

# Macbeth

## 1.2

*Alarum within. Enter King Duncan, Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, with attendants, meeting a bleeding Captain*

**KING DUNCAN**

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

**MALCOLM**

This is the sergeant  
Who like a good and hardy soldier fought  
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend. 5  
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  
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonald±±  
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that 10  
The multiplying villainies of nature  
Do swarm upon him±±from the Western Isles  
Of kerns and galloglasses is supplied,  
And fortune on his damneÁd quarry smiling  
Showed like a rebel's whore. But all's too weak, 15  
For brave Macbeth±±well he deserves that name!±±  
Disdaining fortune, with his brandished steel  
Which smoked with bloody execution,  
Like valour's minion  
Carved out his passage till he faced the slave, 20  
Which ne'er shook hands nor bade farewell to him  
Till he unseamed him from the nave to th' chops,  
And fixed his head upon our battlements.

**KING DUNCAN**

O valiant cousin, worthy gentleman!

**CAPTAIN**

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

**KING DUNCAN**

Dismayed not this our captains, Macbeth and  
Banquo?

**CAPTAIN**

Yes, as sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion! 35  
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  
Or memorize another Golgotha, 40  
I cannot tell±±  
But I am faint. My gashes cry for help.

**KING DUNCAN**

So well thy words become thee as thy wounds:  
They smack of honour both.±±Go get him surgeons.  
*Exit Captain with attendants*  
*Enter Ross and Angus*

Who comes here?

**MALCOLM** The worthy Thane of Ross. 45

**LENNOX**

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

**ROSS**

God save the King.

**KING DUNCAN**

Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?

**ROSS**

From Fife, great King,

Where the Norwegian banners flout the sky  
And fan our people cold. 50  
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,  
Confronted him with self-comparisons, 55  
Point against point, rebellious arm 'gainst arm,  
Curbing his lavish spirit; and to conclude,

The victory fell on us±±

**KING DUNCAN**

Great happiness.

**ROSS**

That now

Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;

Nor would we deign him burial of his men

60

Till he disburseÁd at Saint Colum's inch

Ten thousand dollars to our general use.

**KING DUNCAN**

No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive

Our bosom interest. Go pronounce his present death,

And with his former title greet Macbeth.

65

**ROSS** I'll see it done.

**KING DUNCAN**

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

*Exeunt severally*