Act 2, Scene 4, Page 3

MACDUFF
Well, may you see things well done there. Adieu, lest our old robes sit easier than our new!
ROSS
Farewell, father.
OLD MAN
God’s benison go with you and with those that would make good of bad and friends of foes.

MACDUFF
Will you to Scone?
ROSS
Where is Duncan’s body?
MACDUFF
He is already named and gone to Scone to be invested.
ROSS
Thine own lives’ means! Then ’tis most like the sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
ROSS
‘Gainst nature still! Thriftless ambition, that will raven up thy own lives’ means! Then ’tis most like the sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
ROSS
W i l l  y o u  t o  S c o n e ?
ROSS
Are you going to Scone?
ROSS
Farewell, father.
OLD MAN
May God’s blessing go with you and with all who turn bad into good, and enemies into friends!

Exeunt

Act 3, Scene 1

Enter BANQUO

BANQUO
Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all, as the weird women promised, and I fear thou played’st most foully for ’t. Yet it was said it should not stand in thy posterity.
BANQUO
Now you have it all: you’re the king, the thane of Cawdor, and the thane of Glamis, just like the weird women promised you. And I suspect you cheated to win these titles. But it was also prophesied that the crown would not go to your descendants, and that my sons and grandsons would be kings instead. If the witches tell the truth—which they did about you—maybe what they said about me will come true too. But shhh! I’ll shut up now.
Sennet sounded. Enter MACBETH, as king, LADY MACBETH, as queen, LENNOX, ROSS, LORDS, LADIES, and attendants.

MACBETH
Here’s our chief guest.

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

MACBETH
Tonight we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I’ll request your presence.

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

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 2

MACBETH
Ride you this afternoon?

BANQUO
Ay, my good lord.

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

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 bestowed
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention. But of that tomorrow,

When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse. Adieu,
Till your return at night. Goes Fleance with you?

BANQUO
Ay, my good lord. Our time does call upon ’s.
MACBETH
I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell.

Exit BANQUO

BANQUO exits.

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

Exit BANQUO

BANQUO exits.

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

Everyone exits except MACBETH and a SERVANT

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

SERVANT
They’re waiting outside the palace gate, my lord.

MACBETH
Bring them to me.

The SERVANT exits.

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

Enter SERVANT and two MURDERERS

The SERVANT comes back in with
two MURDERERS

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

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

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

FIRST MURDERER
It was, so please your highness.

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

FIRST MURDERER
You made it known to us.

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

FIRST MURDERER
We are men, my liege.

MACBETH
Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels,
curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are clept
All by the name of dogs. The valued file
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper, the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed, whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike. And so of men.

Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not i’ th’ worst rank of mankind, 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.

FIRST MURDERER
You explained it all.

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

FIRST MURDERER
We are men, my lord.

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

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

MACBETH
Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS
True, my lord.

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

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

FIRST MURDERER
Though our lives—

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

BOTH MURDERERS
We are resolved, my lord.

MACBETH
I’ll call upon you straight. Abide within.

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

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

MACBETH
You both know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS
It’s true, my lord.

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

SECOND MURDERER
We’ll do what you want us to, my lord.

FIRST MURDERER
Though our lives—

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

BOTH MURDERERS
We have decided, my lord. We’re in.

MACBETH
I’ll call for you soon. Stay inside.
Exeunt MURDERERS

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

Exit

He exits.

Act 3, Scene 2

Enter LADY MACBETH and a SERVANT

LADY MACBETH

Is Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT

Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.

LADY MACBETH

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

SERVANT

Madam, I will.

Exit SERVANT

LADY MACBETH

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

Enter MACBETH

MACBETH

We have scorched the snake, not killed it.
She’ll close and be herself whilst our poor malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
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. Duncan is in his grave.
After life’s fitful fever he sleeps well.
Treason has done his worst; nor steel nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further.

LADY MACBETH

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

MACBETH

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

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

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

LADY MACBETH
You must leave this.

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

LADY MACBETH
But in them nature’s copy’s not eterne.

MACBETH
There’s comfort yet; they are assailable.
Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
His cloistered flight, ere to black Hecate’s summon
Hath rung night’s yawning peal, there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH
What’s to be done?

