

List of characters

Legend regarding **Additional Info** at the end of the table!

Casting will be gender-blind and gender-neutral. However, **Lady Macbeth**, the **Witches + Chorus** of Witches should be read as **female** for textual and symbolic reasons.

| Character | Size | Notes | Additional Info | Scenes (Casting) |
|-------------------|----------------|---|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Macbeth | Lead | | "Fi", "Mo" | 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, Monolog |
| Lady Macbeth | Big | | "Mo" | 8, 13, Monolog |
| Banquo | Big | | "Fi", "Mo" | 3, 9, 11 |
| Malcolm | Big | combination of weak, insightful and villain elements | "Fi", "Mo" | 2, 6, 7 |
| Macduff | Big | | "Fi" | 6, 7 |
| Witches (3) | Big / medium | | "Mo" | 1, 3, 5 |
| Chorus of witches | medium - small | Movement workshops strongly recommended The size of the chorus can vary scenewise. Speaking in chorus | "!", "Mo" | 1, 3, 5 |
| spirits | medium - small | "!" -> Part of the chorus of witches?, | "!", "Mo" | 1, 3, 5 |
| Apparitions | Small | "!" -> Part of the chorus of witches?, | "!", "Mo" | 5 |
| Duncan | medium | Has strong & weak elements | | 2, 4 |
| Ross | Big - medium | Try also Lennox! | | 7, 12, Monolog |
| Lennox | Medium | Try also Ross! | | 12 |
| Fleance | Small | | "Fi" | 11, 9 |
| Captain | Small | Part of the real world? Part of the metaphysical world? | | 2, Monolog |

| Character | Size | Notes | Additional Info | Scenes (Casting) |
|-------------------------|-------|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Murderers (2) | Small | Part of the real world | "Fi" | 9, 10 |
| Third Murderer | small | Part of the metaphysical world?, Macbeth?, Lady Macbeth?, A Witch? The Captain? | "!" | 9, 10 |
| Seyton | Small | | "!?" | - |
| Doctor | Small | | "!?" | 8 |
| Gentlewoman | Small | | "!?" | 8 |
| Attendants, Messengers, | Minor | | "!??" | - |

"!":

= Interpretation of the role depends on the casting process. There is still room for new ideas. Show me your interpretation!

"!?":

= Possibility that this will be played by one of the other characters, i.e. merging of characters,

"!??":

= no casting text, probably cut out of the play, only voice from speaker, etc.

Fi

= stands for Fight

Character is originally involved in a fight scene. However, the interpretation might vary drastically from a physical fight scene on stage.

Mo

= stands for Movement

Movements of the metaphysical realm vary from movements based on the real world. Therefore, characters involved, possessed by or interacting with the spiritual world might face chorographical, dancelike or chorus elements in their rehearsal process.

Higher involvement with the metaphysical means higher demands or probability for the realisation of these movements. **However, the amount and feasibility depends on the cast. So don't get scared ;)**

The three witches / Weird sisters:

The witches in *Macbeth* play a crucial role in shaping the plot and influencing Macbeth's actions. Their first encounter with him sets the tragedy in motion by prophesizing his rise to power, sparking his ambition and driving him to murder King Duncan. Throughout the play, the witches appear at key moments, offering cryptic insights that manipulate Macbeth's choices, especially regarding his kingship and eventual downfall. Their presence represents the forces of fate and destiny, guiding Macbeth's internal struggles and pushing him toward his tragic end. The witches embody chaotic, unpredictable forces that disrupt the natural order, highlighting the dangers of unchecked ambition.

The three witches represent the metaphysical realm, acting as agents of fate, prophecy, and chaos. They reflect the emotional turmoil and internal conflict Macbeth experiences, embodying chaotic forces often described as feminine in contrast to the rigid, repressive masculine principle of order. The witches' prophecies offer glimpses of power and present dangerous potential, showing how challenging the established order can lead to both extraordinary success and disastrous consequences. While their chaotic influence holds boundless possibilities, it comes with no guarantees and reveals the terrifying unpredictability of fate. Ultimately, the witches' role underscores the catastrophic results of meddling with forces beyond human control.

