. We have lost
Best half of our affair.

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

[*Exeunt.*

1 " Note of expectation," i.e., list of those expected at the feast.

SCENE IV. *The Same. Hall in the Palace.*

A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and Attendants.

Macbeth. You know your own degrees; sit down: at first
And last¹ the hearty welcome.

Lords. Thanks to your majesty.

Macbeth. Ourselves will mingle with society,
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state,² 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.

First Murderer appears at the door.

Macbeth. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst.
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Approaching the door.*] There's blood upon
thy face.

Murderer. 'Tis Banquo's, then.

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

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

Macbeth. Thou art the best o' the cut-throats; yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil.³

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 casing⁴ air;

¹ "At first and last," i.e., to first and last; to one and all.

² "Keeps her state," i.e., keeps her chair or seat of state.

³ Unequaled.

⁴ Surrounding.

But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in
To saucy doubts and fear. But Banquo's safe ?

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

Macbeth. Thanks for that :
There the grown serpent lies ; the worm that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone ; to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again.¹ [*Exit Murderer.*]

Lady Macbeth. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer ;² the feast is sold
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome : to feed were best at home ;
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony ;
Meeting were bare without it.

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

Lennox. May't please your highness sit.

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

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

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

Macbeth. The table's full.

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

Macbeth. Where ?

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

Macbeth. Which of you have done this ?

¹ " We'll hear," etc., i. e., we'll talk together again.

² Welcome.

Lords.

What, my good lord ?

Macbeth. Thou canst not say I did it : never shake
Thy gory locks at me.

Ross. Gentlemen, rise : his highness is not well.

Lady Macbeth. Sit, worthy friends : my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth : pray you, keep seat ;
The fit is momentary ; upon a thought
He will again be well. If much you note him,
You shall offend him and extend his passion :
Feed, and regard him not. — Are you a man ?

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

Lady Macbeth. O proper stuff !
This is the very painting of your fear :
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,
Impostors to true fear,¹ would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire,
Author'iz'd by her grandam. Shame itself !
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
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites.

[*Ghost vanishes.*]

Lady Macbeth. What ! quite unmann'd in folly ?

Macbeth. If I stand here, I saw him.

Lady Macbeth. Fie, for shame !

Macbeth. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,
Ere human statute purg'd the gentle weal ;²

¹ " To true fear," i.e., when compared with true fear.

² " Ere human statute," etc., i.e., before human statute purified the commonwealth and civilized it, made it gentle.

Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd
 Too terrible for the ear: the time has been,
 That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
 And there an end; but now they rise again,
 With twenty mortal murders¹ on their crowns,
 And push us from our stools. This is more strange
 Than such a murder is.

Lady Macbeth. My worthy lord,
 Your noble friends do lack you.

Macbeth. I do forget.—
 Do not muse² at me, my most worthy friends;
 I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
 To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
 Then I'll sit down.— Give me some wine; fill full.
 I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,
 And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
 Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,
 And all to all.³

Lords. Our duties, and the pledge.

Reënter Ghost.

Macbeth. Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!
 Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;
 Thou hast no speculation⁴ in those eyes
 Which thou dost glare with!

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

Macbeth. What man dare, I dare:
 Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,

¹ "Mortal murders," i.e., fatal wounds.

² Wonder.

³ "To all," etc., i.e., we drink to him and to all, with all best wishes to all.

⁴ "Speculation," i.e., as Dr. Johnson notes, "the intelligence which is perceived in the eye of the living man."

The arm'd rhinoceros,¹ or the Hyrcan² 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 inhabit³ then, protest⁴ me
 The baby of a girl.⁵ Hence, horrible shadow !
 Unreal mockery, hence !

[*Ghost vanishes.*

Why, so : being gone,

I am a man again. — Pray you, sit still.

Lady Macbeth. You have displac'd the mirth, broke the good meeting,

With most admir'd disorder.⁶

Macbeth. Can such things be,
 And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
 Without our special wonder ? You make me strange
 Even to the disposition that I owe,⁷
 When now I think you can behold such sights,
 And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
 When mine is blanch'd with fear.

Ross. What sights, my lord ?

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.

¹ " Arm'd rhinoceros," i.e., armored with his thick hide as with a coat of mail.

² Hyrcania was the name given by the ancients to a part of Asia of uncertain extent, its northern boundary being the Caspian or Hyrcanian Sea.

³ Stay at home ; keep under roof.

⁴ Call.

⁵ " Baby of a girl," i.e., a girl's doll.

⁶ " Admir'd disorder," i.e., disorder to be wondered at.

⁷ " You make me strange," etc., i.e., you make me a stranger even to my own feelings, unable to comprehend the motive of my fear.

Lennox. 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:

Stones have been known to move,¹ and trees to speak;

Augurs and understood relations have

By magot-pies and choughs and rooks² brought forth

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

Lady Macbeth. Almost at odds with morning, which is which

Macbeth. How say'st thou,³ that Macduff denies his person

At our great bidding?

Lady Macbeth. Did you send to him, sir?

Macbeth. I hear it by the way; but I will send:

There's not a one of them but in his house

I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,

And betimes I will, to the weird sisters:

More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,

By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,

All causes shall give way: I am in blood

Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,

Returning were as tedious as go o'er.

Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;

Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.⁴

¹ "Stones have been known to move." Furness (*Variorum Shakespeare*, vol. ii. p. 183) quotes from *Notes and Queries*, Nov. 6, 1869: "May not the allusion be to the rocking-stones or 'stones of judgment,' by which it was thought the Druids tested the guilt or innocence of accused persons? At a slight touch of the innocent, such a stone moved; but 'the secret man of blood' found that his best strength could not stir it."

² Magot-pies and choughs and rooks are all cunning birds, frequently household pets, that may be taught to articulate more or less distinctly. That such birds have been the means of disclosing secrets is well known.

³ "How say'st thou?" i.e., what do you say to this?

⁴ Closely examined.

Lady Macbeth. You lack the season of all natures,¹ sleep.

Macbeth. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse²
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use:
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

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SCENE V. *A Heath.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches, meeting HECATE.

First Witch. Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly.

Hecate. Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close³ contriver of all harms,
Was never call'd to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron⁴
Meet me i' the morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny;

¹ "The season of all natures," i.e., that which keeps all natures fresh; preserves them.

² "My strange and self-abuse," i.e., my strange self-delusion.

³ Secret.

⁴ A river celebrated in antiquity, from its supposed communication with the realms of Pluto. Homer called it, from its dead appearance, one of the rivers of the Lower World; and the fable has been adopted by succeeding poets. Shakespeare, as Steevens remarks, "seems to have thought it allowable to bestow the name of Acheron on any fountain, lake, or pit through which there was vulgarly supposed to be a communication between this and the infernal world."

Your vessels and your spells provide,
 Your charms and everything beside.
 I am for the air; this night I'll spend
 Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
 Great business must be wrought ere noon
 Upon the corner of the moon
 There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
 I'll catch it ere it come to ground:
 And that distill'd by magic sleights¹
 Shall raise such artificial sprites²
 As by the strength of their illusion
 Shall draw him on to his confusion:
 He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
 His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear:
 And you all know, security³
 Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

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

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

First Witch. Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back
 again. [Exit.]

SCENE VI. *Forres. The Palace.*

Enter LENNOX and another Lord.

Lennox. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
 Which can interpret further: only, I say,
 Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
 Was pitied of Macbeth: marry,⁴ he was dead;
 And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late;

¹ Contrivances.

