

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 1, Scene 1

*Thunder and lightning. Enter three WITCHES*

**FIRST WITCH**

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

**SECOND WITCH**

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

**THIRD WITCH**

5 That will be ere the set of sun.

**FIRST WITCH**

Where the place?

**SECOND WITCH**

Upon the heath.

**THIRD WITCH**

There to meet with Macbeth.

**FIRST WITCH**

I come, Graymalkin!

**SECOND WITCH**

10 Paddock calls.

**THIRD WITCH**

Anon.

**ALL**

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

*Exeunt*

*Thunder and lightning. Three WITCHES enter*

**FIRST WITCH**

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

**SECOND WITCH**

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

**THIRD WITCH**

That will happen before sunset.

**FIRST WITCH**

Where should we meet?

**SECOND WITCH**

Let's do it in the open field.

**THIRD WITCH**

We'll meet Macbeth there.

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

**FIRST WITCH**

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

**SECOND WITCH**

My toad, Paddock, calls me.

**THIRD WITCH**

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

**ALL**

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

*They exit.*

## Act 1, Scene 2

*Alarum within. Enter KING  
DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, with  
attendants, meeting a bleeding CAPTAIN*

**DUNCAN**

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

**MALCOLM**

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

**CAPTAIN**

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

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**MALCOLM**

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

**CAPTAIN**

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

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

**DUNCAN**

O valiant cousin! Worthy gentleman!

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

**DUNCAN**

My brave relative! What a worthy man!

## Act 1, Scene 2, Page 2

**CAPTAIN**

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

**DUNCAN**

Dismayed not this our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

**CAPTAIN**

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

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

- 45 Who comes here?

**MALCOLM**

The worthy thane of Ross.

**LENNOX****CAPTAIN**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**CAPTAIN**

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

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

Who is this?

**MALCOLM**The worthy **Thane** of Ross.**LENNOX**

**Original Text**

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

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

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

God save the king.

**DUNCAN**

Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

**ROSS**

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

**DUNCAN**

Great happiness!

**ROSS**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**ROSS**

I'll see it done.

**DUNCAN**

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

*Exeunt***ROSS**

God save the king!

**DUNCAN**

Where have you come from, worthy thane?

**ROSS**

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

**DUNCAN**

Great happiness!

**ROSS**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**ROSS**

I'll get it done right away.

**DUNCAN**

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

*They all exit.***Act 1, Scene 3***Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES***FIRST WITCH**

Where hast thou been, sister?

**SECOND WITCH**

Killing swine.

**THIRD WITCH**

Sister, where thou?

**FIRST WITCH**

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,

*Thunder. The three WITCHES enter.***FIRST WITCH**

Where have you been, sister?

**SECOND WITCH**

Killing pigs.

**THIRD WITCH**

And you, sister?

**FIRST WITCH**

A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap and

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

quoth I.

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

10 And like a rat without a tail,  
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

**SECOND WITCH**

I'll give thee a wind.

**FIRST WITCH**

Thou 'rt kind.

**THIRD WITCH**

And I another.

**FIRST WITCH**

I myself have all the other,

15 And the very ports they blow,  
All the quarters that they know  
I' th' shipman's card.

I'll drain him dry as hay.

Sleep shall neither night nor day

20 Hang upon his penthouse lid.

He shall live a man forbid.

Weary sev'nights nine times nine

Shall he dwindle, peak and pine.

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 2

Though his bark cannot be lost,

25 Yet it shall be tempest-tossed.

Look what I have.

**SECOND WITCH**

Show me, show me.

**FIRST WITCH**

Here I have a pilot's thumb,

Wrecked as homeward he did come.

*Drum within*

**THIRD WITCH**

30 A drum, a drum!

Macbeth doth come.

**ALL**

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

hand,

Posters of the sea and land,

35 Thus do go about, about,

Thrice to thine and thrice to mine

And thrice again, to make up nine.

Peace! The charm's wound up.

*Enter MACBETH and BANQUO*

**MACBETH**

So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

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munched away at them. "Give me one," I said.

"Get away from me, witch!" the fat woman cried.

Her husband has sailed off to Aleppo as master  
of a ship called the *Tiger*. I'll sail there in a kitchen  
strainer, turn myself into a tailless rat, and do  
things to him—

**SECOND WITCH**

I'll give you some wind to sail there.

**FIRST WITCH**

How nice of you!

**THIRD WITCH**

And I will give you some more.

**FIRST WITCH**

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

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

**SECOND WITCH**

Show me, show me.

**FIRST WITCH**

Here I have the thumb of a pilot who was

drowned while trying to return home.

*A drum sounds offstage.*

**THIRD WITCH**

A drum, a drum! Macbeth has come.

**ALL**

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

*MACBETH and BANQUO enter.*

**MACBETH**

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

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**BANQUO**

- How far is 't called to Forres?—What are these
- 40 So withered and so wild in their attire,  
That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' Earth,  
And yet are on 't?—Live you? Or are you aught  
That man may question? You seem to understand  
me,
- 45 By each at once her choppy finger laying  
Upon her skinny lips. You should be women,  
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret  
That you are so.

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 3

**MACBETH**

Speak, if you can: what are you?

**FIRST WITCH**

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

**SECOND WITCH**

- 50 All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

**THIRD WITCH**

All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

**BANQUO**

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

**FIRST WITCH**

Hail!

**SECOND WITCH**

Hail!

**THIRD WITCH**

- 65 Hail!

**FIRST WITCH**

Lesser than Macbeth and greater.

**SECOND WITCH**

Not so happy, yet much happier.

**THIRD WITCH**

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

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**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**FIRST WITCH**

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

**SECOND WITCH**

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

**THIRD WITCH**

All hail, Macbeth, the future king!

**BANQUO**

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

**FIRST WITCH**

Hail!

**SECOND WITCH**

Hail!

**THIRD WITCH**

Hail!

**FIRST WITCH**

You are lesser than Macbeth but also greater.

**SECOND WITCH**

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

**THIRD WITCH**

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

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 4

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**FIRST WITCH**

70 Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

**MACBETH**

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

*WITCHES vanish*

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

Your children shall be kings.

**BANQUO**

You shall be king.

**MACBETH**

And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

**BANQUO**

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

*Enter ROSS and ANGUS*

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**FIRST WITCH**

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

**MACBETH**

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

*The WITCHES vanish.*

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

Your children will be kings.

**BANQUO**

You will be the king.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

*ROSS and ANGUS enter.*

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 5

**ROSS**

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

**ROSS**

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

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And poured them down before him.

**ANGUS**

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

**ROSS**

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

**BANQUO**

What, can the devil speak true?

**MACBETH**

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

**ANGUS**

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

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 6

**MACBETH**

*(aside)* Glamis, and thane of Cawdor!  
The greatest is  
120 behind. *(to ROSS and ANGUS)* Thanks for your  
pains.  
*(aside to BANQUO)* Do you not hope your children  
shall be kings,  
When those that gave the thane of Cawdor to me  
Promised no less to them?

**BANQUO**

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

*BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS move to one side*

**MACBETH**

130 *(aside)* Two truths are told,

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country.

**ANGUS**

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

**ROSS**

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

**BANQUO**

*(shocked)* Can the devil tell the truth?

**MACBETH**

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

**ANGUS**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

*ROSS, ANGUS, and BANQUO move to one  
side.*

**MACBETH**

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

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

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 7

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

**BANQUO**

Look how our partner's rapt.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

New honors come upon him,

150 Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mold  
But with the aid of use.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

Very gladly.

**MACBETH**

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

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

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

**BANQUO**

Look at Macbeth—he's in a daze.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

Good Macbeth, we're ready when you are.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

Absolutely.

**MACBETH**

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



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friends.  
*Exeunt*

*They all exit.*

## Act 1, Scene 4

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**MALCOLM**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

*Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS*

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

**MACBETH**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**MALCOLM**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

*MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS enter.*

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

**MACBETH**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

## Act 1, Scene 4, Page 2

**Original Text**

No less to have done so, let me infold thee  
And hold thee to my heart.

**BANQUO**

There, if I grow,  
The harvest is your own.

**DUNCAN**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**DUNCAN**

My worthy Cawdor!

**Act 1, Scene 4, Page 3****MACBETH**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

*Flourish. Exeunt*

**Act 1, Scene 5**

*Enter LADY MACBETH, alone, with a letter*

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**Modern Text**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**DUNCAN**

My worthy Cawdor!

**MACBETH**

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

*Exit*

*MACBETH exits.*

**DUNCAN**

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

*Trumpet fanfare. They exit.*

*LADY MACBETH enters, reading a letter.*

**LADY MACBETH**

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

## Original Text

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

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be  
What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature;  
It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness

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

*Enter SERVANT*

## Modern Text

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

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

*A SERVANT enters.*

## Act 1, Scene 5, Page 2

What is your tidings?

**SERVANT**

The king comes here tonight.

**LADY MACBETH**

Thou 'rt mad to say it.

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

**SERVANT**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

Give him tending.  
He brings great news.

*Exit SERVANT*

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

What news do you bring?

**SERVANT**

The king is coming here tonight.

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**SERVANT**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

Take good care of him. He brings great news.

*The SERVANT exits.*

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

## Original Text

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

## Modern Text

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

## Act 1, Scene 5, Page 3

*Enter MACBETH*

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

**MACBETH**

My dearest love,

- 50 Duncan comes here tonight.

**LADY MACBETH**

And when goes hence?

**MACBETH**

Tomorrow, as he purposes.

**LADY MACBETH**

O, never

Shall sun that morrow see!

Your face, my thane, is as a book where men  
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,

- 55 Look like the time. Bear welcome in your eye,  
Your hand, your tongue. Look like th' innocent flower,  
But be the serpent under 't. He that's coming  
Must be provided for; and you shall put  
This night's great business into my dispatch,
- 60 Which shall to all our nights and days to come  
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

**MACBETH**

We will speak further.

**LADY MACBETH**

Only look up clear.

To alter favor ever is to fear.

- 65 Leave all the rest to me.

*Exeunt**MACBETH enters.*

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

**MACBETH**

My dearest love, Duncan is coming here tonight.

**LADY MACBETH**

And when is he leaving?

**MACBETH**

He plans to leave tomorrow.

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

We will speak about this further.

**LADY MACBETH**

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

Leave all the rest to me.

*They exit.*

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 1, Scene 6

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

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**BANQUO**

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

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*Enter LADY MACBETH*

*LADY MACBETH enters.*

**DUNCAN**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

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## Act 1, Scene 6, Page 2

**DUNCAN**

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

**DUNCAN**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**DUNCAN****DUNCAN**

**Original Text**

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

*Exeunt***Modern Text**

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

*They all exit.***Act 1, Scene 7**

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

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

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

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

**Act 1, Scene 7, Page 2***Enter LADY MACBETH*

How now! What news?

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

**MACBETH**  
 30 Hath he asked for me?

*LADY MACBETH enters.*

What news do you have?

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

**MACBETH**  
 Has he asked for me?

**Original Text****LADY MACBETH**

Know you not he has?

**MACBETH**

We will proceed no further in this business.  
He hath honored me of late, and I have bought  
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,  
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,

35 Not cast aside so soon.

**LADY MACBETH**

Was the hope drunk

Wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?  
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale  
At what it did so freely? From this time  
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard

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

45 Like the poor cat i' th' adage?

**MACBETH**

Prithee, peace:

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

**LADY MACBETH**

What beast was 't, then,

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

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

55 Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know  
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me.  
I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums  
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you  
Have done to this.

**Modern Text****LADY MACBETH**

Don't you know he has?

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

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

If we should fail?

**LADY MACBETH**

We fail?

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

**MACBETH**

But if we fail—

**LADY MACBETH**

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

## Original Text

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

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

**MACBETH**

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

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

## Act 1, Scene 7, Page 4

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

*They exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 1

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

**BANQUO**

How goes the night, boy?

**FLEANCE**

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

**BANQUO**

And she goes down at twelve.

**FLEANCE**

I take 't 'tis later, sir.

**BANQUO**

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

*Enter MACBETH and a SERVANT with a torch*

Give me my sword. Who's there?

**MACBETH**

10 A friend.

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

**BANQUO**

How's the night going, boy?

**FLEANCE**

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

**BANQUO**

The moon sets at twelve, right?

**FLEANCE**

I think it's later than that, sir.

**BANQUO**

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

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

Give me my sword. Who's there?

**MACBETH**

A friend.



## Original Text

**BANQUO**

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

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

**MACBETH**

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

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 2

**BANQUO**

All's well.

I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:

20 To you they have showed some truth.

**MACBETH**

I think not of them.

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

**BANQUO**

At your kind'st leisure.

**MACBETH**

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

25 It shall make honor for you.

**BANQUO**

So I lose none

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

**MACBETH**

Good repose the while!

**BANQUO**

30 Thanks, sir: the like to you!

*Exeunt BANQUO and FLEANCE*

**MACBETH**

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

*Exit SERVANT*

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

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

## Modern Text

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

Whenever you like.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

Rest easy in the meantime.

**BANQUO**

Thank you, sir. You do the same.