The chorus of witches / spirits:

The chorus represents and supports the three individual witches. Their synchronized movement and choral speaking emphasize their deep connection to the supernatural and chaotic forces at play in *Macbeth*. Their movements are fluid, erratic, and unpredictable, mirroring the disruption they bring to the world, with the witches swirling around characters like Macbeth and Banquo, creating a sense of foreboding and inevitability. Choral speaking allows their voices to overlap and intertwine, shifting between unison and individual lines, highlighting both their collective unity and distinct influence on Macbeth's fate. As they shift positions with sudden, unpredictable motions, appearing and disappearing from different corners of the stage, they symbolize their intangible presence and control over the unfolding events. This dynamic performance underscores the witches as embodiments of fate, manipulating the narrative while remaining an all-encompassing, mysterious, and forceful presence in the play.

The Three Apparitions

A trio of ghosts summoned by the three witches in order to warn Macbeth of his impending doom. The First Apparition tells him to be wary of Macduff, the Second Apparition explains that "none of woman born" will kill Macbeth, and the Third Apparition reveals that he will not be defeated until the Great Birnam Wood arrives to fight at Dunsinane. Macbeth takes these messages to mean that he is virtually invincible.

Macbeth:

Macbeth is the tragic hero of Shakespeare's play, whose ambition and internal conflict drive the plot. Initially a loyal and valiant Thane, his encounter with the witches sparks a deep desire for power, leading him to murder King Duncan and seize the throne. As the play progresses, Macbeth becomes consumed by guilt, paranoia, and a thirst for more power, committing further murders to secure his reign. His descent into tyranny ultimately leads to his downfall, as he is consumed by the chaos he helped create.

Macbeth's connection to the spiritual world reflects his emotional turmoil, with supernatural elements such as the witches' prophecies and Banquo's ghost mirroring his fractured psyche. The witches' cryptic messages fuel his ambition, but they also stir his deepest fears, driving him to act without considering the consequences. This reliance on the supernatural exacerbates his spiritual alienation, cutting him off from both human and divine order. His internal conflict between guilt and ambition represents the tension between human desires and their inevitable consequences. Ultimately, Macbeth's death restores order, showing that when unchecked ambition disrupts the natural balance, ruin is inevitable.

Lady Macbeth:

Lady Macbeth is a central figure in *Macbeth*, whose ambition and manipulative nature drive much of the action in the play. Upon learning of the witches' prophecy, she immediately becomes determined to see her husband crowned king, even if it means murder. She pushes Macbeth into killing King Duncan, questioning his manhood and resolve, and takes on the role of the instigator in their violent plot. However, as the play progresses, Lady Macbeth's guilt over their actions begins to unravel her, leading to intense psychological and emotional turmoil.

Lady Macbeth's connection to the spiritual world is evident in her invocation to the spirits in Act 1, where she asks to be "unsexed" and filled with cruelty, symbolizing her desire to rid herself of feminine compassion in order to pursue power. Her emotional and mental deterioration is reflected in the supernatural disturbances surrounding her, particularly during her sleepwalking scene, where she is haunted by the blood on her hands, unable to escape her guilt. Lady Macbeth's inner conflict between ambition and guilt ultimately leads to her downfall, as she becomes consumed by the consequences of her actions. Her tragic end emphasizes the moral consequences of unbridled ambition, showing how the pursuit of power can lead to spiritual and emotional destruction.

Banquo:

Banquo appears in a third of the play's scenes, both as a living character and as a ghost, yet his relatively few lines are still crucial to the plot. He fights valiantly in the revolt against King Duncan and, after the battle, is told by the witches that his descendants will become kings, though he remains skeptical of their intentions. Unlike Macbeth, who eagerly embraces the witches' prophecy and seeks to make it a reality, Banquo resists the temptation to act on it and warns Macbeth about the potential danger of trusting the witches. It's suggested that Banquo might have

briefly entertained the idea of killing Duncan, influenced by his own prophecy, but ultimately decides against it, staying loyal to Duncan. Although he suspects Macbeth's involvement in the king's murder, Banquo continues to pledge his loyalty to him, only to become a victim of Macbeth's increasing paranoia, with his son Fleance escaping and his ghost haunting Macbeth, symbolizing the contrast between their moral paths and Macbeth's impending downfall.

Macduff:

Macduff is a key figure in *Macbeth*, representing justice, loyalty, and retribution. As a nobleman of Scotland, he initially appears as a supporter of Macbeth, but he grows suspicious of Macbeth's rise to power and eventually becomes one of his most determined adversaries. Macduff's personal motivation for vengeance is revealed when Macbeth orders the brutal murder of his wife and children, pushing him to seek justice. Fueled by grief and rage, he leads the final charge against Macbeth, ultimately killing him in a battle to restore order to Scotland.