² "Artificial sprites," i.e., spirits made, or made to appear, by artificial means.

³ Carelessness.

⁴ "Marry:" this exclamation, or petty oath, is a corruption of "Virgin Mary."

Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,
 For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
 Who cannot want the thought how monstrous
 It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
 To kill their gracious father? damned fact!
 How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight
 In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
 That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?
 Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;
 For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive
 To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,
 He has borne all things well: and I do think
 That had he Duncan's sons under his key—
 As, an't please Heaven, he shall not—they should find
 What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.
 But, peace! for from broad words,¹ and 'cause he fail'd
 His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear
 Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
 Where he bestows himself?

Lord.

The son of Duncan,
 From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth,
 Lives in the English court, and is receiv'd
 Of the most pious Edward² with such grace
 That the malevolence of fortune nothing
 Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff
 Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid,³
 To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward;
 That, by the help of these, with Him above
 To ratify the work, we may again
 Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
 Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
 Do faithful homage, and receive free honors;

¹ "From broad words," i.e., in consequence of free speech.

² Edward the Confessor (see Note 3, p. 82).

³ "Upon his aid," i.e., to his aid.

All which we pine for now. And this report
Hath so exasperate¹ the king, that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Lennox.

Sent he to Macduff ?

Lord. He did ; and with an absolute " Sir, not I,"

The cloudy messenger turns me² his back,
And hums, as who should say, " You'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer."

Lennox.

And that well might

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

Lord.

I'll send my prayers with him.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *A Cavern. In the Middle a Boiling Caldron.*

Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

First Witch. Thrice the brinded³ cat hath mew'd.

Second Witch. Thrice and once the hedgepig whin'd.

Third Witch. Harpier cries, "'Tis time, 'tis time."

First Witch. Round about the caldron go ;

In the poison'd entrails throw.

Toad, that under the cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one

¹ Exasperated.

² The " me " is redundant, introduced to enliven the speech. There are many instances of this use of the word in Shakespeare.

³ Brindled.

Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot.

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

Second Witch. Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt¹ and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork² and blindworm's sting,
Lizard's leg and howlet's³ wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hellbroth boil and bubble.

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

Third Witch. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy,⁴ maw and gulf⁵
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab;
Add thereto a tiger's chawdron,⁶
For the ingredients of our caldron.

¹ A kind of lizard.

² Forked tongue.

³ Owllet's.

⁴ Nares (as quoted by Furness) notes that Egyptian mummy, or what passed for it, was formerly used as a medicine; and Sir Thomas Browne, as noted by Dyce, remarks "that the Egyptian mummies which Cambyses or time had spared, avarice now consumeth; Mummie has become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams." But the same writer adds, that a large business was done in the manufacturing of mummies from dead carcasses, and giving them the names of kings.

⁵ Gullet.

⁶ Entrails.

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

Second Witch. Cool it with a bab'oon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

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Enter HECATE to the other three Witches.

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

[*Music and a song: "Black spirits," etc. Hecate retires.*]

Second Witch. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.¹

Open, locks,
Whoever knocks!

Enter MACBETH.

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

All. A deed without a name.

Macbeth. I con'jure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation² up;
Though bladed corn be lodg'd³ and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure

¹ Steevens remarks, "It is a very ancient superstition, that all sudden pains of the body which could not naturally be accounted for were presages of somewhat that was shortly to happen."

² The vessels of navigation; ships.

³ Laid.

Of nature's germens¹ tumble altogether,
Even till destruction sicken; answer me
To what I ask you.

First Witch. Speak.

Second Witch. Demand.

Third Witch.

We'll answer.

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

Macbeth. Call 'em; let me see 'em.

First Witch. Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow:² grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

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

Thunder. *First Apparition: an armed Head.*

Macbeth. Tell me, thou unknown power,—

First Witch.

He knows thy thought:

Hear his speech, but say thou naught.

First Apparition. Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth ! beware
Macduff ;

Beware the Thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

[*Descends.*

Macbeth. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;
Thou hast harp'd my fear aright:³ but one word more,—

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

Thunder. *Second Apparition: a bloody Child.*

Second Apparition. Macbeth ! Macbeth ! Macbeth !

Macbeth. Had I three ears I'd hear thee.

¹ Fruitful, germinating seeds.

² Litter.

³ " Harp'd my fear aright," i.e., struck the chord or keynote of my fear.

Second Apparition. Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to

SCORN

The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.

[*Descends.*

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

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

What is this

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

All. Listen, but speak not to't.

Third Apparition. Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until
Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsin'ane Hill
Shall come against him.

[*Descends.*

Macbeth. That will never be:
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements!¹ good!
Rebellion's head rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-plac'd Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much, shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

All. Seek to know no more.

Macbeth. I will be satisfied: deny me this

¹ Presages.

And an eternal curse fall on you ! Let me know.
Why sinks that caldron ? and what noise is this ?

[Hautboys.]

First Witch. Show !

Second Witch. Show !

Third Witch. Show !

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

A show of eight Kings, the last with a glass in his hand ; Banquo's Ghost following.

Macbeth. Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo ; down !
Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs. And thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first.
A third is like the former. Filthy hags !
Why do you show me this ? A fourth ! Start, eyes !
What ! will the line stretch out to the crack of doom ?
Another yet ! A seventh ! I'll see no more :
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more ; and some I see
That twofold balls¹ and treble scepters carry :
Horrible sight ! Now, I see, 'tis true ;
For the blood-bolter'd² Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*] What, is
this so ?

First Witch. Ay, sir, all this is so : but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly ?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprights,³
And show the best of our delights :
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round ;

¹ The ball carried by kings was an emblem of sovereignty, "and the twofold balls refer to the double coronation of James I. at Scone and at Westminster."

² Blood-clotted.

³ Spirits.

That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.

[*Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish, with Hecate.*

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

Enter LENNOX.

Lennox. What's your grace's will?

Macbeth. Saw you the weird sisters?

Lennox. No, my lord.

Macbeth. Came they not by you?

Lennox. No indeed, my lord.

Macbeth. Infected be the air whereon they ride,
And damn'd all those that trust them! — I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was't came by?

Lennox. 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.

Macbeth. Fled to England!

Lennox. Ay, my good lord.

Macbeth. [*Aside*] Time, thou anticipat'st¹ my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it. From this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.
But no more sights!² — Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are.

[*Exeunt.*

¹ Preventest.

² "No more sights" like the "horrible sight" he has just beheld.

SCENE II. *Fife. Macduff's Castle.*

Enter LADY MACDUFF, her Son, and ROSS.

Lady Macduff. What hath he done, to make him fly the land ?

Ross. You must have patience, madam.

Lady Macduff. He had none :

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

Ross. You know not

Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

Lady Macduff. Wisdom ! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly ? He loves us not ;
He wants the natural touch : ¹ for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear and nothing is the love ;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

Ross. My dearest coz,

I pray you, school yourself : but for your husband,
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' the season.² I dare not speak much further ;
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
And do not know ourselves ;³ when we hold rumor
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and move.⁴ I take my leave of you :
Shall not be long but I'll be here again.

¹ Affection.

² "The fits o' the season," i.e., that which befits the season.

³ "We are traitors," etc., i.e., we are unconscious of guilt, yet held to be traitors.

⁴ "But float," etc., i.e., but float and move each way, hither and thither, upon a wild and violent sea.

Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you !

Lady Macduff. Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort :
I take my leave at once.