*BANQUO and FLEANCE exit.*

**MACBETH**

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

*The SERVANT exits.*

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

## Original Text

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

## Modern Text

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

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 3

*A bell rings*

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

*Exit*

*A bell rings.*

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

**MACBETH** *exits.*

## Act 2, Scene 2

*Enter LADY MACBETH*

- LADY MACBETH**  
 That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold.  
 What hath quenched them hath given me fire.  
 Hark! Peace! It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal  
 5 bellman,  
 Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it.  
 The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms  
 Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugged  
 their possets,  
 That death and nature do contend about them,  
 Whether they live or die.

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

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

*LADY MACBETH enters.*

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

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

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

## Original Text

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

*Enter MACBETH, with bloody daggers*

My husband!

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

15 I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

Did not you speak?

**MACBETH**

When?

## Act 2, Scene 2, Page 2

**LADY MACBETH**

Now.

**MACBETH**

As I descended?

**LADY MACBETH**

Ay.

**MACBETH**

Hark! Who lies i' th' second chamber?

**LADY MACBETH**

Donalbain.

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

**MACBETH**

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

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

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

**LADY MACBETH**

There are two lodged together.

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

30 Consider it not so deeply.

**MACBETH**

But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?

## Modern Text

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

*MACBETH enters carrying bloody daggers.*

My husband!

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

Didn't you say something?

**MACBETH**

When?

**LADY MACBETH**

Just now.

**MACBETH**

As I came down?

**LADY MACBETH**

Yes.

**MACBETH**

Listen! Who's sleeping in the second chamber?

**LADY MACBETH**

Donalbain.

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

That's a stupid thing to say.

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

Malcolm and Donalbain are asleep in the same  
room.

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

Don't think about it so much.

**MACBETH**

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

## Original Text

I had most need of blessing, and “Amen”  
Stuck in my throat.

**LADY MACBETH**

These deeds must not be thought  
After these ways. So, it will make us mad.

## Modern Text

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

## Act 2, Scene 2, Page 3

**MACBETH**

35 Methought I heard a voice cry, “Sleep no more!  
Macbeth does murder sleep”—the innocent sleep,  
Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,  
The death of each day’s life, sore labor’s bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature’s second course,  
40 Chief nourisher in life’s feast.

**LADY MACBETH**

What do you mean?

**MACBETH**

Still it cried, “Sleep no more!” to all the house.  
“Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor  
Shall sleep no more. Macbeth shall sleep no more.”

**LADY MACBETH**

Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,  
45 You do unbend your noble strength to think  
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,  
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.  
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?  
They must lie there. Go carry them and smear  
50 The sleepy grooms with blood.

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

*Exit*

*Knock within*

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

What are you talking about?

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

*LADY MACBETH exits.*

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

## Act 2, Scene 2, Page 4

**MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

## Original Text

The multitudinous seas incarnadine,  
Making the green one red.

*Enter LADY MACBETH*

**LADY MACBETH**

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

*Knock within*

I hear a knocking  
At the south entry. Retire we to our chamber.  
A little water clears us of this deed.  
How easy is it, then! Your constancy  
Hath left you unattended.

*Knock within*

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

**MACBETH**

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

*Knock within*

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

*Exeunt*

## Act 2, Scene 3

*Enter a PORTER. Knocking within*

**PORTER**

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

*Knock within*

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

*Knock within*

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

*Knock within*

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

## Modern Text

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

*LADY MACBETH enters.*

**LADY MACBETH**

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

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

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

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

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

**MACBETH**

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

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

Wake Duncan with your knocking. I wish you  
could!

*They exit.*

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

**PORTER**

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

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

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

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

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

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

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

## Original Text

## Modern Text

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

*Knock within*

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 2

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

*Knock within*

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

*Opens the gate*

*Enter MACDUFF and LENNOX*

**MACDUFF**

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

**PORTER**

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

**MACDUFF**

What three things does drink especially provoke?

**PORTER**

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

**MACDUFF**

I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

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

*A sound of knocking from offstage.*

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

*The PORTER opens the gate.*

*MACDUFF and LENNOX enter.*

**MACDUFF**

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

**PORTER**

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

**MACDUFF**

What three things does drink make a man do?

**PORTER**

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

**MACDUFF**

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

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 3

**PORTER**

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

**MACDUFF**

15 Is thy master stirring?

*Enter MACBETH*

Our knocking has awaked him. Here he comes.

**PORTER**

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

**MACDUFF**

Is your master awake?

*MACBETH enters.*

Our knocking woke him up. Here he comes.

## Original Text

**LENNOX**

Good morrow, noble sir.

**MACBETH**

Good morrow, both.

**MACDUFF**

Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

**MACBETH**

Not yet.

**MACDUFF**

He did command me to call timely on him.

20 I have almost slipped the hour.

**MACBETH**

I'll bring you to him.

**MACDUFF**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**MACDUFF**

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

*Exit MACDUFF*

**LENNOX**

Goes the king hence today?

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 4

**MACBETH**

He does. He did appoint so.

**LENNOX**

The night has been unruly. Where we lay,  
Our chimneys were blown down and, as they say,  
30 Lamentings heard i' th' air, strange screams of death,  
And prophesying with accents terrible  
Of dire combustion and confused events  
New hatched to the woeful time. The obscure bird  
Clamored the livelong night. Some say the Earth  
35 Was feverous and did shake.

**MACBETH**

'Twas a rough night.

**LENNOX**

My young remembrance cannot parallel  
A fellow to it.

*Enter MACDUFF*

**MACDUFF**

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

**MACBETH & LENNOX**

What's the matter?

## Modern Text

**LENNOX**

Good morning, noble sir.

**MACBETH**

Good morning to both of you.

**MACDUFF**

Is the king awake, worthy thane?

**MACBETH**

Not yet.

**MACDUFF**

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

**MACBETH**

I'll bring you to him.

**MACDUFF**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**MACDUFF**

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

*MACDUFF exits.*

**LENNOX**

Is the king leaving here today?

**MACBETH**

He is. He told us to arrange it.

**LENNOX**

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

**MACBETH**

It was a rough night.

**LENNOX**

I'm too young to remember anything like it.

*MACDUFF enters, upset.*

**MACDUFF**

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

**MACBETH & LENNOX**

What's the matter?

## Original Text

**MACDUFF**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LENNOX**

Mean you his majesty?

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 5

**MACDUFF**

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

*Exeunt MACBETH and LENNOX*

Awake, awake!

Ring the alarum bell. Murder and treason!

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

*Bell rings. Enter LADY MACBETH*

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACDUFF**

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

*Enter BANQUO*

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

**LADY MACBETH**

Woe, alas!  
What, in our house?

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 6

**BANQUO**

- 65 Too cruel any where.  
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,  
And say it is not so.

*Enter MACBETH, LENNOX, and ROSS*

**MACBETH**

Had I but died an hour before this chance,

## Modern Text

**MACDUFF**

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

**MACBETH**

What are you talking about? "The life"?

**LENNOX**

Do you mean the king?

**MACDUFF**

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

*MACBETH and LENNOX exit.*

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

*A bell rings. LADY MACBETH enters.*

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACDUFF**

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

*BANQUO enters.*

Oh Banquo, Banquo, the king has been  
murdered!

**LADY MACBETH**

How horrible! What, in our own house?

**BANQUO**

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

*MACBETH and LENNOX reenter, with ROSS.*

**MACBETH**

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



## Original Text

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

*Enter MALCOLM and DONALBAIN*

**DONALBAIN**

What is amiss?

**MACBETH**

75 You are, and do not know 't.  
 The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood  
 Is stopped; the very source of it is stopped.

**MACDUFF**

Your royal father's murdered.

**MALCOLM**

Oh, by whom?

**LENNOX**

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

**MACBETH**

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

## Modern Text

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

*MALCOLM and DONALBAIN enter.*

**DONALBAIN**

What's wrong?

**MACBETH**

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

**MACDUFF**

Your royal father is murdered.

**MALCOLM**

Who did it?

**LENNOX**

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

**MACBETH**

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

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 7

**MACDUFF**

Wherefore did you so?

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

Help me hence, ho!

**MACDUFF**

Look to the lady.

**MALCOLM**

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

**MACDUFF**

What did you do that for?

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

Help me out of here, quickly!

**MACDUFF**

Take care of the lady.

**MALCOLM**

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

## Original Text

**DONALBAIN**

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

**MALCOLM**

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

**BANQUO**

Look to the lady.

*Exit LADY MACBETH, attended*

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 8

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

**MACDUFF**

And so do I.

**ALL**

So all.

**MACBETH**

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

**ALL**

Well contented.

*Exeunt all but MALCOLM and DONALBAIN*

**MALCOLM**

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

**DONALBAIN**

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

**MALCOLM**

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

## Modern Text

**DONALBAIN**

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

**MALCOLM**

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

**BANQUO**

Take care of the lady.

*LADY MACBETH is carried out.*

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

**MACDUFF**

So will I.

**ALL**

So will we all.

**MACBETH**

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

**ALL**

Agreed.

*Everyone exits  
except MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.*

**MALCOLM**

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

**DONALBAIN**

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

**MALCOLM**

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

## Original Text

## Modern Text

*Exeunt**They exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 4

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

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

**ROSS**

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

**OLD MAN**

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

**ROSS**

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

**OLD MAN**

'Tis said they eat each other.

**ROSS**

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

*Enter MACDUFF***OLD MAN**

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

**ROSS**

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

**OLD MAN**

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

**ROSS**

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

**OLD MAN**

They say the horses ate each other.

**ROSS**

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

*MACDUFF enters.*

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 2

How goes the world, sir, now?

**MACDUFF**

Why, see you not?

**ROSS**

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

**MACDUFF**

Those that Macbeth hath slain.

**ROSS**

Alas, the day!  
 What good could they pretend?

How are things going now?

**MACDUFF**

Can't you see for yourself?

**ROSS**

Does anyone know who committed this horrible  
 crime?

**MACDUFF**

The servants Macbeth killed.

**ROSS**

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

## Original Text

**MACDUFF**

They were suborned.

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

**ROSS**

'Gainst nature still!

Thriftless ambition, that will raven up

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

**MACDUFF**

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

**ROSS**

Where is Duncan's body?

**MACDUFF**

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

**ROSS**

Will you to Scone?

**MACDUFF**

No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

**ROSS**

Well, I will thither.

## Modern Text

**MACDUFF**

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

**ROSS**

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

**MACDUFF**

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

**ROSS**

Where is Duncan's body?

**MACDUFF**

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

**ROSS**

Are you going to Scone?

**MACDUFF**

No, cousin, I'm going to Fife.

**ROSS**

Well, I'll go to Scone.

## Act 2, Scene 4, Page 3

**MACDUFF**

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

**ROSS**

Farewell, father.

**OLD MAN**

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

*Exeunt*

**MACDUFF**

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

**ROSS**

Farewell, old man.

**OLD MAN**

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

*They all exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 1

*Enter BANQUO*

**BANQUO**

Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,  
As the weird women promised, and I fear  
Thou played'st most foully for 't. Yet it was said  
It should not stand in thy posterity,

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

*BANQUO enters.*

**BANQUO**

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

## Original Text

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

**MACBETH**

Here's our chief guest.

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 2

**MACBETH**

20 Ride you this afternoon?

**BANQUO**

Ay, my good lord.

**MACBETH**

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

25 Is 't far you ride?

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

Fail not our feast.

**BANQUO**

30 My lord, I will not.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

## Modern Text

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

Are you going riding this afternoon?

**BANQUO**

Yes, my good lord.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

**MACBETH**

Don't miss our feast.

**BANQUO**

My lord, I won't miss it.

**MACBETH**

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

**BANQUO**

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

## Original Text

**MACBETH**

I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,  
40 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  
45 Till supertime alone. While then, God be with you!

## Modern Text

**MACBETH**

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

*BANQUO exits.*

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

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 3

*Exeunt all except MACBETH and a SERVANT*

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

**SERVANT**

They are, my lord, without the palace gate.

**MACBETH**

Bring them before us.

*Exit SERVANT*

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

*Enter SERVANT and two MURDERERS*

*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.*

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!

*The SERVANT comes back in with two MURDERERS*

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 4

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

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

## Original Text

## Modern Text

*Exit SERVANT**The SERVANT exits.*

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

you.

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

**FIRST MURDERER****FIRST MURDERER**

It was, so please your highness.

It was yesterday, your highness.

**MACBETH****MACBETH**

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

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

**FIRST MURDERER****FIRST MURDERER**

You made it known to us.

You explained it all.

**MACBETH****MACBETH**

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

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

**FIRST MURDERER****FIRST MURDERER**

We are men, my liege.

We are men, my lord.

**MACBETH****MACBETH**

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

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

## Original Text

**SECOND MURDERER**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

**MACBETH**

Both of you  
Know Banquo was your enemy.

**BOTH MURDERERS**

True, my lord.

**MACBETH**

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

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 6

**SECOND MURDERER**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

Though our lives—

**MACBETH**

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

**BOTH MURDERERS**

We are resolved, my lord.

**MACBETH**

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

## Modern Text

**SECOND MURDERER**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

**MACBETH**

You both know Banquo was your enemy.

**BOTH MURDERERS**

It's true, my lord.