Macduff's role as a foil to Macbeth highlights the contrast between Macbeth's unchecked ambition and Macduff's commitment to moral integrity. His victory over Macbeth symbolizes the restoration of justice, showing that despite the chaos and violence Macbeth has unleashed, the forces of order and righteousness will prevail.

Duncan:

King Duncan is a father-figure who is very generous and kind. Duncan is also firm ("No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive / Our bosom interest. Go pronounce his present death / And with his former title greet Macbeth."), insightful ("There's no art / To find the mind's construction in the face."), and sensitive ("This castle hath a pleasant seat. The air / Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself / Unto our gentle senses."). However, the role is full of irony; he is completely deceived in the intentions of Macbeth and therefore may come across as naive, even cruel for ignoring the Captain's wounds. Although a modern reader may view Duncan as an incompetent monarch, he also represents moral order within the play and his murder signals the onset of chaos.

Malcolm:

As the natural heir to the throne, Malcolm is Macbeth's foremost rival. During the battle Malcolm is freed by the Captain and after the death of his father, Malcolm fails to speak up and flees instead in which one might find weak behaviour.

In England Malcolm develops and finds his spirits. He contrasts his father, in this view naive, willfully blind person, who is deceived, and shows great foresight and vision for acknowledging the fact, that the "evil" of Macbeth is human by repeating it on himself.

In the end he and his allies face Macbeth as "God's soldiers" and their eventual victory marks a restoration of moral order. In our version Malcolm dies from Macbeth's hands symbolizing the loss someone has to give up when confronting the evil or letting it manifest in the world.

Captain in Duncan's army:

Scene 1 indicates the entanglement of the witches with the battle in the beginning of the play. Therefore the captain could be interpreted as a figure connected to both the physical and metaphysical realms, blurring the lines between reality and the supernatural. His wounds, deeply symbolic, reflect the trauma of both the battlefield and the eerie influence of the witches, making him a messenger of fate rather than just a war hero. As he recounts Macbeth's battlefield performance, his words could take on a haunting, otherworldly quality, subtly channeling the witches' cryptic prophecies. This interpretation would position the captain as a spectral figure, showing how the forces of war, fate, and the supernatural are inextricably linked in the play.

Ross:

Ross is a Scottish nobleman in *Macbeth*, initially loyal to King Duncan and Macbeth, but gradually becomes disillusioned with Macbeth's tyranny. He functions primarily as a messenger, delivering key news, such as the announcement of Duncan's murder and Banquo's death, which advances the plot. While he doesn't openly oppose Macbeth at first, Ross serves as a subtle moral voice, commenting on the unnatural events in Scotland and showing awareness of the kingdom's decay. As Macbeth's rule becomes more oppressive, Ross aligns himself with Malcolm and the English forces, symbolizing the nobility's shift against Macbeth. His loyalty to the old order and eventual support for the rightful heir represents the restoration of justice in Scotland. Ultimately, Ross's character arc reflects the broader theme of political and moral realignment in the play.

Lennox:

Lennox is a nobleman in *Macbeth*, and while he's not one of the central characters, his role is important for showing the political shifts and tensions in Scotland after Macbeth's rise to power.

Initially, Lennox seems to be a loyal supporter of King Duncan and, later, of Macbeth. However, as Macbeth's tyranny becomes more apparent, Lennox grows increasingly disillusioned. His role as a character is to represent the shifting allegiances among the Scottish nobles, and he is a voice for those who see through Macbeth's false persona.

Two murderers:

The two murderers in *Macbeth* are hired by Macbeth to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance. They are depicted as low-ranking, disreputable figures who lack moral conviction but are easily manipulated by Macbeth's promises of rewards. Despite their initial reluctance, they follow through with the murder of Banquo, although Fleance escapes. Their role in the play

underscores Macbeth's increasing reliance on others to carry out his violent deeds, further isolating him from personal responsibility.

The third murderer:

The third murderer in *Macbeth* is an unnamed character who joins the two hired murderers to kill Banquo. His sudden appearance and involvement in the plot suggest that Macbeth, fearing the outcome, secretly sent him to ensure the job is done correctly. The third murderer's presence highlights Macbeth's paranoia and the growing complexity of his descent into tyranny, as he orchestrates more layers of deceit and violence.