[*Exit.*

Lady Macduff. Sirrah, your father's dead :
And what will you do now ? How will you live ?

Son. As birds do, mother.

Lady Macduff. What, with worms and flies ?

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

Lady Macduff. Poor bird ! thou'dst never fear the net nor
lime,¹

The pitfall nor the gin.²

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

Lady Macduff. Yes, he is dead : how wilt thou do for a father ?

Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband ?

Lady Macduff. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

Son. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

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

Son. Was my father a traitor, mother ?

Lady Macduff. Ay, that he was.

Son. What is a traitor ?

Lady Macduff. Why, one that swears and lies.

Son. And be all traitors that do so ?

Lady Macduff. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must
be hang'd.

Son. And must they all be hang'd that swear and lie ?

¹ Birdlime, a viscous substance with which the edges of birds' nests and the tree branches near them were smeared, and by which the birds were ensnared.

² Trap.

Lady Macduff. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them ?

Lady Macduff. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enow¹ to beat the honest men and hang up them.

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

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

Lady Macduff. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st !

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. Bless you, fair dame ! I am not to you known, Though in your state of honor I am perfect.

I doubt some danger does approach you nearly :

If you will take a homely² man's advice,

Be not found here ; hence, with your little ones.

To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage ;

To do worse to you were fell cruelty,

Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you !

I dare abide no longer.

[*Exit.*

Lady Macduff. Whither should I fly ?

I have done no harm. But I remember now

I am in this earthly world, where to do harm

Is often laudable, to do good sometime

Accounted dangerous folly ; why, then, alas !

Do I put up that womanly defense,

To say I have done no harm ?

Enter Murderers.

What are these faces ?

First Murderer. Where is your husband ?

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

¹ Enough.

² Plain.

First Murderer. He's a traitor.

Son. Thou liest, thou shag-hair'd¹ villain!

First Murderer.

What, you egg!

[*Stabbing him.*

Young fry of treachery!

Son. He has kill'd me, mother:

Run away, I pray you!

[*Dies.*

[*Exit Lady Macduff, crying "Murder!"*

Excunt Murderers, following her.

SCENE III. *England. Before the King's Palace.*

Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF.

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

Macduff. Let us rather

Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our downfall'n birthdom;² each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolor.³

Malcolm. What I believe I'll wail;

What know, believe; and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend,⁴ I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name⁵ blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest: you have lov'd him well;
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom

¹ Rough; coarse-haired.

² "Our downfall'n birthdom," i.e., our fallen country.

³ "Like syllable of dolor," i.e., similar cry of grief.

⁴ "The time to friend," i.e., the time convenient.

⁵ "Whose sole name," i.e., the mere naming of whom.

To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

Macduff. I am not treacherous.

Malcolm.

But Macbeth is.

A good and virtuous nature may recoil¹
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose:
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,
Yet grace must still look so.²

Macduff.

I have lost my hopes.

Malcolm. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.

Why in that rawness³ left you wife and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,
But mine own safeties. You may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

Macduff.

Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee: wear thou thy wrongs;
The title is affeer'd!⁴ Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.

Malcolm.

Be not offended:

I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds: I think withal
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here from gracious England have I offer

¹ Give way.

² "Grace must still look so," i.e., grace must still look like herself.

³ Unprotected condition.

⁴ Confirmed.

Of goodly thousands; but, for all this,
 When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
 Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
 Shall have more vices than it had before,
 More suffer and more sundry ways than ever,¹
 By him that shall succeed.

Macduff. What should he be?

Malcolm. It is myself I mean; in whom I know
 All the particulars of vice so grafted
 That, when they shall be open'd,² black Macbeth
 Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
 Esteem him as a lamb, being compar'd
 With my confineless³ harms.

Macduff. Not in the legions
 Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd
 In evils to top Macbeth.

Malcolm. I grant him bloody,
 Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
 Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
 That has a name; but there's no bottom, none,
 In my voluptuousness. Better Macbeth
 Than such an one to reign.

Macduff. Boundless intemperance
 In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
 The untimely emptying of the happy throne
 And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
 To take upon you what is yours: you may
 Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
 And yet seem cold.

Malcolm. With this there grows
 In my most ill-compos'd affection such
 A stanchless⁴ avarice that, were I king,

¹ "More suffer," etc., i.e., suffer more and in more various ways than ever.

² Blossom, like grafted buds.

³ Unconfined; boundless.

⁴ Ever-flowing; unceasing.

I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
 Desire his jewels and this other's house;¹
 And my more-having would be as a sauce
 To make me hunger more, that I should forge
 Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
 Destroying them for wealth.

Macduff.

This avarice

Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
 Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been
 The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;
 Scotland hath foisons² to fill up your will,
 Of your mere own: all these are portable,³
 With other graces weigh'd.

Malcolm. But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
 As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
 Bounty, persev'rance, mercy, lowliness,
 Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
 I have no relish of them, but abound
 In the division of each several crime,
 Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
 Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
 Uprouar⁴ the universal peace, confound
 All unity on earth.

Macduff.

O Scotland, Scotland!

Malcolm. If such a one be fit to govern, speak:

I am as I have spoken.

Macduff.

Fit to govern!

No, not to live. O nation miserable,
 With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
 When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
 Since that the truest issue of thy throne

¹ "His jewels and this other's house," i.e., this man's jewels, that man's house.

² Abundance.

³ Bearable.

⁴ Put in an uproar or confusion.

By his own interdiction¹ stands accurs'd,
 And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
 Was a most sainted king: the queen that bore thee,
 Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
 Died every day she lived.² Fare thee well!
 These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
 Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
 Thy hope ends here!

Malcolm. Macduff, this noble passion,
 Child of integrity, hath from my soul
 Wip'd the black scruples, reconcil'd my thoughts
 To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth
 By many of these trains³ hath sought to win me
 Into his power, and modest wisdom plucks me
 From overcredulous haste: but God above
 Deal between thee and me! for even now
 I put myself to thy direction, and
 Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure
 The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
 For strangers to my nature. I am yet
 Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
 Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,
 At no time broke my faith, would not betray
 The devil to his fellow, and delight
 No less in truth than life: my first false speaking
 Was this upon myself. What I am truly,
 Is thine and my poor country's to command;
 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
 Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,
 Already at a point,⁴ was setting forth.

¹ Confession.

² "Died every day she lived," i.e., mortified herself daily. "I die daily"
 (1 Cor. xv. 31).

³ Seductive wiles; lures.

⁴ "Already at a point," i.e., fully prepared.

Now we'll together ; and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel !¹ Why are you silent ?

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

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Enter a Doctor.

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

Doctor. Ay, sir ; there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure : their malady convinces
The great assay of art ;² but at his touch,
Such sanctity hath Heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.

Malcolm. I thank you, doctor. [*Exit Doctor.*]

Macduff. What's the disease he means ?

Malcolm. 'Tis call'd the evil :³

A most miraculous work in this good king,
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits Heaven,
Himself best knows ; but strangely-visited people,

¹ "Chance of goodness," etc., i.e., the chance of success be as assured as the justice of our cause.

² "Their malady convinces," etc., i.e., their disease overcomes all the art of the most skillful physicians.