**MACBETH**

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

**SECOND MURDERER**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

Though our lives—

**MACBETH**

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

**BOTH MURDERERS**

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

**MACBETH**

I'll call for you soon. Stay inside.



## Original Text

## Modern Text

*Exeunt MURDERERS**The MURDERERS exit.*

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

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

Is Banquo gone from court?

**LADY MACBETH**

Has Banquo left the court?

**SERVANT**

Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.

**SERVANT**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**SERVANT**

5 Madam, I will.

**SERVANT**

No problem, madam.

*Exit SERVANT**The SERVANT exits.***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.

**LADY MACBETH**

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

*Enter MACBETH**MACBETH enters.*

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

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**

15 We have scorched the snake, not killed it.  
She'll close and be herself whilst our poor malice  
Remains in danger of her former tooth.  
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds  
suffer,

**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.

20 Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep  
In the affliction of these terrible dreams  
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,  
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,  
Than on the torture of the mind to lie  
25 In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave.  
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.  
Treason has done his worst; nor steel nor poison,  
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing  
Can touch him further.

## Act 3, Scene 2, Page 2

**LADY MACBETH****LADY MACBETH**

## Original Text

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

You must leave this.

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

What's to be done?

## Act 3, Scene 2, Page 3

**MACBETH**

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

*Exeunt*

## Act 3, Scene 3

*Enter three MURDERERS*

**FIRST MURDERER**

But who did bid thee join with 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 fear. *(to himself)* The sky's getting dark, and the crow is returning home to the woods. The gentle creatures of the day are falling asleep, while night's predators are waking up to look for their prey. *(to LADY MACBETH)* You seem surprised at my words, but don't question me yet. Bad deeds force you to commit more bad deeds. So please, come with me.

*They exit.*

*The two MURDERERS enter with a third MURDERER.*

**FIRST MURDERER**

But who told you to come here and join us?

## Original Text

**THIRD MURDERER**

Macbeth.

**SECOND MURDERER**

He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers  
Our offices and what we have to do

5 To the direction just.

**FIRST MURDERER**

Then stand with us.  
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.  
Now spurs the lated traveler apace  
To gain the timely inn, and near approaches

10 The subject of our watch.

**THIRD MURDERER**

Hark, I hear horses.

**BANQUO**

(*within*) Give us a light there, ho!

**SECOND MURDERER**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

His horses go about.

**THIRD MURDERER**

Almost a mile; but he does usually—

15 So all men do—from hence to the palace gate  
Make it their walk.

*Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE with a torch*

## Modern Text

**THIRD MURDERER**

Macbeth.

**SECOND MURDERER**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

**THIRD MURDERER**

Listen! I hear horses.

**BANQUO**

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

**SECOND MURDERER**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

**THIRD MURDERER**

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

*BANQUO and FLEANCE enter with a torch.*

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 2

**SECOND MURDERER**

A light, a light!

**THIRD MURDERER**

'Tis he.

**FIRST MURDERER**

Stand to 't.

**BANQUO**

It will be rain tonight.

**FIRST MURDERER**

Let it come down.

*The MURDERERS attack BANQUO*

**BANQUO**

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

20 Thou may 'st revenge —O slave!

*BANQUO dies. Exit FLEANCE*

**THIRD MURDERER**

Who did strike out the light?

**FIRST MURDERER**

Was 't not the way?

**SECOND MURDERER**

Here comes a light! Here comes a light!

**THIRD MURDERER**

That's him.

**FIRST MURDERER**

Prepare yourselves.

**BANQUO**

It will rain tonight.

**FIRST MURDERER**

Then let the rain come down.

*The MURDERERS attack BANQUO.*

**BANQUO**

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

*BANQUO dies. FLEANCE escapes.*

**THIRD MURDERER**

Who put out the light?

**FIRST MURDERER**

Wasn't that the best thing to do?

## Original Text

**THIRD MURDERER**

There's but one down. The son is fled.

**SECOND MURDERER**

We have lost best half of our affair.

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

**THIRD MURDERER**

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

**SECOND MURDERER**

We failed in half of our mission.

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

*They exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 4

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

**MACBETH**

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

*The **LORDS** sit*

**LORDS**

Thanks to your majesty.

**MACBETH**

Ourself will mingle with society  
And play the humble host.

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

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

**MACBETH**

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

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

'Tis Banquo's then.

**MACBETH**

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

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

**MACBETH**

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

*The **LORDS** sit down.*

**LORDS**

Thanks to your majesty.

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

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

**MACBETH**

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

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

Then it must be Banquo's.

**MACBETH**

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

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 2

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

**MACBETH**

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

## Original Text

20 If thou didst it, thou art the nonpareil.

**FIRST MURDERER**

Most royal sir, Fleance is 'scaped.

**MACBETH**

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

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

**MACBETH**

Thanks for that.

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

*Exit FIRST MURDERER*

**LADY MACBETH**

My royal lord,

You do not give the cheer. The feast is sold

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

## Modern Text

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

Most royal sir, Fleance has escaped.

**MACBETH**

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

**FIRST MURDERER**

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

**MACBETH**

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

*The FIRST MURDERER exits.*

**LADY MACBETH**

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

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

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 3

**MACBETH**

Sweet remembrancer!

Now, good digestion wait on appetite,

40 And health on both!

**LENNOX**

May 't please your highness sit.

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

**MACBETH**

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

45 Than pity for mischance.

**ROSS**

His absence, sir,

Lays blame upon his promise. Please 't your  
highness

To grace us with your royal company?

**MACBETH**

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

**LENNOX**

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

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

**MACBETH**

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

**ROSS**

His absence means he's broken his promise, sir.  
If it pleases you, your highness, why don't you sit  
with us and grace us with your royal company?

## Original Text

**MACBETH**

The table's full.

**LENNOX**

Here is a place reserved, sir.

**MACBETH**

50 Where?

**LENNOX**

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

**MACBETH**

Which of you have done this?

**LORDS**

What, my good lord?

**MACBETH**

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

## Modern Text

**MACBETH**

The table's full.

**LENNOX**

Here's an empty seat, sir.

**MACBETH**

Where?

**LENNOX**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LORDS**

What, my good lord?

**MACBETH**

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

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 4

**ROSS**

55 Gentlemen, rise. His highness is not well.

**LADY MACBETH**

Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often thus And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat. The fit is momentary; upon a thought He will again be well. If much you note him,

60 You shall offend him and extend his passion.

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

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

O proper stuff!

This is the very painting of your fear.

65 This is the air-drawn dagger which you said

Led you to Duncan. Oh, these flaws and starts, Impostors to true fear, would well become A woman's story at a winter's fire, Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!

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

**MACBETH**

Prithee, see there! Behold! Look! Lo! How say you? Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too. If charnel houses and our graves must send

75 Those that we bury back, our monuments Shall be the maws of kites.

**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?

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 5

**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*

## 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.

## 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.*

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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

## Original Text

**MACBETH**

What man dare, I dare.

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,

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

*Exit GHOST*

Why so, being gone,

Why so, being gone,

I am a man again. Pray you sit still.

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

Can such things be,

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

**ROSS**

What sights, my lord?

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 7

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**LENNOX**

- 125 Good night, and better health  
Attend his majesty!

**LADY MACBETH**

A kind good night to all!

*Exeunt all but MACBETH and LADY MACBETH*

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

## Modern Text

**MACBETH**

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

*The GHOST vanishes.*

I am a man again. Pray you sit still.

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

Please, remain seated.

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**MACBETH**

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

**ROSS**

What things, my lord?

**LADY MACBETH**

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

**LENNOX**

Good night. I hope the king recovers soon!

**LADY MACBETH**

A kind good night to all!

*Everyone leaves except MACBETH and LADY  
MACBETH.*

**MACBETH**

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

**LADY MACBETH**

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



## Original Text

**MACBETH**

How say'st thou that Macduff denies his person  
135 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.  
140 More shall they speak, for now I am bent to know,  
By the worst means, for 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.  
145 Strange things I have in head, that will to hand,  
Which must be acted ere they may be scanned.

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 8

**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.  
150 We are yet but young in deed.

*Exeunt*

## Act 3, Scene 5

*Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES meeting***HECATE**

**FIRST WITCH**

Why, how now, Hecate! You look angrily.

**HECATE**

Have I not reason, beldams as you are?  
Saucy and overbold, how did you dare  
To trade and traffic with Macbeth  
5 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?  
10 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,  
15 And at the pit of Acheron  
Meet me i' th' morning. Thither he  
Will come to know his destiny.

## Modern Text

**MACBETH**

What do you think about the fact that Macduff  
refuses to come to me when I command  
him?

**LADY MACBETH**

Did you send for him, sir?

**MACBETH**

I've heard about this indirectly, but I will send for him. In every one of the lords' households I have a servant paid to spy for me. Tomorrow, while it's still early, I will go see the witches. They will tell me more, because I'm determined to know the worst about what's going to happen. My own safety is the only important thing now. I have walked so far into this river of blood that even if I stopped now, it would be as hard to go back to being good as it is to keep killing people. I have some schemes in my head that I'm planning to put into action. I have to do these things before I have a chance to think about them.

**LADY MACBETH**

You haven't slept.

**MACBETH**

Yes, let's go to sleep. My strange self-delusions just come from inexperience. We're still just beginners when it comes to crime.

*They exit.*

*Thunder. The three WITCHES enter,  
meeting***HECATE**.

**FIRST WITCH**

What's wrong, Hecate? You look angry.

**HECATE**

Don't I have a reason to be angry, you disobedient hags? How dare you give Macbeth riddles and prophecies about his future without telling me? I am your boss and the source of your powers. I am the one who secretly decides what evil things happen, but you never called me to join in and show off my own powers. And what's worse, you've done all this for a man who  
Your vessels and your spells provide,

behaves like a spoiled brat,  
angry and hateful. Like all  
spoiled sons, he chases  
after what he wants and  
doesn't care about you. But  
you can make it up to me.  
Go away now and in the  
morning meet me in the pit  
by the river in hell. Macbeth  
will go there to learn his  
destiny. You bring your  
cauldrons, your spells, your  
charms, and everything  
else. I'm about to fly away.

I'll

spend tonight working to make something  
horrible

## Original Text

- Your charms and everything beside.  
 20 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.  
 25 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.

## Act 3, Scene 5, Page 2

- 30 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,  
 35 Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me.

*Exit*

**FIRST WITCH**

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

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

happen. I have a lot to do before noon. An important droplet is hanging from the corner of the moon. I'll catch it before it falls to the ground. When I work it over with magic spells, the drop will produce magical spirits that will trick Macbeth with illusions.

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.

*HECATE exits.*

**FIRST WITCH**

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

*They all exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 6

*Enter LENNOX and another LORD*

- LENNOX**  
 My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,  
 Which can interpret farther. Only I say  
 Things have been strangely borne. The gracious  
 Duncan  
 5 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  
 10 It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain  
 To kill their gracious father? Damnèd 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?  
 15 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—  
 20 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

*LENNOX and another LORD enter.*

**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

## Original Text

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—

- 25 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  
30 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,  
35 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**

- 40 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

- 45 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  
50 Under a hand accursed!

**LORD**

I'll send my prayers with him.

*Exeunt*

## Act 4, Scene 1

*A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron. Thunder.  
Enter the three WITCHES.*

**FIRST WITCH**

Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.

**SECOND WITCH**

Thrice, and once the hedge-pig whined.

**THIRD WITCH**

## Modern Text

speaks his mind too plainly, and because he  
failed to show up at Macbeth's feast. Can you tell  
me where he's hiding himself?

**LORD**

Duncan's son Malcolm, whose birthright and  
throne Macbeth has stolen, lives in the English  
court. There, the saintly King Edward treats  
Malcolm so well that despite Malcolm's  
misfortunes, he's not deprived of respect.  
Macduff went there to ask King Edward for help.  
He wants Edward to help him form an alliance  
with the people of Northumberland and their lord,  
Siward. Macduff hopes that with their help—and  
with the help of God above—he may once again  
put food on our tables, bring peace back to our  
nights, free our feasts and banquets from violent  
murders, allow us to pay proper homage to our  
king, and receive honors freely. Those are the  
things we pine for now. Macbeth has heard this  
news and he is so angry that he's preparing for  
war.

**LENNOX**

Did he tell Macduff to return to Scotland?

**LORD**

He did, but Macduff told the messenger, "No  
way." The messenger scowled and rudely turned  
his back on Macduff, as if to say, "You'll regret  
the day you gave me this answer."

**LENNOX**

That might well keep Macduff away from  
Scotland. Some holy angel should go to the court  
of England and give Macduff a message. He  
should return quickly to free our country, which is  
suffering under a tyrant!

**LORD**

I'll send my prayers with him.

*They exit.*

*A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron.  
Thunder. The three WITCHES enter.*

**FIRST WITCH**

The tawny cat has meowed three times.

**SECOND WITCH**

Three times. And the hedgehog has whined once.