It is a mystery who the third murderer is, Macbeth? Lady Macbeth? Third murderer to supervise the others? Death itself?

Working around the interpretation of this character promises to be a lot of fun!

Fleance:

Fleance, the son of Banquo, plays a relatively minor yet symbolically significant role in *Macbeth*. Although he is only a young man, his presence represents the continuation of Banquo's bloodline, which the witches prophesized would lead to a line of kings. After Macbeth arranges for Banquo's murder, Fleance narrowly escapes, ensuring the survival of his family's lineage and the fulfillment of the prophecy.

Fleance's escape is crucial because it symbolizes Macbeth's failure to fully control his destiny and highlights the limitations of his power. Despite Macbeth's efforts to secure his reign, Fleance's survival suggests that Macbeth cannot alter the witches' prophecy and that fate will ultimately take its course. His role underscores the theme of fate versus free will, as his escape foreshadows the eventual downfall of Macbeth's rule.

Gentlewoman:

The Gentlewoman is a minor character in *Macbeth*, serving as Lady Macbeth's lady-in-waiting. She is observant, discreet, and loyal, though she becomes concerned as she witnesses Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking and odd behavior. Her function in the play is to reveal Lady Macbeth's guilt and unraveling mental state, as she reports her mistress's actions to the doctor. Through her, the audience sees the devastating effects of Lady Macbeth's ambition and the helplessness of those around her.

Doctor:

The Doctor in *Macbeth* plays a key role in observing and diagnosing Lady Macbeth's deteriorating mental state. He is summoned to try to help her, but he is unable to cure her, recognizing that her illness is more psychological than physical. The Doctor witnesses Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking and obsessive hand-washing, but he understands that her guilt cannot be healed by medicine. His role highlights the theme of inner torment, as he cannot offer a solution to the psychological consequences of her actions.

Seyton:

Seyton is Macbeth's loyal attendant who remains by his side during the king's final descent into madness. He serves as a symbol of Macbeth's isolation, being one of the few figures left in his circle as his reign collapses. Seyton's role emphasizes Macbeth's detachment from the world and his growing alienation from morality and humanity.

1 - Witches

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches

First Witch

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

Second Witch

When the hurlyburly's done,
When the battle's lost and won.

Third Witch

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

Paddock calls.

Third Witch

Anon.

ALL

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

Exeunt

2 - Captain, Duncan, Malcolm

Enter Duncan, Malcolm with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Captain

Alternative interpretation:

Captain on a tower. Darkness. A light under the Captain wraps him in a fantastical, mystical shadow. Blood comes out of his mouth. Duncan, Malcolm enter. They are afraid of the man. He looks metaphysical for he is the bearer of a message with defining meaning. He represents the terrifying, transformative element of life itself.

DUNCAN

What bloody man is that?

MALCOLM

This is the sergeant
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity.—

DUNCAN

He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

MALCOLM

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
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald
with terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict,
from the Western Isles
And Fortune, on his damnèd quarrel smiling,
Showed like a rebel's whore.

DUNCAN

Dismayed not this our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?

CAPTAIN

Yes, as sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
But all's too weak;
For brave Macbeth
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
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.

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.

DUNCAN

Great happiness!
No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest.
Worthy Thane of Ross
Go, pronounce his present death
And with his former title greet Macbeth.

MALCOLM I'll see it done.

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.

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth hath won.

They exit.

3 - Witches, Macbeth, Banquo

A heath near Forres. Thunder. Enter the three Witches

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,
Here's a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come.

Drum within

ALL

A drum, a drum! (*repeating*)
Macbeth doth come.

*Enter MACBETH
and BANQUO*

MACBETH

So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BANQUO

What are these
So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't?

MACBETH

Speak, if you can: what are you?

First Witch

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

Second Witch

All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch

All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter!

BANQUO

Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?
My noble partner
You greet with royal hope, to me you speak not.
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 favours nor your hate.

First Witch

Hail!

Second Witch

Hail!

Third Witch

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!

First Witch

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? Speak, I charge you.

Witches vanish

BANQUO

The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanish'd?

MACBETH

Into the air; Would they had stay'd!

BANQUO

Were such things here as we do speak about?
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?

4 - Duncan, Macbeth

Flourish. Enter DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, and Attendants

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS, and ANGUS

DUNCAN

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,

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

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 every thing

Safe toward your love and honour.