³ "'Tis call'd the evil," i.e., the king's evil, scrofula. The name of "king's evil" was applied to this affliction in consequence of an old belief that scrofulous tumors could be cured by royal touch. Old historians record that multitudes of patients were submitted to this treatment from the days of Edward the Confessor to the reign of Queen Anne. In the English Cyclopaedia, under the head of "Scrofula," a note from Carte's History of England is cited to the effect that "the Jacobites considered that this power did not descend to Mary, William, or Anne, as they did not reign by divine right." The practice of presenting the patient with a coin was not introduced till the time of Henry VII. In the reign of Charles II. a medal specially designed for the purpose was given. Dr. Samuel Johnson, in 1712, when a child, was touched by Queen Anne, and was probably among the last to receive the treatment. The prayer for the ceremony, which appears in the Liturgy of the Church of England as late as 1719, has been silently omitted.

All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
 The mere despair of surgery, he cures,
 Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
 Put on with holy prayers; and 'tis spoken,
 To the succeeding royalty he leaves
 The healing benediction. With this strange virtue
 He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
 And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
 That speak him full of grace.

Enter Ross.

Macduff. See, who comes here ?

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

Macduff. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

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

Ross. Sir, amen.

Macduff. Stands Scotland where it did ?

Ross. Alas, poor country !

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
 Be call'd our mother, but our grave ; where nothing,
 But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile ;
 Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air
 Are made, not mark'd ; where violent sorrow seems
 A modern ecstasy : ¹ the dead man's knell
 Is there scarce ask'd for who ; ² and good men's lives
 Expire before the flowers in their caps,
 Dying or ere they sicken.

Macduff. O, relation
 Too nice, and yet too true ! ³

Malcolm. What's the newest grief ?

Ross. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker :
 Each minute teems ⁴ a new one.

¹ " A modern ecstasy," i.e., an ordinary grief.

² Whom.

³ " O, relation," etc., i.e., the narrative, though worded with too much art, is yet, alas, too true.

⁴ Gives birth to.

Macduff. How does my wife ?

Ross. Why, well.

Macduff. And all my children ?

Ross. Well too.

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

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

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

Ross. When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumor
Of many worthy fellows that were out ;¹
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that² I saw the tyrant's power³ afoot.
Now is the time of help ; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff⁴ their dire distresses.

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

Ross. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like ! But I have words
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch⁵ them.

Macduff. What concern they ?
The general cause ? or is it a fee-grief⁶
Due to some single breast ?

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

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

¹ Out in armed rebellion.

² " For that," i.e., because.

³ Army.

⁴ Do off ; to be freed from.

⁵ Catch.

⁶ A personal grief of which one is the sole possessor, has it in fee.

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

Macduff. Hum! I guess at it.

Ross. Your castle is surpris'd; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry¹ of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.

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

Macduff. My children too?

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

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

Ross. I have said.

Malcolm. Be comforted:
Let's make us med'cines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

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

Malcolm. Dispute² it like a man.

Macduff. I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did Heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught³ that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!

¹ "A heap of slaughtered game." ² Contend with. ³ Vile thing

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

Macduff. O, I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission,¹ front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

Malcolm. This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave.² Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments.³ Receive what cheer you may:
The night is long that never finds the day. [Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I. *Dunsinane. Anteroom in the Castle.*

Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting Gentlewoman.

Doctor. I have two nights watch'd with you, but can perceive
no truth in your report. When was it she last walk'd?

Gentlewoman. Since his majesty went into the field, I have
seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, un-
lock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it,
afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in
a most fast sleep.

Doctor. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the
benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slum-
bery⁴ agitation, besides her walking and other actual perform-
ances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

¹ Interruption; delay.

² "Our lack," etc., i.e., there is nothing lacking now but to take leave.

³ "Powers," etc., i.e., powers above instigate men to the work.

⁴ Slumberous.

Gentlewoman. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doctor. You may to me: and 'tis most meet you should.

Gentlewoman. Neither to you nor any one; having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter LADY MACBETH, *with a taper.*

Lo you, here she comes! This is her very guise;¹ and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.²

Doctor. How came she by that light?

Gentlewoman. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

Doctor. You see, her eyes are open.

Gentlewoman. Ay, but their sense is shut.

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

Gentlewoman. It is an accustom'd action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady Macbeth. Yet here's a spot.

Doctor. Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady Macbeth. Out, damned spot! out, I say! — One: two: why, then 'tis time to do't. — Hell is murky! — Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account? — Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him!

Doctor. Do you mark that?

Lady Macbeth. The Thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now? — What, will these hands ne'er be clean? — No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

Doctor. Go to, go to; ³ you have known what you should not.

¹ "Very guise," i.e., the dress and manner in which she always appears on these occasions.

² Quiet.

³ "Go to," an exclamation of horror and astonishment here. The phrase is used in various senses by Shakespeare, — as an expression of encouragement, of reproach, of contempt, etc.

Gentlewoman. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: Heaven knows what she has known.

Lady Macbeth. Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doctor. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charg'd.

Gentlewoman. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.¹

Doctor. Well, well, well,—

Gentlewoman. Pray God it be, sir.

Doctor. This disease is beyond my practice: yet I have known those which have walk'd in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

Lady Macbeth. Wash your hands, put on your nightgown; look not so pale.—I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

Doctor. Even so?

Lady Macbeth. To bed, to bed! there's knocking at the gate: come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone.—To bed, to bed, to bed! [Exit.

Doctor. Will she go now to bed?

Gentlewoman. Directly.²

Doctor. Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles: infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets:
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night:
My mind she has mated,³ and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.

Gentlewoman. Good night, good doctor. [Exeunt.

¹ "Heart," etc., i.e., such a heart in my bosom for all the rank and honors of her state.

² At once.

³ Confounded.

SCENE II. *The Country near Dunsinane.*

Drum and colors. Enter MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, and Soldiers.

Menteith. The English power is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Siward, and the good Macduff.
Revenes burn in them; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.¹

Angus. Near Birnam Wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.

Caithness. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?

Lennox. For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Siward's son,
And many unrough² youths that even now
Protest³ their first of manhood.

Menteith. What does the tyrant?

Caithness. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:
Some say he's mad; others that lesser hate him
Do call it valiant fury: but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distemper'd cause
Within the belt of rule.⁴

Angus. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely⁵ revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love: now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.

Menteith. Who then shall blame
His pester'd⁶ senses to recoil and start,

¹ "Mortified man," i.e., an ascetic; a man dead to worldly affairs.

² Unbearded. ³ Testify to.

⁴ "He cannot," etc., i.e., he cannot bind his disaffected party to his sway.

⁵ Constantly occurring. ⁶ Perplexed.

When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there ?

Caithness. Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly ow'd:
Meet we the medicine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.¹

Lennox. Or so much as it needs,
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam. [*Exeunt, marching.*]

SCENE III. *Dunsinane. A Room in the Castle.*

Enter MACBETH, Doctor, and Attendants.

Macbeth. Bring me no more reports ; let them fly all :
Till Birnam Wood remove to Dunsinane,
I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm ?
Was he not born of woman ? The spirits that know
All mortal consequences have pronounc'd² me thus :
" Fear not, Macbeth ; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures :
The mind I sway by³ and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

Enter a Servant.

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac'd loon !
Where got'st thou that goose look ?

Servant. There is ten thousand—

Macbeth. Geese, villain ?

Servant. Soldiers, sir.

Macbeth. Go prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,

¹ "Meet we," etc., i.e., let us join the physician (Malcolm), and with him, to cleanse the sickly commonwealth, shed our blood to the last drop.

² Declared to.

³ "Sway by," i.e., am governed by.

