

# Macbeth

## 2.4

*Enter Ross with 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, 5  
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, 10

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  
certain±±

Beauteous and swift, the minions of their race, 15  
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,  
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would  
Make war with mankind.

**OLD MAN**

'Tis said they ate each other.

**ROSS**

They did so, to th'amazement of mine eyes  
That looked upon't.

*Enter Macduff*

Here comes the good Macduff.

20

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

**ROSS** 'Gainst nature still.  
Thriftless ambition, that will raven up  
Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like  
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth. 30

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

**ROSS** Where is Duncan's body?

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

**ROSS** Will you to Scone?

**MACDUFF**  
No, cousin, I'll to Fife.

**ROSS** Well, I will thither.

**MACDUFF**  
Well, may you see things well done there. Adieu,  
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new.

**ROSS** Farewell, father. 40

**OLD MAN**  
God's benison go with you, and with those  
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes.  
*Exeunt severally*