**THIRD WITCH**

## Original Text

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

**FIRST WITCH**

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

**ALL**

- 10 Double, double toil and trouble,  
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

**SECOND WITCH**

- Fillet of a fenny snake,  
 In the cauldron boil and bake.  
 Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
 15 Wool of bat and tongue of dog,  
 Adder's fork and blind-worm's sting,  
 Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,  
 For a charm of powerful trouble,  
 Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

**ALL**

- 20 Double, double toil and trouble,  
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 2

**THIRD WITCH**

- Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
 Witches' mummy, maw and gulf  
 Of the ravined salt-sea shark,  
 25 Root of hemlock digged i' th' dark,  
 Liver of blaspheming Jew,  
 Gall of goat and slips of yew  
 Slivered in the moon's eclipse,  
 Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips,  
 30 Finger of birth-strangled babe  
 Ditch-delivered by a drab,  
 Make the gruel thick and slab.  
 Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,  
 For the ingredients of our cauldron.

**ALL**

- 35 Double, double toil and trouble,  
 Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

**SECOND WITCH**

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

*Enter HECATE and the other three WITCHES*

**HECATE**

- Oh well done! I commend your pains,  
 40 And every one shall share i' th' gains.  
 And now about the cauldron sing,  
 Like elves and fairies in a ring,

## Modern Text

My spirit friend, Harpier, is yelling, "It's time, it's time!"

**FIRST WITCH**

Dance around the cauldron and throw in the poisoned entrails. (*holding up a toad*) You'll go in first—a toad that sat under a cold rock for a month, oozing poison from its pores.

**ALL**

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

**SECOND WITCH**

(*holding something up*) We'll boil you in the cauldron next—a slice of swamp snake. All the rest of you in too: a newt's eye, a frog's tongue, fur from a bat, a dog's tongue, the forked tongue of an adder, the stinger of a burrowing worm, a lizard's leg, an owl's wing. (*speaking to the ingredients*) Make a charm to cause powerful trouble, and boil and bubble like a broth of hell.

**ALL**

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

**THIRD WITCH**

Here come some more ingredients: the scale of a dragon, a wolf's tooth, a witch's mummified flesh, the gullet and stomach of a ravenous shark, a root of hemlock that was dug up in the dark, a Jew's liver, a goat's bile, some twigs of yew that were broken off during a lunar eclipse, a Turk's nose, a Tartar's lips, the finger of a baby that was strangled as a prostitute gave birth to it in a ditch. (*to the ingredients*) Make this potion thick and gluey. (*to the other WITCHES*) Now let's add a tiger's entrails to the mix.

**ALL**

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

**SECOND WITCH**

We'll cool the mixture with baboon blood. After that the charm is finished.

*HECATE enters with three other WITCHES.*

**HECATE**

Well done! I admire your efforts, and all of you will share the rewards. Now come sing around the cauldron like a ring of elves and fairies, enchanting everything you put in.

## Original Text

Enchanting all that you put in.

*Music and a song: "Black spirits," &c. HECATE retires*

**SECOND WITCH**

By the pricking of my thumbs,  
45 Something wicked this way comes.  
Open, locks,  
Whoever knocks.

## Modern Text

*Music plays and the six WITCHES sing a song called "Black Spirits." HECATE leaves.*

**SECOND WITCH**

I can tell that something wicked is coming by the  
tingling in my thumbs. Doors, open up for  
whoever is knocking!

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 3

*Enter MACBETH*

**MACBETH**

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

**ALL**

A deed without a name.

**MACBETH**

50 I conjure 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 yeasty waves  
Confound and swallow navigation up,  
55 Though bladed corn be lodged 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  
60 Of nature's germens tumble all together,  
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 th' hadst rather hear it from our mouths,  
Or from our masters'.

**MACBETH**

Call 'em. Let me see 'em.

**FIRST WITCH**

65 Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten  
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten  
From the murderer's gibbet throw  
Into the flame.

*MACBETH enters.*

**MACBETH**

What's going on here, you secret, evil, midnight  
hags? What are you doing?

**ALL**

Something there isn't a word for.

**MACBETH**

I don't know how you know the things you do, but  
I insist that you answer my questions. I command  
you in the name of whatever dark powers you  
serve. I don't care if you unleash violent winds  
that tear down churches, make the foamy waves  
overwhelm ships and send sailors to their deaths,  
flatten crops and trees, make castles fall down on  
their inhabitants' heads, make palaces and  
pyramids collapse, and mix up everything in  
nature. Tell me what I want to know.

**FIRST WITCH**

Speak.

**SECOND WITCH**

Demand.

**THIRD WITCH**

We'll answer.

**FIRST WITCH**

Would you rather hear these things from our  
mouths or from our master's?

**MACBETH**

Call them. Let me see them.

**FIRST WITCH**

Pour in the blood of a sow who has eaten her  
nine offspring. Take the sweat of a murderer on  
the gallows and throw it into the flame.

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 4

**ALL**

Come, high or low;

**ALL**

Come, high or low spirits. Show yourself and

## Original Text

70 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 nought.

**FIRST APPARITION**

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff.  
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

*Descends*

**MACBETH**

75 Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks.  
Thou hast harped my fear aright. 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**

80 Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

**SECOND APPARITION**

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

*Descends*

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 5

**MACBETH**

85 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*

90 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  
95 Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are.

## Modern Text

what you do.

*Thunder. The FIRST APPARITION appears,  
looking like a head with an armored helmet.*

**MACBETH**

Tell me, you unknown power—

**FIRST WITCH**

He can read your thoughts. Listen, but don't  
speak.

**FIRST APPARITION**

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff.  
Beware the thane of Fife. Let me go. Enough.

*The FIRST APPARITION descends.*

**MACBETH**

Whatever you are, thanks for your advice. You  
have guessed exactly what I feared. But one  
word more—

**FIRST WITCH**

He will not be commanded by you. Here's  
another, stronger than the first.

*Thunder. The SECOND APPARITION appears,  
looking like a bloody child.*

**SECOND APPARITION**

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

**MACBETH**

If I had three ears I'd listen with all three.

**SECOND APPARITION**

Be violent, bold, and firm. Laugh at the power of  
other men, because nobody born from a woman  
will ever harm Macbeth.

*The SECOND APPARITION descends.*

**MACBETH**

Then I don't need to kill Macduff. I have no  
reason to fear him. But even so, I'll make doubly  
sure. I'll guarantee my own fate by having you  
killed, Macduff. That way I can conquer my own  
fear and sleep easy at night.

*Thunder. The THIRD APPARITION appears, in  
the form of a child with a crown on his head and  
a tree in his hand.*

What is this spirit that looks like the son of a king  
and wears a crown on his young head?

**ALL**

Listen but don't speak to it.

**THIRD APPARITION**

Be brave like the lion and proud. Don't even  
worry about who hates you, who resents you,

## Original Text

Macbeth shall never vanquished be until  
Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill  
Shall come against him.

*Descends*

**MACBETH**

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

## Modern Text

and who conspires against you. Macbeth will  
never be defeated until Birnam Wood marches to  
fight you at Dunsinane Hill.

*The THIRD APPARITION descends.*

**MACBETH**

That will never happen. Who can command the  
forest and make the trees pull their roots out of  
the earth? These were sweet omens! Good! My  
murders will never come back to threaten me  
until the forest of Birnam gets up and moves, and  
I will be king for my entire natural life. But my  
heart is still throbbing to know one thing. Tell me,  
if your dark powers can see this far: will  
Banquo's sons ever reign in this kingdom?

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 6

**ALL**

Seek to know no more.

**MACBETH**

I will be satisfied. Deny me this,  
110 And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.  
Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise is this?

*Hautboys*

**ALL**

Don't try to find out more.

**MACBETH**

I demand to be satisfied. If you refuse, let an  
eternal curse fall on you. Let me know. Why is  
that cauldron sinking? And what is that music?

*Hautboys play music for a ceremonial  
procession.*

**FIRST WITCH**

Show.

**SECOND WITCH**

Show.

**THIRD WITCH**

Show.

**ALL**

115 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, followed by BANQUO*

**FIRST WITCH**

Show.

**SECOND WITCH**

Show.

**THIRD WITCH**

Show.

**ALL**

Show him and make him grieve. Come like  
shadows and depart in the same way!

*Eight kings march across the stage, the last one  
with a mirror in his hand, followed by the GHOST  
OF BANQUO.*

**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.  
120 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 th' crack of doom?  
Another yet? A seventh? I'll see no more.  
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass  
125 Which shows me many more, and some I see  
That twofold balls and treble scepters carry.  
Horrible sight! Now I see 'tis true;  
For the blood-boltered Banquo smiles upon me  
And points at them for his.

**MACBETH**

You look too much like the ghost of Banquo. Go  
away! *(to the first)* Your crown hurts  
my eyes. *(to the second)* Your blond hair, which  
looks like another crown underneath the one  
you're wearing, looks just like the first king's hair.  
Now I see a third king who looks just like the  
second. Filthy hags! Why are you showing me  
this? A fourth! My eyes are bulging out of their  
sockets! Will this line stretch on forever? Another  
one! And a seventh! I don't want to see any  
more. And yet an eighth appears, holding a  
mirror in which I see many more men. And some  
are carrying double balls and triple scepters,  
meaning they're kings of more than one country!



## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 7

*Apparitions vanish**The spirits of the kings and the **GHOST OF BANQUO** vanish.*

What, is this so?

What? Is this true?

**FIRST WITCH****FIRST WITCH**

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

Yes, this is true, but why do you stand there so  
 dumbfounded? Come, sisters, let's cheer him up  
 and show him our talents. I will charm the air to  
 produce music while you all dance around like  
 crazy, so this king will say we did our duty and  
 entertained him.

*Music. The **WITCHES** dance and then vanish**Music plays. The **WITCHES** dance and then  
 vanish.***MACBETH**

Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour  
 Stand aye accursèd in the calendar!

140 Come in, without there.

**MACBETH**

Where are they? Gone? Let this evil hour be  
 marked forever in the calendar as cursed. (*calls  
 to someone offstage*) You outside, come in!

*Enter **LENNOX******LENNOX** enters.***LENNOX**

What's your grace's will?

**LENNOX**

What does your grace want?

**MACBETH**

Saw you the weird sisters?

**MACBETH**

Did you see the weird sisters?

**LENNOX**

No, my lord.

**LENNOX**

No, my lord.

**MACBETH**

Came they not by you?

**MACBETH**

Didn't they pass by you?

**LENNOX**

No, indeed, my lord.

**LENNOX**

No, indeed, my lord.

**MACBETH**

Infected be the air whereon they ride,  
 And damned all those that trust them! I did hear

145 The galloping of horse. Who was 't came by?

**MACBETH**

The air on which they ride is infected. Damn all  
 those who trust them! I heard the galloping of  
 horses. Who was it that came here?

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 8

**LENNOX**

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

**MACBETH**

Fled to England?

**LENNOX**

Two or three men, my lord, who brought the  
 message that Macduff has fled to England.

**MACBETH**

Fled to England?

**LENNOX**

Ay, my good lord.

**LENNOX**

Yes, my good lord.

**MACBETH**

150 Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits.

**MACBETH**

Time, you thwart my dreadful plans. Unless a

## Original Text

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,  
 155 To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and  
 done:  
 The castle of Macduff I will surprise,  
 Seize upon Fife, give to th' edge o' th' sword  
 His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls  
 160 That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool.  
 This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.  
 But no more sights!—Where are these gentlemen?  
 Come, bring me where they are.

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

person does something the second he thinks of  
 it, he'll never get a chance to do it. From now on,  
 as soon as I decide to do something I'm going to  
 act immediately. In fact, I'll start following up my  
 thoughts with actions right now. I'll raid Macduff's  
 castle, seize the town of Fife, and kill his wife, his  
 children, and anyone else unfortunate enough to  
 stand in line for his inheritance. No more foolish  
 talk. I will do this deed before I lose my sense of  
 purpose. But no more spooky visions!—Where  
 are the messengers? Come, bring me to them.

*They exit.*

## Act 4, Scene 2

*Enter LADY MACDUFF, her SON, and ROSS***LADY MACDUFF**

What had he done to make him fly the land?

**ROSS**

You must have patience, madam.

**LADY MACDUFF**

He had none.

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

**ROSS**

You know not

5 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. For the poor wren,

10 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,

15 I pray you school yourself. But for your husband,  
 He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows  
 The fits o' th' season. I dare not speak much further;  
 But cruel are the times when we are traitors  
 And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumor  
 20 From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,  
 But float upon a wild and violent sea  
 Each way and none. I take my leave of you.  
 Shall not be long but I'll be here again.  
 Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward  
 25 To what they were before.—My pretty cousin,  
 Blessing upon you.

*LADY MACDUFF, her SON, and ROSS enter.***LADY MACDUFF**

What did he do that made him flee this land?

**ROSS**

You have to be patient, madam.

**LADY MACDUFF**

He had no patience. He was crazy to run away.  
 Even if you're not a traitor, you're going to look  
 like one if you run away.

**ROSS**

You don't know whether it was wisdom or fear  
 that made him flee.

**LADY MACDUFF**

How could it be wisdom! To leave his wife, his  
 children, his house, and his titles in a place so  
 unsafe that he himself flees it! He doesn't love us.  
 He lacks the natural instinct to protect his family.  
 Even the fragile wren, the smallest of birds, will  
 fight against the owl when it threatens her young  
 ones in the nest. His running away has everything  
 to do with fear and nothing to do with love. And  
 since it's so unreasonable for him to run away, it  
 has nothing to do with wisdom either.

