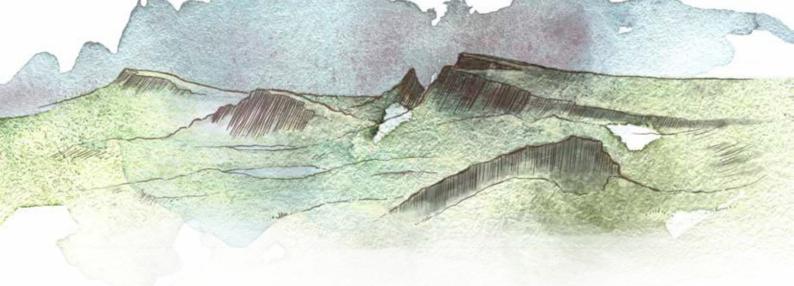


Written by: William Shakespeare Adapted by: Janys Chambers Art Director: Nick Price Produced by: Turnip Starfish Limited







Scenes For You To Perform

Here are five scenes from Macbeth for you to act out. (If you're at home, you'll need at least one other person from your family or friends to do these.)

Act 1, Scene 1: The three Witches plan to meet Macbeth – (short, 3 actors)

Act 1, Scene 3: Macbeth and Banquo meet the three Witches – (5 actors)

Act 2, Scene 2: Macbeth and Lady Macbeth try to murder the King (2 actors)

Act 5, Scene 1: A Lady-in-waiting and a Doctor watch Lady Macbeth sleep-walk – (3 actors)

Act 5, Scene 5: A messenger gives bad news to Macbeth – (short, 2 actors)



How To Go About Rehearsals

1. How Do We Start?

Before you do anything – sit down and read through the scenes aloud together several times, and make sure everyone understands everything.

2. How Should We Hand Out Parts?

Important rule: anyone can play anything in the theatre. Actors of any gender can play any character and can also, using bodies and voices imaginatively, portray anything else: scenery, furniture, doors, animals, weather...

Start with people saying which parts they would like to play, and if there is any clash or disagreement, try and talk it through, or failing all else, toss a coin.





3. How Do We Tackle The Strange Language?

Words have changed a lot since Shakespeare's day. Think how many new words you know that have only appeared in the last few years – and then multiply them x 400 years. Words have changed their meaning or spelling; some have disappeared altogether; new ones have been invented. This can make Shakespeare's language hard to read and understand. You have to look words up as if they were written in another language, like French – but it's worth doing because Shakespeare's writing is so fantastic.

To help you, I've done the 'looking up' for you and listed the meanings of some of the most difficult words. (You can see these in the margins). Occasionally I've changed a difficult word for an easier one or even jumped a few difficult lines, whilst trying to keep the rhythm of the whole thing. Rhythm is very important in Shakespeare. I've also modernised the spelling and punctuation of the scenes; and added a few stage directions. Just have a go – it's easier than you think!

4. Where Should We Rehearse And Perform Our Scenes?

If you're at school, you can rehearse and perform in the hall or even a classroom, if you can clear enough space (and your teacher agrees.) If you're at home, you can rehearse and perform in your bedroom or living-room. Don't worry about the space being small. Sometimes restrictions can make actors work more imaginatively.

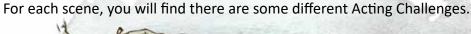
It might be a good idea to create your scenes indoors, but when they're ready, try staging final rehearsals and the performance itself of any outdoor scenes actually outdoors - in the school-field or yard, or in the garden or back-yard if you're at home. (Or maybe even go to the local Park – take an adult.) Of course it depends on the weather. And be careful – it's harder to focus outside, and the wind can carry people's voices away. Acting outdoors needs very big voices.

If you perform your outdoor scenes outside, you can still perform your indoor ones inside. The audience can travel from outdoors to indoors with you (if it's not too far). When the performance travels like this, it's called a 'promenade performance'.

5. How Can We Bring Our Scenes Alive?

Go through the scenes several times, over and over. Does your character want to move at any point? Creating moves and physical actions will help to make your scene 'live', but don't add these randomly; only move or do something when your character really wants to; then go for it - be bold.

And when you are supposed to stand still, try and stand very still. Don't shift your feet about or fiddle with your hair. Stillness makes you look powerful and allows your audience to concentrate on what you're saying.