DUNCAN

Welcome hither:

I have begun to plant thee, and will labour

To make thee full of growing.

Sons, kinsmen, thanes,

And you whose places are the nearest, know

We will establish our estate upon

Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter

The Prince of Cumberland; which honour must

Not unaccompanied invest him only,

But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine

On all deservers. From hence to Inverness,

And bind us further to you.

MACBETH

The rest is labour, 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!

MACBETH

[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,

Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

Exit

5 - Witches, Macbeth, (Apparitions)

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

ALL (repeating?)

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.

Third Witch

O well done! I commend your pains;
And every one shall share i' the gains;

Second Witch

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

Enter MACBETH

MACBETH

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

ALL

A deed without a name.

MACBETH

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
Though bladed corn be lodged and trees blown down;
Though the treasure
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 thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?

MACBETH

Call 'em; let me see 'em.

First Witch

From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

ALL

Come, high or low;
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 / Second Witch

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

Descends

MACBETH

Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;
Thou hast harp'd 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 / Third Witch

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

MACBETH

Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

Second Apparition / Third Witch

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

Descends

MACBETH

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

What is this
That rises like the issue of a king,

ALL

Listen, but speak not to't.

Third Apparition / First Witch

Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquish'd 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
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good!
Rebellion's head, 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
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much: shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

ALL

Seek to know no more.

MACBETH

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

Hautboys

First Witch

Show!

Second Witch

Show!

Third Witch

Show!

ALL

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; GHOST OF
BANQUO following*

MACBETH

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo: down!
Filthy hags! Why do you show me this?
Horrible sight! Now, I see, 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his.

Apparitions vanish

What, is this so?

Music. The witches dance and then vanish

MACBETH

Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!
Come in, without there!

Enter LENNOX

6 - Malcolm, Macduff

England. Before the King's palace. *Enter MALCOLM and MACDUFF*

MALCOLM

Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

MACDUFF

Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and like good men
Bestride our down-fall'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

MALCOLM

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 touch'd you yet. I am young;
but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

MACDUFF

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM

But Macbeth is.
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,
Yet grace must still look so.

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?

MACDUFF

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

MALCOLM

Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
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,
By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF

What should he be?

MALCOLM

It is myself I mean: in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow

MACDUFF

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

MALCOLM

I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
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
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 fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours:
We have willing dames enough: there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness

MALCOLM

With this there grows
In my most ill-composed affection such
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
Destroying them for wealth.

MACDUFF

This Sticks deeper
Than summer-seeming lust
it hath been The sword of our slain kings
yet do not fear;
all these are portable,
With other graces weigh'd.

MALCOLM

But I have none: Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
*(Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.)*
If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.

MACDUFF

Fit to govern!
No, not to live. Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

7 - Malcolm, Macduff, Ross

England. Before the King's palace. Enter ROSS

MACDUFF

See, who comes here?

MALCOLM

My countryman; but yet I know him not.

MACDUFF

My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

MALCOLM

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

ROSS

Sir, amen.

MACDUFF

Stands Scotland where it did?

ROSS

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave; (*where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;*)
(*the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.*)

MACDUFF

(*O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!*)

MALCOLM

What's the newest grief?

ROSS

That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker:
Each minute teems a new one.
(*When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumour
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:*)
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.

MALCOLM

Be't their comfort
We are coming thither: gracious England hath
Lent us ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.

ROSS

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

MACDUFF

What concern they?

ROSS

the main part
Pertains to you alone.

Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,
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

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
At one fell swoop?

MALCOLM

Dispute it like a man.
Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

MACDUFF

O, I could play the woman with mine eyes
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

MALCOLM

This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave; Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking (*Receive what cheer you may:
The night is long that never finds the day.*)

Exeunt

8 - Lady Macbeth, Doctor, Gentlewoman

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 night-gown 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 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;

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

How came she by that light?

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

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

Yet here's a spot.

Doctor

Hark! she speaks

LADY MACBETH

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

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.

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: Nothing will sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doctor

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

This disease is beyond my practise

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.

Doctor

Even so?

LADY MACBETH

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 now to bed?

Gentlewoman

Directly.

Doctor

Foul whisperings are abroad: unnatural deeds
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,
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

9 - Murderer (3), Banquo, (Fleance)

Enter three Murderers

First Murderer

But who did bid thee join with us?

Third Murderer

Macbeth.

Second Murderer

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

First Murderer

Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch.

Third Murderer

Hark! I hear horses.

