

Macbeth/ActII 1

ACT II, SCENE I.

[Inverness. Court of Macbeth's castle. 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,

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 cursed thoughts that nature

Gives way to in repose!- Give me my sword.-

Who's there?

[Enter MACBETH, and a SERVANT with a torch.]

MACBETH.

A friend.

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 officers:

This diamond he greets your wife withal,

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.

BANQUO.

All's well.-

I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:

To you they have show'd some truth.

MACBETH.

I think not of them:

Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,

We would spend it in some words upon that business,

If you would grant the time.

BANQUO.

Macbeth/ActII 2

At your kind'st leisure.

MACBETH.

If you shall cleave to my consent,- when 'tis,
It shall make honour for you.

BANQUO.

So I lose none

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

MACBETH.

Good repose the while!

BANQUO.

Thanks, sir: the like to you![Exeunt BANQUO and
FLEANCE.]

MACBETH.

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

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee:-
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.

Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' th'other senses,
Or else worth all the rest: I see thee still;
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
Thus to mine eyes.- Now o'er the one half-world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep; now witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings; and wither'd murder,
Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
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

Macbeth/ActII

3

The very stones prate of my whereabouts,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it.- Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives. [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.]

ACT II, SCENE II.

[Inverness. Court of Macbeth's castle. Enter LADY MACBETH.]

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH [within].

Who's there? what, ho!

LADY MACBETH.

Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
And 'tis not done:- th'attempt, and not the deed,
Confounds us.- Hark!- I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em.- Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.- My husband!
[Enter MACBETH.]

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH.

When?

LADY MACBETH.

Now.

MACBETH.

As I descended?

LADY MACBETH.

Macbeth/ActII

4

Ay.

MACBETH.

Hark!-

Who lies i' th'second chamber?

LADY MACBETH.

Donalbain.

MACBETH.

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

LADY MACBETH.

A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH.

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

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:

But they did say their prayers, and address'd 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.

Listening their fear, I could not say "Amen!"

When they did say "God bless us!"

LADY MACBETH.

Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH.

But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?

I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"

Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH.

These deeds must not be thought

After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH.

Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!

Macbeth does murder sleep,"- the innocent sleep,

Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,

The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,

Chief nourisher in life's feast,-

LADY MACBETH.

What do you mean?

MACBETH.

Still it cried "Sleep no more!" to all the house:

"Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor

Macbeth/ActII

5

Shall sleep no more,- Macbeth shall sleep no more!"

LADY MACBETH.

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

MACBETH.

I'll go no more:

I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH.

Infirm of purpose!

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

MACBETH.

Whence is that knocking?

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

[Enter LADY MACBETH.]

LADY MACBETH.

My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white. [knock.]I hear a knocking
At the south entry:- retire we to our chamber:
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it, then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended.- [knock.]Hark! more knocking:
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers:- be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

MACBETH.

To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.[knock.]
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!
[Exeunt.]

ACT II, SCENE III.

[Inverness. Court of Macbeth's castle. 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.]Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' th'name of Belzebub? Here's a farmer that hang'd himself on th'expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you'll sweat for't. [knock.]Knock, knock! Who's there, i' 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.]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.- [knock.]Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you?- But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to th'everlasting bonfire.- [knock.]Anon, anon! 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.

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.

Macbeth/ActII

7

PORTER.

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

MACDUFF.

Is thy master stirring?-

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

[Enter MACBETH.]

LENNOX.

Good morrow, noble sir.

MACBETH.

Good morrow, both.

MACDUFF.

Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

MACBETH.

Not yet.

MACDUFF.

He did command me to call timely on him:

I have almost slipp'd the hour.

MACBETH.

I'll bring you to him.

MACDUFF.

I know this is a joyful trouble to you;

But yet 'tis one.

MACBETH.

The labour we delight in physics pain.

This is the door.

MACDUFF.

I'll make so bold to call,

For 'tis my limited service.[Exit.]

LENNOX.

Goes the king hence to-day?

MACBETH.

He does: he did appoint so.