Thou lily-liver'd¹ boy. What soldiers, patch?²
 Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
 Are counselors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?

Servant. The English force, so please you.

Macbeth. Take thy face hence. [*Exit Servant.*

Seyton!—I am sick at heart,

When I behold—Seyton, I say!—this push³
 Will chair me ever, or disseat me now.
 I have liv'd long enough: my way of life
 Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
 And that which should accompany old age,
 As honor, love, obedience, troops of friends,
 I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
 Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honor, breath,
 Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.
 Seyton!

Enter SEYTON.

Seyton. What is your gracious pleasure?

Macbeth. What news more?

Seyton. All is confirm'd, my lord, which was reported.

Macbeth. I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hack'd.
 Give me my armor.

Seyton. 'Tis not needed yet.

Macbeth. I'll put it on.

Send out more horses; skirr⁴ the country round;
 Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor.
 How does your patient, doctor?

Doctor. Not so sick, my lord,
 As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies,
 That keep her from her rest.

Macbeth. Cure her of that.
 Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd,

¹ Cowardly. Formerly the liver was regarded as the seat of the passions and emotions generally.

² Stupid fool.

³ Onset.

⁴ Scour.

Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
 Raze out the written troubles of the brain
 And with some sweet oblivious antidote
 Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
 Which weighs upon the heart?

Doctor.

Therein the patient

Must minister to himself.

Macbeth. Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.—
 Come, put mine armor on; give me my staff.¹—
 Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes fly from me.—
 Come, sir, dispatch.²—If thou couldst, doctor, cast
 The water of my land, find her disease,
 And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
 I would applaud thee to the very echo,
 That should applaud again.—Pull't off, I say.³—
 What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug,
 Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?

Doctor. Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
 Makes us hear something.

Macbeth.

Bring it after me.—

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

Doctor. [*Aside*] Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
 Profit again should hardly draw me here. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV. *Country near Birnam Wood.*

Drum and colors. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD and his Son, MACDUFF,
 MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX, ROSS, and Soldiers, *marching.*

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

¹ Lance.

² "Come, sir, dispatch," addressing the attendant who is putting on the armor.

³ "Pull't off, I say," i.e., the armor, or some part of it, to which Macbeth refers a few lines below,— "Bring it after me."

Menteith. We doubt it nothing.

Siward. What wood is this before us ?

Menteith. The wood of Birnam.

Malcolm. Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear't before him; thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host, and make discovery
Err in report of us.

Soldiers. It shall be done.

Siward. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before't.¹

Malcolm. 'Tis his main hope :
For where there is advantage to be ta'en,
Both more and less have given him the revolt,
And none serve with him but constrained things
Whose hearts are absent too.

Macduff. Let our just censures
Attend the true event, and put we on
Industrious soldiership.²

Siward. The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe.
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate :
Towards which advance the war. [Exeunt, marching.]

SCENE V. *Dunsinane. Within the Castle.*

Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and Soldiers, with drum and colors.

Macbeth. Hang out our banners on the outward walls ;
The cry is still, " They come ! " Our castle's strength

¹ " Keeps still," etc., i.e., intrenched in his castle of Dunsinane, will stand a siege from us.

² " Let our just censures," etc., i.e., let us act the part of true soldiers, that the event may prove our judgments just.

Will laugh a siege to scorn: here let them lie
 Till famine and the ague eat them up:
 Were they not forc'd¹ with those that should be ours,
 We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
 And beat them backward home. [*A cry of women within.*
 What is that noise?

Seyton. It is the cry of women, my good lord. [*Exit.*

Macbeth. I have almost forgot the taste of fears:
 The time has been, my senses would have cool'd
 To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair²
 Would at a dismal treatise³ rouse and stir
 As life were in't. I have supp'd full with horrors;
 Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts,
 Cannot once start me.

Reënter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry?

Seyton. The queen, my lord, is dead.

Macbeth. She should have died hereafter;
 There would have been a time for such a word.
 To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
 Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
 To the last syllable of recorded time,
 And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
 The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
 Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
 That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
 And then is heard no more: it is a tale
 Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
 Signifying nothing.

Enter a Messenger.

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

Messenger. Gracious my lord,

¹ Reënforced. ² "Fell of hair," i.e., scalp with the hair on it.

³ "Dismal treatise," i.e., blood-curdling story.

I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

Macbeth. Well, say, sir.

Messenger. As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I look'd toward Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.

Macbeth. Liar and slave !

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

Macbeth. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling¹ thee : if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.
I pall² in resolution, and begin
To doubt the equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth : " Fear not till Birnam Wood
Do come to Dunsinane : " and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out !
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here. -
I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish the estate o' the world were now undone.
Ring the alarum bell ! Blow, wind ! come, wrack !³
At least we'll die with harness⁴ on our back.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI. *Dunsinane. Before the Castle.*

*Drum and colors. Enter MALCOLM, old SIWARD, MACDUFF, and their
Army, with boughs.*

Malcolm. Now near enough : your leavy screens throw down,
And show like those you are. You, worthy uncle,

¹ Wither, shrivel up, a signification of " cling " which it still has in the north of England.

² Lose heart.

³ Ruin.

⁴ Armor.

Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,
 Lead our first battle :¹ worthy Macduff and we
 Shall take upon's what else remains to do,
 According to our order.

Siward. Fare you well.

Do we but find the tyrant's power to-night,
 Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.

Macduff. Make all our trumpets speak ; give them all breath,
 Those clamorous harbingers² of blood and death. [Exeunt.]



SCENE VII. *Another Part of the Field.*

Alarums. Enter MACBETH.

Macbeth. They have tied me to a stake ; I cannot fly,
 But, bearlike, I must fight the course.³ What's he
 That was not born of woman ? Such a one
 Am I to fear, or none.

Enter young SIWARD.

Young Siward: What is thy name ?

Macbeth. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

Young Siward. No ; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
 Than any is in hell.

Macbeth. My name's Macbeth.

Young Siward. The devil himself could not pronounce a title
 More hateful to mine ear.

Macbeth. No, nor more fearful.

Young Siward. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant ; with my sword
 I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

[*They fight, and young Siward is slain.*]

¹ Battalion.

² Announcers (see Note 4, p. 25).

³ "They have tied," etc. Bear-baiting was a popular amusement in England in Shakespeare's time. The bear was tied to a stake, and a certain number of dogs set on him at intervals. Each attack was called a course.

Macbeth. Thou wast born of woman.
 But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
 Brandish'd by man that's of a woman born. [Exit.

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF.

Macduff. That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face !
 If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,
 My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
 I cannot strike at wretched kerns,¹ whose arms
 Are hir'd to bear their staves:² either thou, Macbeth,
 Or else my sword with an unbatter'd edge
 I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst oe ;
 By this great clatter, one of greatest note
 Seems bruted.³ Let me find him, Fortune !
 And more I beg not. [Exit. *Alarums.*

Enter MALCOLM and old SIWARD.

Siward. This way, my lord ; the castle's gently render'd :
 The tyrant's people on both sides do fight ;
 The noble thanes do bravely in the war ;
 The day almost itself professes yours,
 And little is to do.

Malcolm. We have met with foes
 That strike beside us.

Siward. Enter, sir, the castle. [Exeunt. *Alarums.*

SCENE VIII. *Another Part of the Field.*

Enter MACBETH.

Macbeth. Why should I play the Roman fool⁴ and die
 On mine own sword ? Whiles I see lives, the gashes
 Do better upon them.