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

FIRST MURDERER
But who did bid thee join with us?

MACBETH
It’s better you don’t know about it until after it’s
done, when you can applaud it. (to the
night)Come, night, and blindfold the kindhearted
day. Use your bloody and invisible hand to tear
up Banquo’s lease on life, which keeps me in

FIRST MURDERER
But who told you to come here and join us?

Modern Text

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

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

LADY MACBETH
You have to stop talking like this.

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

LADY MACBETH
But they can’t live forever.

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

LADY MACBETH
What are you going to do?

MACBETH
It’s better you don’t know about it until after it’s
done, when you can applaud it. (to the
night)Come, night, and blindfold the kindhearted
day. Use your bloody and invisible hand to tear
up Banquo’s lease on life, which keeps me in

FIRST MURDERER
But who told you to come here and join us?

Act 3, Scene 2, Page 3

MACBETH
Enter three MURDERERS

FIRST MURDERER
But who did bid thee join with us?

Exeunt

Act 3, Scene 3

Enter three MURDERERS

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

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

FIRST MURDERER
Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.
Now spurs the lated 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
Already are i' th' 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.

Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE with a torch

SECOND MURDERER
A light, a light!

THIRD MURDERER
'Tis he.

FIRST MURDERER
Stand to 't.

BANQUO
It will be rain tonight.

FIRST MURDERER
Let it come down.

The MURDERERS attack BANQUO

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

BANQUO dies. Exit FLEANCE

THIRD MURDERER
Who did strike out the light?

FIRST MURDERER
Was 't not the way?
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.

Third Murderer
There's only one body here. The son ran away.
Second Murderer
We failed in half of our mission.
First Murderer
Well, let's get out of here and tell Macbeth what we did accomplish.

Exeunt
They exit.

Act 3, Scene 4

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

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

The LORDS sit

LORDS
Thanks to your majesty.

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

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

Enter FIRST MURDERER at the door

FIRST MURDERER
'Tis Banquo's then.
FIRST MURDERER
My lord, his throat is cut. That I did for him.

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

FIRST MURDERER
'Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatched?

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

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

(coming to first Murderer) There’s blood on your face.
FIRST MURDERER
Then it must be Banquo’s.

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

FIRST MURDERER
My lord, his throat is cut. I did that to him.
MACBETH
You are the best of the cutthroats. But whoever did the same to Fleance must also be good. If
If thou didst it, thou art the nonpareil.

FIRST MURDERER
Most royal sir, Fleance is 'scape.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Exit FIRST MURDERER

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

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

LENNOX
May't please your highness sit.

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

MACBETH  
Where?

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

MACBETH  
Which of you have done this?

LORDS  
What, my good lord?

MACBETH  
(to GHOST) 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, Feed and regard him not. (aside to MACBETH) Are you a man?

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

LADY MACBETH  
O proper stuff! This is the very painting of your fear. This is the air-drawn dagger which you said Led you to Duncan. Oh, these flaws and starts, Impostors to true fear, would well become A woman's story at a winter's fire, Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!

MACBETH  
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.

ROSS  
Gentlemen, stand up. His highness is not well.

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

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

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

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

Exit GHOST  
The GHOST vanishes.
Original Text

LADY MACBETH

What, quite unmanned in folly?

MACBETH

If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH

Fie, for shame!

MACBETH

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

80

Ay, and since too, murders have been performed
Too terrible for the ear. The time has been
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end. But now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns

85

And push us from our stools. This is more strange
Than such a murder is.

LADY MACBETH

My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

MACBETH

I do forget.

Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends.

90

I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all.
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine. Fill full.

Enter the GHOST OF BANQUO

I drink to the general joy o' th' whole table,
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;

95

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

LORDS

Our duties, and the pledge.

They drink

Modern Text

LADY MACBETH

What, has your foolishness paralyzed you completely?

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

Nonsense!

MACBETH

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

LADY MACBETH

My worthy lord, your noble friends miss your
company.

MACBETH

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

The GHOST OF BANQUO reappears

in MACBETH’s seat.

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

LORDS

Hear, hear.

They drink.

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 6

MACBETH

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

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold.

100

Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with!