**ROSS**

My dearest relative, I'm begging you, pull yourself  
 together. As for your husband, he is noble, wise,  
 and judicious, and he understands what the times  
 require. It's not safe for me to say much more  
 than this, but times are bad when people get  
 denounced as traitors and don't even know why.  
 In times like these, we believe frightening rumors  
 but we don't even know what we're afraid of. It's  
 like being tossed around on the ocean in every  
 direction, and finally getting nowhere. I'll say  
 good-bye now. It won't be long before I'm back.  
 When things are at their worst they have to stop,  
 or else improve to the way things were before. My

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 4, Scene 2, Page 2

**LADY MACDUFF**

Fathered he is, and yet he's fatherless.

**ROSS**I am so much a fool, should I stay longer  
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.

30 I take my leave at once.

**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**35 Poor bird! Thou 'dst never fear the net nor lime,  
The pitfall nor the gin.**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**

40 Nay, how will you do for a husband?

**LADY MACDUFF**

Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

## Act 4, Scene 2, Page 3

**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**

45 Was my father a traitor, Mother?

**LADY MACDUFF**

Ay, that he was.

**SON**

What is a traitor?

**LADY MACDUFF**

young cousin, I put my blessing upon you.

**LADY MACDUFF**

He has a father, and yet he is fatherless.

**ROSS**I have to go. If I stay longer, I'll embarrass you  
and disgrace myself by crying. I'm leaving now.*Exit**ROSS exits.***LADY MACDUFF**Young man, your father's dead. What are you  
going to do now? How are you going to live?**SON**

I will live the way birds do, Mother.

**LADY MACDUFF**What? Are you going to start eating worms and  
flies?**SON**

I mean I will live on whatever I get, like birds do.

**LADY MACDUFF**You'd be a pitiful bird. You wouldn't know enough  
to be afraid of traps.**SON**Why should I be afraid of them, Mother? If I'm a  
pitiful bird, like you say, hunters won't want me.  
No matter what you say, my father is not dead.**LADY MACDUFF**Yes, he is dead. What are you going to do for a  
father?**SON**Maybe you should ask, what will you do for a  
husband?**LADY MACDUFF**

Oh, I can buy twenty husbands at any market.

**SON**

If so, you'd be buying them to sell again.

**LADY MACDUFF**You talk like a child, but you're very smart  
anyway.**SON**

Was my father a traitor, Mother?

**LADY MACDUFF**

Yes, he was.

**SON**

What is a traitor?

**LADY MACDUFF**

## Original Text

Why, one that swears and lies.

**SON**

And be all traitors that do so?

**LADY MACDUFF**

50 Every one that does so is a traitor and must be hanged.

**SON**

And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

**LADY MACDUFF**

Every one.

**SON**

Who must hang them?

**LADY MACDUFF**

Why, the honest men.

**SON**

55 Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enough 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!

## Modern Text

Someone who makes a promise and breaks it.

**SON**

And is everyone who swears and lies a traitor?

**LADY MACDUFF**

Everyone who does so is a traitor and should be hanged.

**SON**

And should everyone who makes promises and breaks them be hanged?

**LADY MACDUFF**

Everyone.

**SON**

Who should hang them?

**LADY MACDUFF**

The honest men.

**SON**

Then the liars are fools, for there are enough liars in the world to beat up the honest men and hang them.

**LADY MACDUFF**

*(laughing)* Heaven help you for saying that, boy! *(sad again)* But what will you do without a father?

**SON**

If he were dead, you'd be weeping for him. If you aren't weeping, it's a good sign that I'll soon have a new father.

**LADY MACDUFF**

Silly babbler, how you talk!

## Act 4, Scene 2, Page 4

*Enter a MESSENGER*

*A MESSENGER enters.*

**MESSENGER**

Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,  
60 Though in your state of honor I am perfect.  
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly.  
If you will take a homely man's advice,  
Be not found here. Hence with your little ones.  
To fright you thus methinks I am too savage;  
65 To do worse to you were fell cruelty,  
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!  
I dare abide no longer.

**MESSENGER**

Bless you, fair lady! You don't know me, but I know you're an important person. I'm afraid something dangerous is coming toward you. If you'll take a simple man's advice, don't be here when it arrives. Go away and take your children. I feel bad for scaring you like this, but it would be much worse for me to let you come to harm. And harm is getting close! Heaven keep you safe!

*Exit*

*The MESSENGER exits.*

**LADY MACDUFF**

Whither should I fly?  
I have done no harm. But I remember now  
70 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?

**LADY MACDUFF**

Where should I go? I haven't done anything wrong. But I have to remember that I'm here on Earth, where doing evil is often praised, and doing good is sometimes a stupid and dangerous mistake. So then why should I offer this womanish defense that I'm innocent?

## Original Text

*Enter MURDERERS*

What are these faces?

**FIRST MURDERER**

75 Where is your husband?

**LADY MACDUFF**I hope, in no place so unsanctified  
Where such as thou mayst find him.**FIRST MURDERER**

He's a traitor.

**SON**

Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain!

## Act 4, Scene 2, Page 5

**FIRST MURDERER***(Stabbing him)*

What, you egg?

Young fry of treachery!

**SON**80 He has killed me, mother.  
Run away, I pray you!*He dies. Exit LADY MACDUFF, crying "Murder!"  
followed by MURDERERS*

## Modern Text

*The MURDERERS enter.*

Who are these men?

**FIRST MURDERER**

Where is your husband?

**LADY MACDUFF**I hope he's not anywhere so disreputable that  
thugs like you can find him.**FIRST MURDERER**

He's a traitor.

**SON**

You're lying, you shaggy-haired villain!

**FIRST MURDERER**What's that, you runt? *(stabbing him)* Young son  
of a traitor!**SON**

He has killed me, Mother. Run away, I beg you!

*The SON dies. LADY MACDUFF exits, crying  
"Murder!" The MURDERERS exit, following her.*

## Act 4, Scene 3

*Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF***MALCOLM**Let us seek out some desolate shade and there  
Weep our sad bosoms empty.**MACDUFF**

Let us rather

5 Hold fast the mortal sword and, like good men,  
Bestride our downfall'n birthdom. 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 yelled out  
Like syllable of dolor.**MALCOLM**

What I believe I'll wail;

10 What know believe, and what I can redress,  
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.  
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.  
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,  
Was once thought honest. You have loved him well.  
He hath not touched you yet. I am young, but  
15 something  
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom  
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb  
T' appease an angry god.**MACDUFF**

I am not treacherous.

*MALCOLM and MACDUFF enter.***MALCOLM**Let's seek out some shady place where we can  
sit down alone and cry our hearts out.**MACDUFF**Instead of crying, let's keep hold of our swords  
and defend our fallen homeland like honorable  
men. Each day new widows howl, new orphans  
cry, and new sorrows slap heaven in the face,  
until it sounds like heaven itself feels Scotland's  
anguish and screams in pain.**MALCOLM**I will avenge whatever I believe is wrong. And I'll  
believe whatever I'm sure is true. And I'll put right  
whatever I can when the time comes. What you  
just said may perhaps be true. This tyrant, whose  
mere name is so awful it hurts us to say it, was  
once considered an honest man. You were one of  
his favorites. He hasn't done anything to harm  
you yet. I'm inexperienced, but maybe you're  
planning to win Macbeth's favor by betraying me  
to him. It would be smart to offer someone poor  
and innocent like me as a sacrificial lamb to  
satisfy an angry god like Macbeth.**MACDUFF**

I am not treacherous.

## Original Text

**MALCOLM**

But Macbeth is.

- 20 A good and virtuous nature may recoil  
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,  
25 Yet grace must still look so.

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 2

**MACDUFF**

I have lost my hopes.

**MALCOLM**

Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.  
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,  
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,  
Without leave-taking? I pray you,

- 30 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  
35 wrongs;  
The title is affeered.—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.  
40 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  
45 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,  
50 By him that shall succeed.

**MACDUFF**

What should he be?

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 3

**MALCOLM**

It is myself I mean, in whom I know

## Modern Text

**MALCOLM**

But Macbeth is. Even someone with a good and virtuous nature might give way to a royal command. But I beg your pardon. My fears can't actually make you evil. Angels are still bright even though Lucifer, the brightest angel, fell from heaven. Even though everything evil wants to look good, good still has to look good too.

**MACDUFF**

I have lost my hope of convincing you to fight against Macbeth.

**MALCOLM**

Maybe you lost your hopes about me where I found my doubts about you. Why did you leave your wife and child vulnerable—the most precious things in your life, those strong bonds of love? How could you leave them behind? But I beg you, don't interpret my suspicions as slander against you. You must understand that I want to protect myself. You may really be honest, no matter what I think.

**MACDUFF**

Bleed, bleed, poor country! Great tyrant, go ahead and build yourself up, because good people are afraid to stand up to you. Enjoy everything you stole, because your title is safe! Farewell, lord. I wouldn't be the villain you think I am even if I were offered all of Macbeth's kingdom and the riches of the East too.

**MALCOLM**

Don't be offended. I don't completely distrust you. I do think Scotland is sinking under Macbeth's oppression. Our country weeps, it bleeds, and each day a fresh cut is added to her wounds. I also think there would be many people willing to fight for me. The English have promised me thousands of troops. But even so, when I have Macbeth's head under my foot, or stuck on the end of my sword, then my poor country will be plagued by worse evil than it was before. It will suffer worse and in more ways than ever under the reign of the king who follows Macbeth.

**MACDUFF**

Who are you talking about?

**MALCOLM**

I'm talking about myself. I know I have so many

**Original Text**

All the particulars of vice so grafted  
 That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth  
 Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state  
 55 Esteem him as a lamb, being compared  
 With my confineless harms.

**MACDUFF**

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

**MALCOLM**

I grant him bloody,  
 Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,  
 60 Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin  
 That has a name. But there's no bottom, none,  
 In my voluptuousness. Your wives, your daughters,  
 Your matrons, and your maids could not fill up  
 The cistern of my lust, and my desire  
 65 All continent impediments would o'erbear  
 That did oppose my will. 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  
 70 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; the time you may so hoodwink.  
 We have willing dames enough. There cannot be  
 75 That vulture in you to devour so many  
 As will to greatness dedicate themselves,  
 Finding it so inclined.

**Act 4, Scene 3, Page 4****MALCOLM**

With this there grows  
 In my most ill-composed affection such  
 80 A stanchless avarice that, were I king,  
 I should cut off the nobles for their lands,  
 Desire his jewels and this other's house.  
 And my more-having would be as a sauce  
 To make me hunger more, that I should forge  
 85 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;  
 90 Scotland hath foisons to fill up your will,  
 Of your mere own. All these are portable,  
 With other graces weighed.

**MALCOLM****Modern Text**

vices that when people see all of them exposed,  
 evil Macbeth will seem as pure as snow in  
 comparison, and poor Scotland will call him a  
 sweet lamb when they compare him to me and  
 my infinite evils.

**MACDUFF**

Even in hell you couldn't find a devil worse than  
 Macbeth.

**MALCOLM**

I admit that he's murderous, lecherous, greedy,  
 lying, deceitful, violent, malicious, and guilty of  
 every sin that has a name. But there is no end,  
 absolutely none, to my sexual desires. Your  
 wives, your daughters, your old women, and your  
 young maids together could not satisfy my lust.  
 My desire would overpower all restraints and  
 anyone who stood in my way. It would be better  
 for Macbeth to rule than someone like me.

**MACDUFF**

Endless greed and lust in a man's nature is a kind  
 of tyranny. It has caused the downfall of many  
 kings. But don't be afraid to take the crown that  
 belongs to you. You can find a way to satisfy your  
 desires in secret, while still appearing virtuous.  
 You can deceive everyone. There are more than  
 enough willing women around. Your lust can't  
 possibly be so strong that you'd use up all the  
 women willing to give themselves to the king  
 once they find out he wants them.

**MALCOLM**

Along with being full of lust, I'm also incredibly  
 greedy. If I became king, I would steal the  
 nobles' lands, taking jewels from one guy and  
 houses from another. The more I had, the  
 greedier I would grow, until I'd invent false  
 quarrels with my good and loyal subjects,  
 destroying them so I could get my hands on their  
 wealth.

**MACDUFF**

The greed you're talking about is worse than lust  
 because you won't outgrow it. Greed has been  
 the downfall of many kings. But don't be afraid.  
 Scotland has enough treasures to satisfy you out  
 of your own royal coffers. These bad qualities  
 are bearable when balanced against your good  
 sides.

**MALCOLM**

## Original Text

But I have none. The king-becoming graces,  
 As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,  
 95 Bounty, perseverance, 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  
 100 Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,  
 Uproar 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.

## Modern Text

But I don't have any good sides. I don't have a trace of the qualities a king needs, such as justice, truth, moderation, stability, generosity, perseverance, mercy, humility, devotion, patience, courage, and bravery. Instead, I overflow with every variation of all the different vices. No, if I had power I would take world peace and throw it down to hell.

**MACDUFF**

Oh Scotland, Scotland!

**MALCOLM**

If someone like me is fit to be king, let me know. I really am exactly as I have described myself to you.

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 5

**MACDUFF**

Fit to govern?