¹ "Kerns" is used here contemptuously for the common soldiers of Macbeth's army (see Note 4, p. 14).

² Lances.

³ Hailed with great clamor.

⁴ "Roman fool," alluding, probably, to Cato or Marcus Brutus.

Enter MACDUFF.

Macduff. Turn, hell-hound, turn !

Macbeth. Of all men else I have avoided thee :
But get thee back ; my soul is too much charg'd
With blood of thine already.

Macduff. I have no words :
My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out !

[*They fight.*]

Macbeth. Thou lovest labor :
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant¹ air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed :
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests ;
I bear a charmed life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.

Macduff. Despair thy charm ;
And let the angel² whom thou still hast serv'd
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripp'd.

Macbeth. Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cow'd my better part of man !
And be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,
That palter³ with us in a double sense ;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.

Macduff. Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o' the time :
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
" Here may you see the tyrant."

Macbeth. I will not yield
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,

¹ Incapable of receiving a wound.

² Demon. It was the belief of the ancients that every man was controlled for good or evil by his attendant genius or demon (see Note 3, p. 50).

³ Equivocate.

And to be baited¹ with the rabble's curse.
 Though Birnam Wood be come to Dunsinane,
 And thou oppos'd, being of no woman born,
 Yet I will try the last. Before my body
 I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,
 And damn'd be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!"

[*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums.*

Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colors, MALCOLM, old SIWARD, Ross, the other Thanes, and Soldiers.

Malcolm. I would the friends we miss were safe arriv'd.

Siward. Some must go off: and yet, by these I see,²
 So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

Malcolm. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

Ross. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
 He only liv'd but till he was a man;
 The which no sooner had his prowess confirm'd
 In the unshrinking station where he fought,
 But like a man he died.

Siward. Then he is dead?

Ross. Ay, and brought off the field: your cause of sorrow
 Must not be measur'd by his worth, for then
 It hath no end.

Siward. Had he his hurts before?

Ross. Ay, on the front.

Siward. Why then, God's soldier be he!
 Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
 I would not wish them to a fairer death:
 And so, his knell is knoll'd.

Malcolm. He's worth more sorrow,
 And that I'll spend for him.

¹ Snarled at; worried, as by dogs.

² "Some must," etc., i.e., some must die; and yet, by the full ranks I see around us, etc.

Siward. He's worth no more:
They say he parted well, and paid his score:
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

Reënter MACDUFF, with MACBETH'S head.

Macduff. Hail, King! for so thou art: behold, where stands
The usurper's cursed head: the time is free.
I see thee compass'd with thy kingdom's pearl,¹
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine:
Hail, King of Scotland!

All. Hail, King of Scotland! [*Flourish.*]

Malcolm. We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honor nam'd. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exil'd friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiendlike queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace,
We will perform in measure, time, and place:
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crown'd at Scone.

[*Flourish. Excunt.*]

¹ "Thy kingdom's pearl," i.e., the nobility of Scotland as a body.



SUGGESTIONS FOR THE STUDY OF MACBETH.

IN this age of invention the teaching of literature has smacked too strongly of the pseudo-scientific: Shakespeare in the classroom is approached too often as a thing for dissection. Geometric analyses; labored notes; contentious theses; long philological disquisitions,—these factors have sometimes crowded out the Poet himself so that the study of Shakespeare becomes merely a discussion of what has been “discovered” *about* Shakespeare.

If appreciation of LITERATURE is the end for which we are striving, evidently we have to turn in a direction different from that indicated above. Notes that are distracting must be omitted, and Shakespeare himself must be allowed to speak face to face to his readers.

Literary appreciation, however, is a thing that cannot be taught directly; and it may not come without labor. Appreciation can only follow understanding; and to understand the plays of the Master one must be content to serve diligently. Questionable passages must be discussed, words have to be looked up in the dictionary, accuracy should be cultivated—anything that leads to a better appreciative understanding of Shakespeare is worth while. The temptation is to study glossaries and notes for their own sake whereas they are always to be kept subordinate.

The questions following are only suggestive. They attempt to bring out the interrelations of the parts of the tragedy and the interplay of character upon character. In short, they tend to be constructive rather than analytical. They should never be adhered to slavishly, but it is hoped that they may occasionally be found helpful. If at any time they seem to get in the way of the play itself, they should be discarded altogether.

First read the play through to get a general understanding of the

plot. Make up your mind, as you go along, as to the sort of character each person is. Then reread the play carefully (preferably aloud), modifying your initial opinion by a finer analysis of the doubtful parts you failed to understand in the first hurried reading. Here is the place that the notes at the foot of the page should be taken advantage of. Whole passages, fragmentary phrases and single words all deserve the nicest discrimination you possess; for the reader of Shakespeare soon learns that the price of understanding is reflection. Do not let the "criticisms" suggested in the following questions get in the way of your own opinion: you are to care not so much for what somebody else thinks about the play as what you yourself find in the lines. Lastly, let the passages that appeal to you strike home so deeply that they stick in your memory, food for future digestion and a constant source of that quiet satisfaction that only men and women of culture know.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—The opening scene of a play strikes the keynote of the whole: if the drama is a tragedy, Scene I forecasts a serious mood, perhaps opens in turmoil; if a comedy, a lighter tone is soon apparent. As an instance of each, *Julius Cæsar* opens with the strife between the citizens and the tribunes; *Twelfth Night*, with the love poetry:—"If music be the food of love, play on."

Taking into consideration (a) the place in which the scene is laid; (b) the thunder and lightning; (c) the sort of characters, what temper does *Macbeth* discover at the outset? Is it tragedy or comedy?

Note, as you read further, what a splendid preparation this first scene is for the recurring witch scenes in the play.

SCENE II.—What is the state of affairs in Scotland as revealed in this scene? A little later Malcolm is nominated by his father as the successor to the kingship: does Malcolm's report of his own part in the battle indicate any personal prowess or leadership to justify this election?

What opinion, also, do you form of Duncan as a leader? What may the condition of the country show concerning the King?—Duncan's absence from the scene of battle?

Compare the reports of Ross and the sergeant. Is Macbeth's honor increasing? What is this significant of?

SCENE III.—One of the so-called “problems” of *Macbeth* is the influence of the witches on Macbeth himself. To what extent are the weird sisters responsible for Macbeth’s career of crime? Do they make the original suggestion for his murder of Duncan, or is Macbeth contemplating the kingship when he is first introduced? Or is he made a puppet of Fate in the play, to be bowled about at the witches’ will?—These are some of the larger questions of the tragedy, the answers to which depend partially upon the interpretation of this scene. Note throughout the powers and limitations of the witches as the weird sisters reveal them.

How is Macbeth’s entrance heralded? Is his first speech significant? To whom does Banquo address his first question? How do you account for Macbeth’s starting and seeming to fear “Things that do sound so fair”? Be sure that you make out to whom Banquo’s remarks or questions are addressed. Who seems to be more deeply affected by the prophecy of the witches, Banquo or his partner?

An “earnest” is a promise: what, then, can Ross mean when he refers to an “earnest of a greater honor”? Is Banquo envious in his warning, “That, trusted home,” etc.? Where do you first make sure that Macbeth has murder in his heart? Is Banquo honest in his explanation of Macbeth’s abstraction (“New honors come upon him,” etc.)? To whom does Macbeth say, “Think upon what hath chanc’d,” etc.?

SCENE IV.—Memorize the splendid passages in Malcolm’s and Duncan’s speeches in the opening of this scene.