LADY MACBETH

Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom. 'Tis no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.
MACBETH
What man dare, I dare.
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
The armed rhinoceros, or th' Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble. Or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword.
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!
Unreal mockery, hence!

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

Exit GHOST

ROSS
What sights, my lord?

LADY MACBETH
You have displaced the mirth, broke the good
meeting,
With most admired disorder.

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

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

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

ROSS
What things, my lord?

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

LENNOX
Good night, and better health
Attend his majesty!

LADY MACBETH
A kind good night to all!

MACBETH
It will have blood, they say. Blood will have blood.
Stones have been known to move, and trees to
speak.
Augurs and understood relations have
By magot pies and choughs and rooks brought forth
The secret'st man of blood.—What is the night?

LADY MACBETH
Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

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

LADY MACBETH
It's almost morning. You can't tell whether it's
day or night.
MACBETH
How say’st thou that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?

LADY MACBETH
Did you send to him, sir?

MACBETH
I hear it by the way; but I will send.
There’s not a one of them but in his house
I keep a servant fee’d. I will tomorrow—
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
Stepped 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 scanned.

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

MACBETH
Come, we’ll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use.
We are yet but young in deed.

Act 3, Scene 5

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 close contriver of all harms,
Was never called to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?

And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now. Get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i’ th’ morning. Thither he
Will come to know his destiny.
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your cauldrons, your prophecies, your charms,
And everything else. I’m about to fly away. I’ll spend tonight working to make something horrible
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 vap'rous drop profound.
I'll catch it ere it come to ground.
And that distilled by magic sleights
Shall raise such artificial sprites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion.

He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear.
And you all know, security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

Music and a song within: 'Come away, come away,'
&c

Hark! I am called. My little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me.

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

FIRST WITCH
Come on, let's hurry. She'll be back again soon.

LENNOX
My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther. Only I say
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan
Was pitied of Macbeth. Marry, he was dead.
And the right-valiant Banquo walked too late,
Whom, you may say, if 't please you, Fleance killed,
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? Damnèd fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! Was 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 angered any heart alive
To hear the men deny 't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well. And I do think
That had he Duncan's sons under his key—
As, an't please heaven, he shall not—they should find
What 'twere to kill a father. So should Fleance.
But, peace! For from broad words, and 'cause he

He will be fooled into thinking he is greater than fate, he will mock death, and he will think he is above wisdom, grace, and fear. As you all know, overconfidence is man's greatest enemy.

Music plays offstage, and voices sing a song with the words "Come away, come away."

Listen! I'm being called. Look, my little spirit is sitting in a foggy cloud waiting for me.

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

LENNOX
What I've already said shows you we think alike, so you can draw your own conclusions. All I'm saying is that strange things have been going on. Macbeth pitied Duncan—after Duncan was dead. And Banquo went out walking too late at night. If you like, we can say that Fleance must have killed him, because Fleance fled the scene of the crime. Clearly, men should not go out walking too late! And who can help thinking how monstrous it was for Malcolm and Donalbain to kill their gracious father? Such a heinous crime—how it saddened Macbeth! Wasn't it loyal of him to kill those two servants right away, while they were still drunk and asleep? That was the right thing to do, wasn't it? Yes, and it was the wise thing, too, because we all would have been outraged to hear those two deny their crime. Considering all this, I think Macbeth has handled things well. If he had Duncan's sons in prison—which I hope won't happen—they would find out how awful the punishment is for those who kill their fathers, and so would Fleance. But enough of that. I hear that Macduff is out of favor with the king because he
failed
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 received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king upon his aid
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward,
That by the help of these—with Him above
To ratify the work—we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,
Do faithful homage and receive free honors.
All which we pine for now. And this report
Hath so exasperated the king that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

Act 3, Scene 6, Page 2

LENNOX
Sent he to Macduff?

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

LENNOX
And that well might
Advise him to a caution, t’ hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country

LORD
I’ll send my prayers with him.

Exeunt

Act 4, Scene 1

FIRST WITCH
Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.
SECOND WITCH
Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined.
THIRD WITCH

First Witch
The tawny cat has meowed three times.
Second Witch
Three times. And the hedgehog has whined once.