105 No, not to live.—O nation miserable,  
 With an untitled tyrant bloody-sceptered,  
 When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,  
 Since that the truest issue of thy throne  
 By his own interdiction stands accursed,  
 110 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. Fare thee well!  
 These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself  
 115 Have banished me from Scotland.—O my breast,  
 Thy hope ends here!

**MALCOLM**

Macduff, this noble passion,  
 Child of integrity, hath from my soul  
 Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts  
 To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth  
 120 By many of these trains 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  
 125 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,  
 130 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.

**MACDUFF**

(to MALCOLM) Fit to be king? You're not fit to live!—Oh miserable nation, ruled by a usurping, murderous tyrant, when will you see peaceful days again? The man who has a legal right to the throne is, by his own admission, a cursed man and a disgrace to the royal family.—Your royal father Duncan was a virtuous king. Your mother spent more time on her knees in prayer than she did standing up, and she lived a life of absolute piety. Good-bye. The evils you have described inside yourself have driven me out of Scotland forever. Oh my heart, your hope is dead!

**MALCOLM**

Macduff, this passionate outburst, which proves your integrity, has removed my doubts about you and made me realize that you really are trustworthy and honorable. That devil Macbeth has tried many times to trick me and lure me into his power, and prudence prevents me from believing people too quickly. But with God as my witness, I will let myself be guided by you, and I take back my confession. I take back all the bad things I said about myself, because none of those flaws are really part of my character. I'm still a virgin. I have never told a lie. I barely care about what I already own, let alone feel jealous of another's possessions. I have never broken a promise. I wouldn't betray the devil himself. I love truth as much as I love life. The lies I told about my character are actually the first false words I have ever spoken. The person who I really am is ready to serve you and our poor country.



## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 6

135 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,  
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men,  
Already at a point, was setting forth.  
Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness  
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

**MACDUFF**

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

*Enter a DOCTOR***MALCOLM**

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

**DOCTOR**

Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls  
That stay his cure. Their malady convinces  
145 The great assay of art, 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 called the evil.  
A most miraculous work in this good king,  
150 Which often since my here-remain in England  
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,  
Himself best knows, but strangely visited people,  
All swoll'n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,  
The mere despair of surgery, he cures,  
155 Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,  
Put on with holy prayers. And, 'tis spoken,

Indeed, before you arrived here, old Siward, with  
ten thousand soldiers already prepared for battle,  
was making his way here. Now we will fight  
Macbeth together, and may the chances of our  
success be as great as the justice of our cause!  
Why are you silent?

**MACDUFF**

It's hard to make sense of such different stories.

*A DOCTOR enters.***MALCOLM**

Well, we'll speak more soon. (*to the DOCTOR*)Is  
King Edward coming out?

**DOCTOR**

Yes, sir. A crowd of sick people is waiting for him  
to heal them. Their illness confounds the most  
advanced techniques of modern medicine, but  
when he touches them, they heal immediately  
because of the power granted to him by heaven.

**MALCOLM**

Thank you, doctor.

*The DOCTOR exits.***MACDUFF**

What disease is he talking about?

**MALCOLM**

It's called the evil. Edward's healing touch is a  
miracle that I have seen him perform many times  
during my stay in England. How he receives  
these gifts from heaven, only he can say. But he  
cures people with strange conditions—all  
swollen, plagued by ulcers, and pitiful to look at,  
patients who are beyond the help of surgery—by  
placing a gold coin around their necks and  
saying holy prayers over them.

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 7

To the succeeding royalty he leaves  
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,  
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,  
160 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.

They say that he bequeaths this ability to heal to  
his royal descendants. Along with this strange  
power, he also has the gift of prophecy and  
various other abilities. All of these signs mark  
him as a man graced by God.

*ROSS enters.***MACDUFF**

Who's that coming over here?

**MALCOLM**

By his dress I can tell he's my countryman, but I  
don't recognize him.

**MACDUFF**

My noble kinsman, welcome.

## Original Text

**MALCOLM**

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

**ROSS**

Sir, amen.

**MACDUFF**

Stands Scotland where it did?

**ROSS**

Alas, poor country!  
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot  
Be called our mother, but our grave, where nothing,  
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;  
170 Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air  
Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems  
A modern ecstasy. The dead man's knell  
Is there scarce asked for who, and good men's lives  
175 Expire before the flowers in their caps,  
Dying or ere they sicken.

**MACDUFF**

Oh, relation  
Too nice and yet too true!

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 8

**MALCOLM**

What's the newest grief?

**ROSS**

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

**MACDUFF**

How does my wife?

**ROSS**

Why, well.

**MACDUFF**

And all my children?

**ROSS**

Well too.

**MACDUFF**

180 The tyrant has not battered 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  
185 Of many worthy fellows that were out;  
Which was to my belief witnessed the rather  
For that I saw the tyrant's power afoot.  
Now is the time of help. Your eye in Scotland

## Modern Text

**MALCOLM**

I recognize him now. May God alter the  
circumstances that keep us apart!

**ROSS**

Hello, sir.

**MACDUFF**

Is Scotland the same as when I left it?

**ROSS**

Alas, our poor country! It's too frightened to look  
at itself. Scotland is no longer the land where we  
were born; it's the land where we'll die. Where no  
one ever smiles except for the fool who knows  
nothing. Where sighs, groans, and shrieks rip  
through the air but no one notices. Where violent  
sorrow is a common emotion. When the funeral  
bells ring, people no longer ask who died. Good  
men die before the flowers in their caps wilt.  
They die before they even fall sick.

**MACDUFF**

Oh, your report is too poetic, but it sounds so  
true!

**MALCOLM**

What is the most recent news?

**ROSS**

Even news an hour old is old news. Every minute  
another awful thing happens.

**MACDUFF**

How is my wife?

**ROSS**

She's well.

**MACDUFF**

And all my children?

**ROSS**

They're well too.

**MACDUFF**

Macbeth hasn't attacked them?

**ROSS**

They were [at peace](#) when I left them.

**MACDUFF**

Don't be stingy with your words. What's the  
news?

**ROSS**

While I was coming here to tell you my sad  
news, I heard rumors that many good men are  
arming themselves to rebel against Macbeth.  
When I saw Macbeth's army on the move, I knew  
the rumors must be true. Now is the time when  
we need your help. Your presence in Scotland

## Original Text

Would create soldiers, make our women fight,  
190 To doff 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.

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 9

**ROSS**

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

**MACDUFF**

What concern they?  
The general cause, or is it a fee-grief  
Due to some single breast?

**ROSS**

No mind that's honest  
200 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.

**ROSS**

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

**MACDUFF**

Hum! I guess at it.

**ROSS**

Your castle is surprised, your wife and babes  
Savagely slaughtered. To relate the manner,  
Were, on the quarry of these murdered deer  
210 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**

215 Wife, children, servants, all that could be found.

## Modern Text

would inspire people to fight. Even the women  
would fight to rid themselves of Macbeth's  
oppression.

**MALCOLM**

Let them be comforted—I'm returning to  
Scotland. Gracious King Edward has sent us  
noble Siward and ten thousand soldiers. There is  
no soldier more experienced or successful than  
Siward in the entire Christian world.

**ROSS**

I wish I could repay this happy news with good  
news of my own. But I have some news that  
should be howled in a barren desert where  
nobody can hear it.

**MACDUFF**

What is this news about? Does it affect all of us?  
Or just one of us?

**ROSS**

No decent man can keep from sharing in the  
sorrow, but my news affects you alone.

**MACDUFF**

If it's for me, don't keep it from me. Let me have  
it now.

**ROSS**

I hope you won't hate me forever after I say  
these things, because I will soon fill your ears  
with the most dreadful news you have ever  
heard.

**MACDUFF**

I think I can guess what you're about to say.

**ROSS**

Your castle was attacked. Your wife and children  
were savagely slaughtered. If I told you how they  
were killed, it would cause you so much pain that  
it would kill you too, and add your body to the pile  
of murdered corpses.

**MALCOLM**

Merciful heaven! (to MACDUFF) Come on, man,  
don't keep your grief hidden. Put your sorrow into  
words. The grief you keep inside you will whisper  
in your heart until it breaks.

**MACDUFF**

They killed my children too?

**ROSS**

They killed your wife, your children, your  
servants, anyone they could find.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 10

**MACDUFF**

And I must be from thence!  
My wife killed too?

**ROSS**

I have said.

**MALCOLM**

Be comforted.

220 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

225 At one fell swoop?

**MALCOLM**

Dispute 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  
230 That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,  
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,  
They were all struck for thee! Naught that I am,  
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,  
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now.

**MALCOLM**

235 Be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief  
Convert to anger. Blunt not the heart, enrage it.

**MACDUFF**

Oh, I could play the woman with mine eyes  
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,  
Cut short all intermission. Front to front

240 Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself.  
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,  
Heaven forgive him too.

**MACDUFF**

And I had to be away! My wife was killed too?

**ROSS**

I said she was.

**MALCOLM**

Take comfort. Let's cure this awful grief by taking  
revenge on Macbeth.

**MACDUFF**

He doesn't have children. All my pretty little  
children? Did you say all? Oh, that bird from hell!  
All of them? What, all my children and their  
mother dead in one fell swoop?

**MALCOLM**

Fight it like a man.

**MACDUFF**

I will. But I also have to feel it like a man. I can't  
help remembering the things that were most  
precious to me. Did heaven watch the slaughter  
and not send down any help? Sinful Macduff,  
they were killed because of you! As wicked as I  
am, they were slaughtered because of me, not  
because of anything they did. May God give their  
souls rest.

**MALCOLM**

Let this anger sharpen your sword. Transform  
your grief into anger. Don't block the feelings in  
your heart; let them loose as rage.

**MACDUFF**

I could go on weeping like a woman and  
bragging about how I will avenge them! But  
gentle heavens, don't keep me waiting. Bring me  
face to face with Macbeth, that devil of Scotland.  
Put him within the reach of my sword, and if he  
escapes, may heaven forgive him as well!

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 11

**MALCOLM**

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

**MALCOLM**

Now you sound like a man. Come on, let's go  
see King Edward. The army is ready. All we have  
to do now is say goodbye to the king. Macbeth is  
ripe for the picking. We'll be acting as God's  
agents. Cheer up as much as you can. A new  
day will come at last.

*Exeunt*

*They exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 1

## Original Text

Enter a **DOCTOR** of physic and a waiting-  
**GENTLEWOMAN**

**DOCTOR**

I have two nights watched with you but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

**GENTLEWOMAN**

Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, 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 line>effects of watching. In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

**GENTLEWOMAN**

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

**DOCTOR**

You may to me, and 'tis most 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; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her, stand close.

**DOCTOR**

15 How came she by that light?

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 2

**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**

20 It is an accustomed action with her to seem thus washing her hands. I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

**LADY MACBETH**

## Modern Text

A **DOCTOR** and a waiting-  
**GENTLEWOMAN** enter.

**DOCTOR**

I've stayed up with you for two nights now, and I haven't seen any evidence of what you were talking about. When was the last time you saw her sleepwalking?

**GENTLEWOMAN**

Since Macbeth went to war, I have seen her rise from her bed, put on her nightgown, unlock her closet, take out some paper, fold it, write on it, read it, seal it up, and then return to bed, remaining asleep the entire time.

**DOCTOR**

It's unnatural to be asleep and act as if you're awake. When she is like this, besides walking and performing various activities, have you heard her say anything?

**GENTLEWOMAN**

She says something, sir, but I will not repeat it to you.

**DOCTOR**

You can tell me. You really should.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

I will not confess it to you nor to anyone else, because there was no one else to witness her speech.

**LADY MACBETH** enters, holding a candle.

Look, here she comes! This is exactly how she always looks, and—I swear it—she is fast asleep. Watch her. Keep hidden.

**DOCTOR**

How did she get that candle?

**GENTLEWOMAN**

It stands by her bedside. She always has to have a light next to her. Those are her orders.

**DOCTOR**

You see, her eyes are open.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

Yes, but they don't see anything.

**DOCTOR**

What's she doing now? Look how she rubs her hands.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

She often does that. She looks like she's washing her hands. I've seen her do that before for as long as fifteen minutes.

**LADY MACBETH**

## Original Text

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**

- 25 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**

- 30 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. You have known what you should not.

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 3

**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 charged.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

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

**DOCTOR**

Well, well, well.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

Pray God it be, sir.

**DOCTOR**

- 40 This disease is beyond my practice. Yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

**LADY MACBETH**

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

## Modern Text

There's still a spot here.

**DOCTOR**

Listen! She's talking. I'll write down what she says, so I'll remember it better.

**LADY MACBETH**

*(rubbing her hands)* Come out, damned spot! Out, I command you! One, two. OK, it's time to do it now.—Hell is murky!—Nonsense, my lord, nonsense! You are a soldier, and yet you are afraid? Why should we be scared, when no one can lay the guilt upon us?—But who would have thought the old man would have had so much blood in him?

**DOCTOR**

Did you hear that?

**LADY MACBETH**

The thane of Fife had a wife. Where is she now?—What, will my hands never be clean?—No more of that, my lord, no more of that. You'll ruin everything by acting startled like this.