The reader is already cognizant of the struggle going on in Macbeth’s mind; what is the effect, then, of having Macbeth enter as he does in the midst of the particular speech Duncan is saying? Do you observe any difference in the way the King receives Macbeth and Banquo? Was this accidental on the part of the playwright?

It has been pointed out that this is a most inopportune time for Duncan to appoint Malcolm successor to the throne; that the nomination of his son, covering scant seven lines, is weak and hurried when one considers the pomp attending other like ceremonies in the play. What is the excuse for the nomination at this time? Does Duncan suspect Macbeth’s ambition? Or is it dropped in to serve a particular purpose at this point? (See the beginning of Macbeth’s last speech in this scene.)

Note the artistic effect of Duncan's comment to Banquo, following Macbeth's *aside*.

SCENE V.—Read from memory some of the splendid speeches of Lady Macbeth in this scene.

What characteristic of Macbeth comes out in his excuse for writing his letter to his wife? Compare Lady Macbeth's interpretation of her husband with your own conception of him.

In addition to the influence of the witches on Macbeth, another directing force in his life is here introduced, viz., Lady Macbeth. What is your initial impression of her?

How must Lady Macbeth have said to the messenger "Thou'rt mad to say it"? Why does she hasten to add the explanation immediately following?

Does Macbeth understand his wife when she says—"And when goes hence?" In his answer to this, why does Macbeth add, "as he purposes"?

SCENE VI.—Note the effect of the atmosphere of repose in this scene as opposed to the high passion of the scenes immediately preceding and following.

Why does not Macbeth receive the King? Why does Lady Macbeth fail to answer Duncan's inquiry as to the whereabouts of the Thane of Cawdor? To the reader, what is the irony of the King's "And his great love, sharp as his spur," etc.?

In the concluding speech of the preceding scene Lady Macbeth says "Leave all the rest to me." Is she worthy of the trust? Could Macbeth at this point have carried his part through successfully?

SCENE VII.—Try reading this scene aloud. Commit to memory the finest passages.

What is the struggle in Macbeth's mind here? Is he more ready to commit murder than in Scene V? Why does he hesitate? Does his conscience or his fear of the results "here" have the more weight with him? What is Macbeth's testimony concerning Duncan as a king? What unconscious predictions is Macbeth making for himself in this first speech? Explain the figure, "I have no spur," etc.

How much time has elapsed between this and the preceding scene, as is shown in Lady Macbeth's speech? Why had Macbeth left the presence of the King?

Macbeth argues against the murder of Duncan because the crime

would soil his own reputation. He omits to mention to Lady Macbeth his struggle with his conscience. Does he leave it out purposely? If so, what effect does it have on your interpretation of Lady Macbeth? Is Lady Macbeth diplomatic in her method of spurring on her husband?

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Several solutions have been suggested to clear up the passage "What beast was't, then, That made you break this enterprise to me?" Nowhere in the play has the husband broken the enterprise to the wife. One scholar suggests that a scene has been omitted; another that Macbeth's surrender to evil has taken place before the play actually opens; a third, that this is only a proof that Lady Macbeth is the root of evil in the tragedy, and that she uses this, whether literally true or not, to goad Macbeth on to crime. Upon your interpretation of this passage depends, in part, your conception of the chief characters of the play. What is your explanation?

Is it the *natural* Lady Macbeth revealing herself in the speech that follows, or is she pitched to a dramatic intensity unnatural even to her?

Does Macbeth's question suggest his surrender to the proposition?

Try to read aloud, "We fail!" the way you think Lady Macbeth must have said it. Is Lady Macbeth's plot skillfully planned?

State in a single sentence the contribution of Act I to the action of the play.

ACT II.

How long a time elapses between the two acts?

SCENE I.—Why could not Banquo sleep? Is he also tempted by the suggestion of the witches, or is he suspicious of Macbeth? Why does Banquo introduce the subject of the three weird sisters? What does Macbeth mean by, "If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis, It shall make honor for you"?

Is Banquo's irony unconscious when he bids Macbeth "good repose"?

Macbeth, when left alone, loses control of himself because of his "heat-oppressed brain." Try to distinguish the parts of his speech that are sane and the parts that are "false creations." What would be the stage effect of having a bell ring in the midst of this tragic intensity?

SCENE II.—What is the necessity of a shift of scene at this point?

Scene II is intense in feeling. Note how every accidental occurrence affects the murderers. Under normal circumstances would either of the pair be stirred by the hoot of an owl or the chirp of a cricket?

Is Lady Macbeth as cool and "bold" as she would make herself believe?

"Had he not resembled My father as he slept," etc.—What light does this shed on Lady Macbeth's character?

Macbeth's repetition of the things that happen in the chamber of the murdered man is a pathetic comment on his state of mind. Why is Lady Macbeth alarmed for him? What is she thinking when she asks, "Who was it that thus cried?" Note her practical grip of the situation in, "Go get some water," etc., in contrast to Macbeth's rant about the "multitudinous seas," etc.

SCENE III.—To some readers the porter scene is out of tune with the rest of the tragedy, to others it is the chiefest relief spot in the play. How does the scene appeal to you?

How does Lennox's account of the night correspond with what we already know of it?

Why have Macduff rather than Banquo discover the murdered King? Why does not Macbeth call the King? Why does Macbeth add, in answer to Lennox's question, "he did appoint so"? Note the difference between Lennox's and Macbeth's reception of the news of the tragedy. Macbeth really reveals his knowledge of the crime—How?

The center of interest in this scene is the way Macbeth and Lady Macbeth bear the exposure of their deed. How do you account for Macbeth's palming it off so smoothly when he has been so wrought up only a short while before? The speech beginning, "Who can be wise," etc., is seemingly one of a practiced deceiver. Note the effect of its horrible details on Lady Macbeth. Does she faint or is she only feigning? It has been pointed out that Lady Macbeth rose to the occasion only when her husband showed symptoms of failure; that when he was strong her feminine qualities dominated her evil nature, and she consequently broke down. Do you agree?

Does Banquo guess who did the deed? If he guessed correctly, did he have evidence enough to make an accusation?—Or was he in sympathy with Macbeth all along?

Do Malcolm and Donalbain guess correctly? What does their untimely flight suggest to the nobles?

SCENE IV.—The Old Man brings in the supernatural element again, this time interpreted through the general superstitions of the people. What do you know of the belief in witchcraft, sorcery, etc., in the time of Shakespeare?

Macduff repeats the accusation of the courtiers in general. Does he express his real opinion as well? Why does he go to Fife instead of Scone?

Is it essential that Macbeth be crowned King?

What has Act II added to the advancement of the tragedy?

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Is Banquo ambitious to be “the root and father Of many kings”? What does his speech show concerning the effect on himself of the prophecy of the witches? One moment Banquo declares, concerning Macbeth, “I fear Thou play’dst most foully for’t,” and the next, that his “duties Are with a most indissoluble tie Forever knit” to the new King. Does this affect the general interpretation of Banquo as “noble”?

Why is Macbeth giving the feast? Does he have the murder of Banquo and Fleance in mind when he first quizzes Banquo? Why does he add, “Goes Fleance with you?”

“To be thus is nothing,” etc.—What characteristic of Macbeth is here showing forth?

Is Macbeth’s interpretation of Banquo’s motives to be accepted as the whole truth?

Macbeth’s growing boldness is apparent in his dealings with the hired assassins. Note the continuous change of his character. Can you foresee what he must finally become?