LENNOX.

The night has been unruly: where we lay,

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

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

And prophesying, with accents terrible,

Of dire combustion and confused events

New hatch'd to th'woeful time: the obscure bird

Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth

Macbeth/ActII

8

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 and LENNOX.

What's the matter?

MACDUFF.

Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!

Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope

The Lord's annointed temple, and stole thence

The life o' th'building!

MACBETH.

What is't you say? the life?

LENNOX.

Mean you his majesty?

MACDUFF.

Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight

With a new Gorgon:- do not bid me speak;

See, and then speak yourselves. [Exeunt MACBETH and LENNOX.]

Awake, awake!-

Ring the alarum-bell:- murder and treason!-

Banquo and Donalbain! Malcolm! awake!

Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,

And look on death itself! up, up, and see

The great doom's image! Malcolm! Banquo!

As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,

To countenance this horror![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:

The repetition, in a woman's ear,

Would murder as it fell.

[Enter BANQUO.]

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

LADY MACBETH.

Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

BANQUO.

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,
I had lived a blessed time; for, from this instant,
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.

You are, and do not know't:

The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopp'd,- the very source of it is stopp'd.

MACDUFF.

Your royal father's murder'd.

MALCOLM.

O, by whom?

LENNOX.

Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't:
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.

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

MACDUFF.

Wherefore did you so?

MACBETH.

Who can be wise, amazed, temperate and furious,

Macbeth/ActII

10

Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
The expedition of my violent love
Outrun the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood;
And his gash'd stabs look'd like a breach in nature
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steep'd in the colours of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breech'd 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 tongues,

That most may claim this argument for ours?

DONALBAIN [aside to MALCOLM].

What should be spoken here, where our fate,
Hid in an auger-hole, may rush, and seize us?

Let's away;

Our tears are not yet brew'd.

MALCOLM [aside to DONALBAIN].

Nor our strong sorrow

Upon the foot of motion.

BANQUO.

Look to the lady:-[LADY
MACBETH is carried out.]

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

MACDUFF.

And so do I.

ALL.

So all.

MACBETH.

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

ALL.

Macbeth/ActII 11

Well contented.[Exeunt
all but MALCOLM and DONALBAIN.]

MALCOLM.

What will you do? Let's not consort with them:

To show an unfelt sorrow is an office

Which the false man does easy. I'll to England.

DONALBAIN.

To Ireland I; our separated fortune

Shall keep us both the safer: where we are,

There's daggers in men's smiles: the near in blood,

The nearer bloody.

MALCOLM.

This murderous shaft that's shot

Hath not yet lighted; and our safest way

Is to avoid the aim. Therefore, to horse;

And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,

But shift away: there's warrant in that theft

Which steals itself, when there's no mercy left.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II, SCENE IV.

[Without Macbeth's castle. Enter ROSS and an OLD MAN.]

OLD MAN.

Threescore and ten I can remember well:

Within the volume of which time I have seen

Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night

Hath trifled former knowings.

ROSS.

Ha, good father,

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,

When living light should kiss it?

OLD MAN.

'Tis unnatural,

Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,

A falcon, towering in her pride of place,

Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

ROSS.

And Duncan's horses,- a thing most strange and certain,-

Macbeth/ActII

12

Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race,
Turn'd 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,
That look'd upon't.- Here comes the good Macduff.

[Enter MACDUFF.]

How goes the world, sir, now?

MACDUFF.

Why, see you not?

ROSS.

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

MACDUFF.

Those that Macbeth hath slain.

ROSS.

Alas, the day!

What good could they pretend?

MACDUFF.

They were suborn'd:

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

ROSS.

'Gainst nature still:

Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up
Thine own life's 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.

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

ROSS.

Will you to Scone?

MACDUFF.

No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

Macbeth/ActII

13

ROSS.

Well, I will thither.

MACDUFF.

Well, may you see things well done there,- adieu,-

Lest our old robes sit easier than our new!

ROSS.

Farewell, father.

OLD MAN.

God's benison go with you; and with those

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

[Exeunt.]