**DOCTOR**

Now look what you've done. You've heard something you shouldn't have.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

She said something she shouldn't have said, I'm sure of that. Heaven knows what secrets she's keeping.

**LADY MACBETH**

I still have the smell of blood on my hand. All the perfumes of Arabia couldn't make my little hand smell better. Oh, oh, oh!

**DOCTOR**

What a heavy sigh! Her heart is carrying a heavy weight.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

I wouldn't want a heart like hers even if you made me queen.

**DOCTOR**

Well, well, well.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

I hope what she's saying is well, sir!

**DOCTOR**

This disease is beyond my medical skills. But I have known people who sleepwalked and weren't guilty of anything.

**LADY MACBETH**

Wash your hands. Put on your nightgown. Don't look so frightened. I tell you again, Banquo is buried. He cannot come out of his grave.

**Original Text****DOCTOR**

Even so?

**LADY MACBETH**

45 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 to bed now?

**Modern Text****DOCTOR**

Is this true?

**LADY MACBETH**

To bed, to bed! There's a knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed!

**LADY MACBETH** *exits.*

**DOCTOR**

Will she go to bed now?

**Act 5, Scene 1, Page 4****GENTLEWOMAN**

Directly.

**DOCTOR**

Foul whisp'rings are abroad. Unnatural deeds  
50 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,  
55 And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night.  
My mind she has mated, and amazed my sight.  
I think, but dare not speak.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

Good night, good doctor.

*Exeunt*

**GENTLEWOMAN**

Yes, right away.

**DOCTOR**

Evil rumors are going around. Unnatural acts will cause **supernatural** things to happen. People with guilty and deranged minds will confess their secrets to their pillows as they sleep. This woman needs a priest more than a doctor. God forgive us all! (*to the waiting-* GENTLEWOMAN) Look after her. Remove anything she might hurt herself with. Watch her constantly. And now, good-night. She has bewildered my mind and amazed my eyes. I have an opinion, but I don't dare to say it out loud.

**GENTLEWOMAN**

Good night, good doctor.

*They exit.*

**Act 5, Scene 2**

*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.  
Revenge burn in them, for their dear causes  
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm  
5 Excite the mortified man.

**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,  
10 And many unrough youths that even now  
Protest their first of manhood.

**MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, LENNOX,**  
*and soldiers enter with a drummer and flag.*

**MENTEITH**

The English army is near, led by Malcolm, his  
uncle Siward, and the good Macduff. They burn  
for revenge. The wrongs they have suffered  
would make dead men rise up and fight.

**ANGUS**

We'll meet them near Birnam Wood. They are  
coming that way.

**CAITHNESS**

Does anyone know if Donalbain is with his  
brother?

**LENNOX**

He is definitely not there, sir. I have a list of all the  
important men. Siward's son is there, as well as  
many boys too young to have beards who will  
become men by joining in this battle.

**Original Text****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,  
15 He cannot buckle his distempered cause  
Within the belt of rule.

**ANGUS**

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

**Act 5, Scene 2, Page 2****MENTEITH**

Who then shall blame  
His pestered senses to recoil and start,  
When all that is within him does condemn  
25 Itself for being there?

**CAITHNESS**

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

**LENNOX**

Or so much as it needs,  
30 To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.  
Make we our march towards Birnam.

*Exeunt, marching*

**Modern Text****MENTEITH**

What is the tyrant Macbeth doing?

**CAITHNESS**

He is fortifying his castle at Dunsinane with heavy defenses. Some say he's insane. Those who hate him less call it brave anger. One thing is certain: he's out of control.

**ANGUS**

Now Macbeth feels the blood of his murdered enemies sticking to his hands. Now, rebel armies punish him every minute for his treachery. The soldiers he commands are only following orders. They don't fight because they love Macbeth. Now he seems too small to be a great king, like a midget trying to wear the robes of a giant.

**MENTEITH**

Who can blame him for acting crazy, when inside he condemns himself for everything he's done?

**CAITHNESS**

Well, let's keep marching and give our loyalty to someone who truly deserves it. We're going to meet Malcolm, the doctor who will cure our sick country. We'll pour out our own blood to help him.

**LENNOX**

However much blood we need to give to water the royal flower and drown the weeds—to make Malcolm king and get rid of Macbeth. Let's proceed on our march to Birnam.

*They exit, marching.*

**Act 5, Scene 3**

*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  
5 All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:  
"Fear not, Macbeth. No man that's born of woman  
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,  
And mingle with the English epicures.  
10 The mind I sway by and the heart I bear  
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

*Enter a SERVANT*

*MACBETH, a DOCTOR, and attendants enter.*

**MACBETH**

Don't bring me any more reports. I don't care if all the thanes desert me. Until Birnam Wood gets up and moves to Dunsinane, I won't be affected by fear. What's the boy Malcolm? Wasn't he born from a woman? The spirits that know the future have told me this: "Don't be afraid, Macbeth. No man born from a woman will ever defeat you." So get out of here, disloyal thanes, and join the weak and decadent English! My mind and courage will never falter with doubt or shake with fear.

*A SERVANT enters.*



**Original Text**

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

**SERVANT**

There is ten thousand—

**MACBETH**

Geese, villain?

**SERVANT**

15 Soldiers, sir.

**MACBETH**

Go, prick thy face and over-red thy fear,  
Thou lily-livered boy. What soldiers, patch?  
Death of thy soul! Those linen cheeks of thine  
Are counselors to fear. What soldiers, why-face?

**SERVANT**

20 The English force, so please you.

**MACBETH**

Take thy face hence.

*Exit* **SERVANT**

**Modern Text**

May the devil turn you black, you white-faced  
fool! Why do you look like a frightened goose?

**SERVANT**

There are ten thousand—

**MACBETH**

Geese, you idiot?

**SERVANT**

Soldiers, sir.

**MACBETH**

Go pinch your cheeks and bring some color back  
into your face, you cowardly boy. What soldiers,  
fool? Curse you! That pale face of yours will  
frighten the others as well. What soldiers, milk-  
face?

**SERVANT**

The English army, sir.

**MACBETH**

Get out of my sight.

*The* **SERVANT** *exits.*

**Act 5, Scene 3, Page 2**

Seyton!—I am sick at heart,  
When I behold—Seyton, I say!—This push  
Will cheer me ever, or disseat me now.  
I have lived long enough. My way of life  
25 Is fall'n into the sere, 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  
30 Which the poor heart would fain deny and dare not.  
Seyton!

*Enter* **SEYTON**

**SEYTON**

What's your gracious pleasure?

**MACBETH**

What news more?

**SEYTON**

All is confirmed, my lord, which was reported.

**MACBETH**

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

**SEYTON**

35 'Tis not needed yet.

**MACBETH**

I'll put it on.  
Send out more horses. Skirr the country round.  
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor.  
How does your patient, doctor?

Seyton!—I'm sick at heart when I see—Seyton,  
come here!—This battle will either secure my  
reign forever or else topple me from the throne. I  
have lived long enough. The course of my life is  
beginning to wither and fall away, like a yellowing  
leaf in autumn. The things that should go along  
with old age, like honor, love, obedience, and  
loyal friends, I cannot hope to have. Instead, I  
have passionate but quietly whispered curses,  
people who honor me with their words but not in  
their hearts, and lingering life, which my heart  
would gladly end, though I can't bring myself to  
do it. Seyton!

*SEYTON* *enters.*

**SEYTON**

What do you want?

**MACBETH**

Is there more news?

**SEYTON**

All the rumors have been confirmed.

**MACBETH**

I'll fight until they hack the flesh off my bones.  
Give me my armor.

**SEYTON**

You don't need it yet.

**MACBETH**

I'll put it on anyway. Send out more cavalry.  
Scour the whole country and hang anyone  
spreading fear. Give me my armor. (*to*  
*the DOCTOR*) How is my wife, doctor?

## Original Text

**DOCTOR**

Not so sick, my lord,

- 40 As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies  
That keep her from her rest.

## Act 5, Scene 3, Page 3

**MACBETH**

Cure her of that.

- Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain  
45 And with some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleanse the stuffed 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.  
50 Come, put mine armor on. Give me my staff.  
Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes fly from me.  
Come, sir, dispatch.—If thou couldst, doctor, cast  
The water of my land, find her disease,  
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,  
55 I would applaud thee to the very echo,  
That should applaud again.—Pull 't off, I say.—  
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  
60 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*

## Modern Text

**DOCTOR**

She is not sick, my lord, but she is troubled with  
endless visions that keep her from sleeping.

**MACBETH**

Cure her of that. Can't you treat a diseased  
mind? Take away her memory of sorrow? Use  
some drug to erase the troubling thoughts from  
her brain and ease her heart?

**DOCTOR**

For that kind of relief, the patient must heal  
herself.

**MACBETH**

Medicine is for the dogs. I won't have anything to  
do with it. (*to SEYTON*) Come, put my armor on  
me. Give me my lance. Seyton, send out the  
soldiers. (*to the DOCTOR*) Doctor, the thanes are  
running away from me. (*to SEYTON*) Come on,  
sir, hurry. (*to the DOCTOR*) Can you figure out  
what's wrong with my country? If you can  
diagnose its disease by examining its urine, and  
bring it back to health, I will praise you to the  
ends of the Earth, where the sound will echo back  
so you can hear the applause again.—  
(*to SEYTON*) Pull it off, I tell you. (*to  
the DOCTOR*) What drug would purge the English  
from this country? Have you heard of any?

**DOCTOR**

Yes, my good lord. Your preparation for war  
sounds like something.

**MACBETH**

(*to SEYTON*) Bring the armor and follow me. I will  
not be afraid of death and destruction until  
Birnam forest picks itself up and moves to  
Dunsinane.

**DOCTOR**

(*to himself*) I wish I were far away from  
Dunsinane. You couldn't pay me to come back  
here.

*They exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 4

*Drum and colors.*

*Enter MALCOLM, SIWARD, MACDUFF,  
Siward's SON, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS,  
LENNOX, ROSS, and SOLDIERS, marching*

*MALCOLM, old SIWARD and  
his SON, MACDUFF, MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGU  
S, LENNOX, ROSS, and SOLDIERS enter marching,  
with a drummer and flag.*

## Original Text

**MALCOLM**

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

**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  
5 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  
1 Our setting down before 't.

0

**MALCOLM**

'Tis his main hope:  
For, where there is advantage to be given,  
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  
1 Attend the true event, and put we on  
5 Industrious soldiership.

## Modern Text

**MALCOLM**

Kinsmen, I hope the time is coming when people will be  
safe in their own bedrooms.

**MENTEITH**

We don't doubt it.

**SIWARD**

What's the name of this forest behind us?

**MENTEITH**

Birnam Wood.

**MALCOLM**

Tell every soldier to break off a branch and hold it in  
front of him. That way we can conceal how many of us  
there are, and Macbeth's spies will give him inaccurate  
reports.

**SOLDIERS**

We'll do it.

**SIWARD**

We have no news except that the overconfident  
Macbeth is still in Dunsinane and will allow us to lay  
siege to the castle.

**MALCOLM**

He wants us to lay siege. Wherever his soldiers have an  
opportunity to leave him, they do, whatever rank they  
are. No one fights with him except men who are forced  
to, and their hearts aren't in it.

**MACDUFF**

We shouldn't make any judgments until we achieve our  
goal. Let's go fight like hardworking soldiers.

## Act 5, Scene 4, Page 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,  
20 But certain issue strokes must arbitrate.  
Towards which, advance the war.

*Exeunt, marching*

**SIWARD**

Soon we'll find out what's really ours and what  
isn't. It's easy for us to get our hopes up just  
sitting around thinking about it, but the only way  
this is really going to be settled is by violence. So  
let's move our armies forward.

*They exit, marching.*

## Act 5, Scene 5

*Enter MACBETH, SEYTON, and SOLDIERS, with  
drum and colors*

**MACBETH**

Hang out our banners on the outward walls.  
The cry is still "They come!" Our castle's strength  
Will laugh a siege to scorn. Here let them lie  
Till famine and the ague eat them up.  
5 Were they not forced with those that should be ours,

*MACBETH, SEYTON, and SOLDIERS enter with  
a drummer and flag.*

**MACBETH**

Hang our flags on the outer walls. Everyone  
keeps yelling, "Here they come!" Our castle is  
strong enough to laugh off their seige. They can  
sit out there until they die of hunger and disease.  
If it weren't for the fact that so many of our

**Original Text**

We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,  
And beat them backward home.

*A cry within of women*

What is that noise?

**SEYTON**

It is the cry of women, my good lord.

*Exit*

**MACBETH**

I have almost forgot the taste of fears.

- 10 The time has been my senses would have cooled  
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair  
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir  
As life were in 't. I have supped full with horrors.  
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts  
15 Cannot once start me.

*Enter SEYTON*

Wherefore was that cry?

**SEYTON**

The queen, my lord, is dead.

**Modern Text**

soldiers revolted and joined them, we could have  
met them out in front of the castle, man to man,  
and beaten them back to England.

*A sound of women crying offstage.*

What's that noise?

**SEYTON**

It's women crying, my good lord.