What does Macbeth mean by, “I’ll come to you anon”?

SCENE II.—What did Lady Macbeth have in mind when she inquired concerning Banquo’s whereabouts? Compare her speech beginning, “Naught’s had, all’s spent,” etc., with Macbeth’s, “To be thus is nothing,” etc., of the preceding scene.

Does Lady Macbeth misinterpret Macbeth’s withdrawal from the

company when she says, "How now, my lord!" etc.? Why does not Macbeth take his wife into the secret of the plot to murder Banquo?

SCENE III.—Is the third murderer Macbeth?—Cite evidences supporting your answer.

To meet the limitations of the stage, Banquo and Fleance are assaulted while they are on foot. How does Shakespeare try to make their being riderless appear a matter of custom?

"The son is fled." This is the first of Macbeth's failures. Note how it is the beginning of the end. Compare this with the turning point of other Shakespearean plays you have read. Why should Fleance escape? Do you expect him to appear again in the play?

SCENE IV.—Note the dignity of the beginning of this scene in contrast to the abrupt ending of the banquet.

Does any of the court except Macbeth see the murderer? Why have him appear at all? Do Macbeth's questions suggest that he himself was the third murderer?

What does Lady Macbeth think is weighing on her husband's mind?

Do any of the guests see Banquo's ghost? Does Lady Macbeth? To whom does Macbeth say, "Thou canst not say I did it," etc.?

How does Lady Macbeth seek to withdraw attention from her husband? The Queen evidently whispers her sarcastic comments to Macbeth—In what tone of voice do you think he answers her? Follow this portion carefully to determine to whom, and in what manner, the speeches are delivered. What must the guests think of Macbeth's behavior?

Why does Lady Macbeth break in after Ross's "What sights, my lord?" and dismiss the company so abruptly?

How do you account for her entire change of attitude, and the complete closing of reference to the ghost of Banquo, as soon as the guests are departed?

Note the speed of the play at this point. The Macduff incident is already being prepared for, even though the ghost scene is scarcely closed.—Why should the action move more rapidly than at the beginning?

"We are yet but young in deed"—What does this prophesy?

SCENE V.—Note the recurrence of the supernatural. What is the purpose of this witch scene? Could it be omitted without loss to the play?

Can you guess the fate of Macbeth from anything Hecate suggests?

SCENE VI.—How do the lords feel toward Macbeth? What bearing has this scene on what follows?

Sum up the important events of this Act.

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ACT IV.

SCENE I.—This is the last appearance of the witches in the play. How does the elaborateness of this compare with the other witch scenes? Why does Hecate herself appear?

What are the witches doing at the beginning of the scene? Note the ingredients of the caldron. Why is the whole scene made so terrible? Is Macbeth's speech, conjuring the witches to answer him, in keeping with the speeches of the witches themselves?

What does Macbeth's command, "Call 'em; let me see 'em," indicate as to his change of character?

In what ways are the apparitions superior to the witches? Notice how they echo the fears of Macbeth.

What other murder is here definitely forecast?

What are the two prophecies that allay Macbeth's fears?

Macbeth's demand to "be satisfied" concerning the whole future is in keeping with his determination to "make assurance doubly sure." This same desire to "dare do all that may become a man" finally leads to what? "Show his eyes, and grieve his heart"—How is this a comment on the career of Macbeth?

It has been proposed that the long line of rulers carrying the "two-fold balls and treble scepters" was a direct compliment to the reigning sovereign of England. How could it be so interpreted?

How does Lennox's news bear out the witches' prophecy? What can you say now of the speed with which the catastrophe is approaching?

"The very firstlings of my heart," etc. After this speech do you expect Macbeth to deliberate before he acts? Compare the Macbeth who utters this with the one who said to his wife, "If we should fail?" Has he any further need of Lady Macbeth to spur him on? So far, has the change come about naturally?

SCENE II.—What does Macduff's sudden flight suggest with re-

gard to conditions in Scotland? Does the playwright mean for your sympathy to be against Macduff because of his departure? How can you justify his action?

When did you learn that every nobleman's castle had within its walls a "servant fee'd"? What recent event is causing Ross and the nobles to flee from the country?

Does the son talk like a child? Do children play much of a part in the plays of Shakespeare you have read?

In many modern presentations of *Macbeth* this entire scene is omitted. Do you see any reason why it should be? What is the justification of the scene?

SCENE III.—Where is this scene laid?

How does Macduff unwittingly comment on his own loss in his first speech? How also does Malcolm unknowingly touch upon the disaster in Macduff's home? What is the effect of these touches on the reader?

How is the preceding scene made to do service in this one?

Are Malcolm's suspicions of Macduff reasonably founded? Why does the former belittle himself? What are some of the things he accuses himself of? What is the effect on Macduff of all these self-accusations? Why should Macduff's "noble passion" prove his loyalty to Malcolm? Do you think Macduff would believe Malcolm's sudden retraction of these things, or does the Prince go too far in his testing of the Thane of Fife?

How is Ross's news prepared for? "Gracious England hath Lent us good Siward," etc. Take note of the swift certainty of the preparation for the last act.

Macduff is temporarily overwhelmed by his grief. In this moment of bitterness does he reproach himself unjustly?

How does the length of Act IV compare with the length of the preceding Acts? What definite things does it add to the advancement of the play?

ACT V.

SCENE I.—Prior to this Lady Macbeth has figured in two great situations in the play. What are they? What is the relative importance of the part she plays in each? How do you account for her

omission from Act IV? Why is she brought in finally at this point? Does Macbeth stand in need of her services longer? (See Act I, Scene V: "Hie thee hither," etc.) Does your final glimpse of Lady Macbeth modify your previous conception of her? What is there in this scene that gives you an idea of the physical build of the Queen? Do you think now that her "fainting" in Act II, Scene III, was real or only feigned? In this scene she is made to suffer for crimes of which she is not guilty. What are they? Is it just that she should suffer for sins other than her own?

What characteristics of his profession does the Doctor show? What does he have in mind when he says, "Even so?"

SCENE II.—What information do you get from this scene concerning the attitude of the nobles toward Macbeth? What does this foreshadow? As soon as Birnam Wood is mentioned, what do you recall? Incidentally, which prince is here eliminated from the play?

SCENE III.—How does the first line of Macbeth's speech hark back to the preceding scene? What does he mean by, "let them fly all"?

When did you first learn that the witches' prophecies had a double meaning? Why does Macbeth still place such implicit faith in these prophecies? If he truly believes in his own personal safety, why is he so wrought up at this point? Macbeth and the Doctor enter simultaneously, but the former takes no notice of the physician for some time. What does this signify? Is his appeal to the Doctor to save the Queen pathetic to you?

Macbeth's speech beginning, "Seyton! I am sick at heart," is really spoken to whom? What idea do you get from this passage of the time that has elapsed since Scene I? Commit to memory the finest lines of this speech of Macbeth.

The fifth act of a tragedy should exhibit the inevitable workings of Nemesis or "poetic justice." At the same time the playwright must not lose the sympathy of the audience for the leading characters (Why not?) Does Shakespeare succeed in making you feel both the justice and pity here? Are these elements as effectively worked out in Macbeth's instance as in the case of the Queen?

Is Macbeth thinking of Lady Macbeth only in the passage, "Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd," etc? Memorize this speech of Macbeth.

How is Macbeth's final appeal to the Doctor to cure Lady Macbeth