BANQUO

[Within] Give us a light there, ho!

Second Murderer

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

First Murderer

His horses go about.

Third Murderer

Almost a mile: but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to the palace gate
Make it their walk.

Second Murderer

A light, a light!

Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE with a torch

Third Murderer

'Tis he.

First Murderer

Stand to't.

BANQUO

It will be rain to-night.

First Murderer

Let it come down.

They set upon BANQUO

BANQUO

O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou mayst revenge. O slave!

Dies. FLEANCE escapes

Third Murderer

Who did strike out the light?

First Murderer

Wast not the way?

Third Murderer

There's but one down; the son is fled.

Second Murderer

We have lost
Best half of our affair.

First Murderer

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

Exeunt

10 - Macbeth, Murderer (any)

Murderer appears at the door

MACBETH

There's blood on thy face.

Murderer

'Tis Banquo's then.

MACBETH

'Tis better thee without than he within.

Is he dispatch'd?

Murderer

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

MACBETH

Thou art the best o' the cut-throats: yet he's good

That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,

Thou art the nonpareil.

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:

But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in

To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

Murderer

Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,

With twenty trenched gashes on his head;

The least a death to nature.

MACBETH

Thanks for that:

There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled

Hath nature that in time will venom breed,

No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow

We'll hear, ourselves, again.

Exit Murderer

11 - Banquo, Macbeth, (Fleance)

→ Create a solution if you want to do the scene without Fleance!

Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing 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!

Enter MACBETH

Give me my sword.

Who's there?

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 offices.

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

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
I shall be counsell'd.

MACBETH

Good repose the while!

BANQUO

Thanks, sir: the like to you!

Exeunt BANQUO and FLEANCE

MACBETH

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-oppresed brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.

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

12 - Lennox, Ross

Enter LENNOX and Ross

LENNOX

only, I say,

Things have been strangely borne. The

gracious Duncan

Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he was dead:

And the right-valiant Banquo walk'd too late;

Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance kill'd,

For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.

Who cannot want the thought how monstrous

It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain

To kill their gracious father? damned 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?

Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too;

For 'twould have anger'd any heart alive

To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,

He has borne all things well: and I do think

That had he Duncan's sons under his key--

As, an't please heaven, he shall not--they

should find

What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.

But, peace! for from broad words and 'cause he fail'd

His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear

Macduff lives in disgrace: sir, can you tell

Where he bestows himself?

Ross

The son of Duncan,

From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth

Lives in the English court, and is received

Of the most pious Edward with such grace

That the malevolence of fortune nothing

Takes from his high respect: thither Macduff

Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid

To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward:

That, by the help of these, we may again

Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,

Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,

Lennox

I'll send my prayers with him.

Exeunt

13 - Macbeth, Lady Macbeth

MACBETH

We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honour'd me of late;

LADY MACBETH

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd 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.

MACBETH

Prithee, peace:

LADY MACBETH

Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would,'
Like the poor cat i' the adage?¹

MACBETH

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;
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 pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

¹ The cat would eat fyshe,
and would net wet her feete

MACBETH

If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH

We fail!

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep
his two chamberlains will I with wine so convince
That memory shall be a fume
when in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lie as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
The unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?

MACBETH

Thy undaunted mettle...

When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers..

LADY MACBETH

Who dares receive it other,
As that they have done't?

MACBETH

I am settled.

Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

Exeunt

Monolog - Lady Macbeth

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way.
Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
And chastise with the valour of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crown'd withal.
The king comes here to-night...
The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
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;*)
Come to my woman's breasts,
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,
Wherever in your sightless substances
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.

Monolog Ross

Enter ROSS

ROSS

Twoscore 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.

Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,

Threaten his bloody stage: by the clock, 'tis day,

And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp:

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.

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

Turn'd wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,

'Tis said they eat each other.

Here comes the good Macduff.

Enter MACDUFF

How goes the world, sir, now?

Monolog - Captain

Doubtful it stood,
As two spent swimmers that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald
with terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict,
from the Western Isles
And Fortune, on his damnèd quarrel smiling,
Showed like a rebel's whore:

But all's too weak;
For brave Macbeth
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
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.

But I am faint. My gashes cry for help.

Monolog - MACBETH

This supernatural soliciting
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
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings:
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man
that function is smother'd in surmise,
and nothing is but what is not.
If chance will have me king, why, chance may
crown me,
Without my stir.
Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.