*SEYTON exits.*

**MACBETH**

I've almost forgotten what fear feels like. There  
was a time when I would have been terrified by a  
shriek in the night, and the hair on my skin would  
have stood up when I heard a ghost story. But  
now I've had my fill of real horrors. Horrible things  
are so familiar that they can't startle me.

*SEYTON comes back in.*

What was that cry for?

**SEYTON**

The queen is dead, my lord.

**Act 5, Scene 5, Page 2**

**MACBETH**

She should have died hereafter.

There would have been a time for such a word.

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,

- 20 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  
25 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 comest to use

Thy tongue; thy story quickly.

**MESSENGER**

Gracious my lord,

- 30 I should report that which I say I saw,  
But know not how to do 't.

**MACBETH**

Well, say, sir.

**MESSENGER**

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

**MACBETH**

Liar and slave!

**MESSENGER**

**MACBETH**

She would have died later anyway. That news  
was bound to come someday. Tomorrow, and  
tomorrow, and tomorrow. The days creep slowly  
along until the end of time. And every day that's  
already happened has taken fools that much  
closer to their deaths. Out, out, brief candle. Life  
is nothing more than an illusion. It's like a poor  
actor who struts and worries for his hour on the  
stage and then is never heard from again. Life is  
a story told by an idiot, full of noise and emotional  
disturbance but devoid of meaning.

*A MESSENGER enters.*

You've come to tell me something. Tell me  
quickly.

**MESSENGER**

My gracious lord, I should tell you what I saw, but  
I don't know how to say it.

**MACBETH**

Just say it.

**MESSENGER**

As I was standing watch on the hill, I looked  
toward Birnam, and I thought I saw the forest  
begin to move.

**MACBETH**

Liar and slave!

**MESSENGER**

## Original Text

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

## Act 5, Scene 5, Page 3

**MACBETH**

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

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

Punish me if it's not true. Three miles from here  
 you can see it coming, a moving forest.

**MACBETH**

If you're lying, I'll hang you alive from the nearest  
 tree until you die of hunger. If what you say is  
 true, you can do the same to me. *(to himself)* My  
 confidence is failing. I'm starting to doubt the lies  
 the devil told me, which sounded like truth. "Don't  
 worry until Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane."  
 And now a wood is coming to Dunsinane.  
 Prepare for battle, and go! If what this messenger  
 says is true, it's no use running away or staying  
 here. I'm starting to grow tired of living, and I'd  
 like to see the world plunged into chaos. Ring the  
 alarms! Blow, wind! Come, ruin! At least we'll die  
 with our armor on.

*They exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 6

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

**MALCOLM**

Now near enough. Your leafy screens throw down,  
 And show like those you are.—You, worthy uncle,  
 Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son,  
 Lead our first battle. Worthy Macduff and we  
 5 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 tonight,  
 Let us be beaten if we cannot fight.

**MACDUFF**

10 Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,  
 Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.

*Exeunt*

*MALCOLM, old SIWARD, MACDUFF, and their  
 army enter carrying branches, with a drummer  
 and flag.*

**MALCOLM**

We're close enough now. Throw down these  
 branches and show them who you really are.  
 Uncle Siward, you and your son will lead the first  
 battle. Brave Macduff and I will do the rest,  
 according to our battle plan.

**SIWARD**

Good luck. If we meet Macbeth's army tonight, let  
 us be beaten if we cannot fight.

**MACDUFF**

Blow all the trumpets. They loudly announce the  
 news of blood and death.

*They exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 7

*Alarums. Enter MACBETH***MACBETH**

They have tied me to a stake. I cannot fly,  
 But, bearlike, I must fight the course. What's he  
 That was not born of woman? Such a one

*Trumpets and the noise of  
 battle. MACBETH enters.***MACBETH**

They have me tied to a stake. I can't run away. I  
 have to stand and fight, like a bear. Where's the  
 man who wasn't born from a woman? He's the

## Original Text

Am I to fear, or none.

*Enter YOUNG SIWARD*

**YOUNG SIWARD**

5 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**

10 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*

**MACBETH**

Thou wast born of woman.

But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,

15 Brandished by man that's of a woman born.

## Modern Text

only one I'm afraid of, nobody else.

*YOUNG SIWARD enters.*

**YOUNG SIWARD**

What's your name?

**MACBETH**

You'll be afraid to hear it.

**YOUNG SIWARD**

No I won't, even if you were one of the worst  
demons in hell.

**MACBETH**

My name's Macbeth.

**YOUNG SIWARD**

The devil himself couldn't say a name I hate  
more.

**MACBETH**

No, nor could the devil's name be more  
frightening.

**YOUNG SIWARD**

You lie, you disgusting tyrant. I'll prove with my  
sword that I'm not scared of you.

*They fight and YOUNG SIWARD is killed.*

**MACBETH**

You were born from a woman. Swords don't  
frighten me. I laugh at any weapon used by a  
man who was born from a woman.

## Act 5, Scene 7, Page 2

*Exit*

*Alarums. Enter MACDUFF*

**MACDUFF**

That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face!  
If thou beest slain, and with no stroke of mine,  
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.

I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms  
20 Are hired to bear their staves. Either thou, Macbeth,  
Or else my sword with an unbattered edge  
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;

By this great clatter, one of the greatest note  
Seems bruited. Let me find him, Fortune,

25 And more I beg not.

*Exit. Alarums*

*Enter MALCOLM and SIWARD*

**SIWARD**

This way, my lord. The castle's gently rendered.  
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight,  
The noble thanes do bravely in the war,  
The day almost itself professes yours,

30 And little is to do.

**MALCOLM**

We have met with foes

*MACBETH exits.*

*Trumpets and battle sounds. MACDUFF enters.*

**MACDUFF**

The noise is coming from over there. Tyrant,  
show your face! If someone other than me kills  
you, the ghosts of my wife and children will haunt  
me forever. I can't be bothered to fight these lame  
soldiers who only fight for money. I'll either fight  
you, Macbeth, or else I'll put down my sword  
unused. You must be over there. By the great  
noise, it sounds like one of the highest-ranking  
men is being announced. I hope I find him! I ask  
for nothing more than that.

*MACDUFF exits. More battle noises.*

*MALCOLM and old SIWARD enter.*

**SIWARD**

Come this way, my lord. The castle has been  
surrendered without a fight. Macbeth's soldiers  
are fighting on both sides. Our noblemen are  
battling bravely. The victory is almost yours, and  
it seems like there's not much left to do.

**MALCOLM**

Our enemies fight as if they're trying not to hurt

## Original Text

That strike beside us.

**SIWARD**

Enter, sir, the castle.

*Exeunt. Alarums*

## Modern Text

us.

**SIWARD**

Sir, enter the castle.

*They exit. Battle noises continue.*

## Act 5, Scene 8

*Enter MACBETH*

**MACBETH**

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

*Enter MACDUFF*

**MACDUFF**

Turn, hellhound, turn!

**MACBETH**

Of all men else I have avoided thee.  
5 But get thee back. My soul is too much charged  
With blood of thine already.

**MACDUFF**

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

*They fight*

**MACBETH**

Thou lovest labor.  
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air  
10 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 angel whom thou still hast served  
15 Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb  
Untimely ripped.

*MACBETH enters.*

**MACBETH**

Why should I commit suicide like one of the  
ancient Romans? As long as I see enemies of  
mine alive, I would rather see my sword wound  
them than me.

*MACDUFF enters.*

**MACDUFF**

Turn around, you dog from hell, turn around!

**MACBETH**

You are the only man I have avoided. But go  
away now. I'm already guilty of killing your whole  
family.

**MACDUFF**

I have nothing to say to you. My sword will talk for  
me. You are too evil for words!

*They fight.*

**MACBETH**

You're wasting your time trying to wound me. You  
might as well try to stab the air with your sword.  
Go fight someone who can be harmed. I lead a  
charmed life, which can't be ended by anyone  
born from a woman.

**MACDUFF**

You can forget about your charm. The evil spirit  
you serve can tell you that I was not born. They  
cut me out of my mother's womb before she  
could bear me naturally.

## Act 5, Scene 8, Page 2

**MACBETH**

Accursèd be that tongue that tells me so,  
For it hath cowed my better part of man!  
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,  
20 That palter 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' th' time.  
25 We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,  
Painted on a pole, and underwrit,

**MACBETH**

Curse you for telling me this. You've frightened  
away my courage. I don't believe those evil  
creatures anymore. They tricked me with their  
wordgames, raising my hopes and then  
destroying them. I won't fight you.

**MACDUFF**

Then surrender, coward, and we'll put you in a  
freakshow, just like they do with deformed  
animals. We'll put a picture of you on a sign, right  
above the words "Come see the tyrant!"

## Original Text

“Here may you see the tyrant.”

**MACBETH**

- I will not yield,  
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm’s feet,  
And to be baited with the rabble’s curse.  
30 Though Birnam Wood be come to Dunsinane,  
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,  
Yet I will try the last. Before my body  
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,  
And damned be him that first cries, “Hold, enough!”

*Exeunt, fighting. Alarums. They enter fighting, and MACBETH slain. Retreat. Flourish. Enter, with drum and colors MALCOLM, SIWARD, ROSS, THANES, and SOLDIERS*

**MALCOLM**

- 35 I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

**SIWARD**

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

**MALCOLM**

Macduff is missing, and your noble son.

**ROSS**

- Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier’s debt.  
40 He only lived but till he was a man,  
The which no sooner had his prowess confirmed  
In the unshrinking station where he fought,  
But like a man he died.

## Act 5, Scene 8, Page 3

**SIWARD**

Then he is dead?

**ROSS**

- Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow  
45 Must not be measured by his worth, for then  
It hath no end.

**SIWARD**

Had he his hurts before?

**ROSS**

Ay, on the front.

**SIWARD**

- Why then, God’s soldier be he!  
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,  
I would not wish them to a fairer death.  
50 And so, his knell is knolled.

**MALCOLM**

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

## Modern Text

**MACBETH**

I’m not going to surrender and have to kiss the ground in front of Malcolm, or be taunted by the common people. Even though Birnam Wood really did come to Dunsinane, and I’m fighting a man not of woman born, I’ll fight to the end. I’ll put up my shield and battle you. Come on, let’s go at it, Macduff, and damn the first man who cries, ‘Stop! Enough!’

*They exit fighting. Trumpets and battle noises. The trumpet of one army sounds a call to retreat. The other army’s trumpet sounds a call of victory. The victorious army enters, led by MALCOLM, old SIWARD, ROSS, the other THANES, and soldiers, with a drummer and flag.*

**MALCOLM**

I wish all of our friends could have survived this battle.

**SIWARD**

In every battle, some people will always be killed, but judging from the men I see around us, our great victory didn’t cost us very much.

**MALCOLM**

Macduff is missing, and so is your noble son.

**ROSS**

My lord, your son has paid the soldier’s price: death. He only lived long enough to become a man, and as soon as he proved that he was a man by fighting like one, he died.

**SIWARD**

So he’s dead?

**ROSS**

Yes, and he’s been carried off the field. Your grief should not be equal to his worth, because then your sorrow would never end.

**SIWARD**

Were his wounds on his front side?

**ROSS**

Yes, on his front.

**SIWARD**

Well then, he’s God’s soldier now! If I had as many sons as I have hairs on my head, I couldn’t hope that any of them would die more honorably than he did. And that’s all there is to it.

**MALCOLM**

He is worth more mourning than that, and I will mourn for him.



## Original Text

**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.

*Enter MACDUFF with MACBETH's head*

**MACDUFF**

Hail, king! For so thou art. Behold where stands  
55 The usurper's cursèd head. The time is free.  
I see thee compassed with thy kingdom's pearl,  
That speak my salutation in their minds,  
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine.  
Hail, King of Scotland!

## Modern Text

**SIWARD**

He is worth no more than that. They tell me he  
died well, and settled his scores. With that, I hope  
God is with him! Here comes better news.

*MACDUFF enters, carrying MACBETH's head.*

**MACDUFF**

Hail, king! Because that's what you are now.  
Look, here I have Macbeth's cursed head. We  
are free from his tyranny. I see that you have the  
kingdom's noblemen around you, and they're  
thinking the same thing as me. I want them to join  
me in this loud cheer, Hail, King of Scotland!

## Act 5, Scene 8, Page 4

**ALL**

60 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  
65 In such an honor named. What's more to do,  
Which would be planted newly with the time,  
As calling home our exiled friends abroad  
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny,  
Producing forth the cruel ministers  
70 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.  
75 So, thanks to all at once and to each one,  
Whom we invite to see us crowned at Scone.

*Flourish. Exeunt*

**ALL**

Hail, King of Scotland!

*Trumpets play.*

**MALCOLM**

It won't be long before I reward each of you as he  
deserves. My thanes and kinsmen, I name you all  
earls, the first earls that Scotland has ever had.  
We have a lot to do at the dawn of this new era.  
We must call home all of our exiled friends who  
fled from the grip of Macbeth's tyranny, and we  
must bring to justice all the evil ministers of this  
dead butcher and his demon-like queen, who,  
rumor has it, committed suicide. This, and  
whatever else we are called to do by God, we will  
do at the right time and in the right place. So I  
thank you all, and I invite each and every one of  
you to come watch me be crowned king of  
Scotland at Scone.

*Trumpets play. They all exit.*