Act 1, Scene 1 – Acting Challenges

- 1. <u>Create The Characters Of The Witches.</u> Think about these questions: are they really Witches, or just human beings out to make mischief? What do they look like? (In a later scene, Banquo says they look like women but with beards, but what are their other features?) Do they all look the same, or different? We know they sometimes speak in rhyming, or nearly rhyming, couplets (pairs of lines) but what are their voices like? Different, or all the same? How old are the Witches ageless, or different ages, or the same age? Is there a 'Boss Witch' or a 'Junior Witch'? How do the Witches move?
- 2. <u>Create A Dramatic Entrance And Exit.</u> How can the Witches make a dramatic entrance? Do they jump onstage from somewhere high? Run or spin on, quickly? Hobble on slowly? Make a sound as they enter? Do they exit in the same way that they come on, or differently?
- 3. <u>Create Atmosphere.</u> People in Shakespeare's day believed Witches were real and were frightened of them, so Shakespeare wanted his opening scene to be frightening. What can you do to make your scene atmospheric?
- 4. <u>Create Sound Effects.</u> Shakespeare wanted the scene to start with a thunderstorm effect. How can you create this? By using musical instruments or other objects, sheets of card, your voices? Can you create sound effects for anything else in the scene e.g. the cat, or the toad?_
- 5. <u>Create Clear Story-Telling For The Audience</u>. The Witches give important information in the scene: about the strange weather; that there's been a battle; that 'nothing is what it seems'; that they're going to meet Macbeth, whose name is spoken here for the first time in the play. What can you as actors do with your voices to make the information, and the story, clear?





Act 1, Scene 1

A DESERT PLACE* (deserted)

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING. THREE WITCHES ENTER.

FIRST WITCH When shall we three meet again

In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH When the hurlyburly's done,* (chaos is over)

When the battle's lost and won.

THIRD WITCH That will be 'ere the set of sun. * ('ere, pronounced like 'air', means 'before')

FIRST WITCH Where the place?

SECOND WITCH Upon the heath.* (moor)

THIRD WITCH There to meet with Macbeth.

FIRST WITCH I come, Graymalkin!* (her pet cat)

SECOND WITCH Paddock* calls. (her pet toad)

THIRD WITCH Anon.* (soon)

ALL Fair is foul, and foul is fair:* (good is bad and bad is good)









Act 1, Scene 3 – Acting Challenges

- 1. <u>Create The Characters Of Macbeth And Banquo.</u> Remember both of these characters are Lords but they are also soldiers; high-ranking Generals. How can you show this? How, for example, do they stand, or walk? They've just won a great battle, so they must be feeling triumphant but exhausted. How might they show this as they enter? They are also old friends. How can you show this in the scene?
- 2. <u>Create A Surprise Entrance.</u> In Shakespeare's day the Witches would have made their 'magical' appearance in this scene through a trap-door which you probably don't have! How can you make an entrance that will surprise both Macbeth and Banquo, and the audience?
- 3. <u>Make Clear Macbeth And Banquo's Reactions To The Prophecy.</u> How do the two characters react to the Witches' prophecy? Are their reactions different? Who is the most frightened or amazed? Who listens most to the actual words spoken by the Witches, and seems the most excited by them? What can you do as actors to show these different reactions?
- 4. <u>Create The Movement Of The Witches.</u> When the Witches speak to Macbeth and Banquo, it is not an ordinary conversation. There is a pattern: they speak in strict order; they repeat words; they speak in riddles; they reverse sentences. Can you find a pattern of physical movements for the Witches that mirrors or complements the pattern of the words?
- 5. Create The Witches' Exit. The Witches have to 'vanish.' How can they do this?







Act 1, Scene 3

ENTER MACBETH AND BANQUO IN RATHER MIXED WEATHER.

MACBETH So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BANQUO How far is it called to Forres?* (how far is it supposed to be to Forres, where the

King's camp is?)

(THE WITCHES APPEAR)

What are these

So withered and so wild in their attire,

That look not like the inhabitants of the earth, And yet are on it? (TO THE WITCHES) Are you living?

Are you anything that man may question?

(THE WITCHES PUT THEIR FINGERS ON THEIR LIPS)

You seem to understand me,

By each at once her choppy* finger laying (chapped)

Upon her skinny lips. You should be women, And yet your beards forbid me to believe

That you are so.

MACBETH Speak, if you can. What are you?

FIRST WITCH All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!* (Lord of Glamis, pronounced

'Glarms')

SECOND WITCH All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee,* Thane of Cawdor! (you)

THIRD WITCH All hail, Macbeth, thou shall be King hereafter!* (you shall be King in the future)

BANQUO (TO MACBETH)

Good sir, why do you start;* and seem to fear (jump)

Things that do sound so fair?

(TO THE WITCHES)
In the name of truth,

Are you fantastical, or that indeed,

Which outwardly you show?* My noble partner (which you look on the outside)

You greet with present grace* and great prediction (title)
That he seems rapt* with it: to me you speak not. (riveted)

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 begs nor fears

Your favours or 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 shall get kings, though thou be none.* (You shall be the father of Kings, though

you won't be one)

So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

FIRST WITCH Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACBETH Stay,* you unclear speakers, tell me more: (wait)

By my father'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

Stands not within the prospect* of belief, (possibility)

No more than to be Cawdor. Say from where

You get this strange intelligence?* or why (information)

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way

With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge* you. (command)

THE WITCHES VANISH.

BANQUO The earth has bubbles, as the water has,

And these are of them. Whither* are they vanished?(where)

MACBETH Into the air; and what seemed corporal* melted (like bodies)

As breath into the wind. Would* they had stayed! (if only)

BANQUO Were such things here as we do speak about?

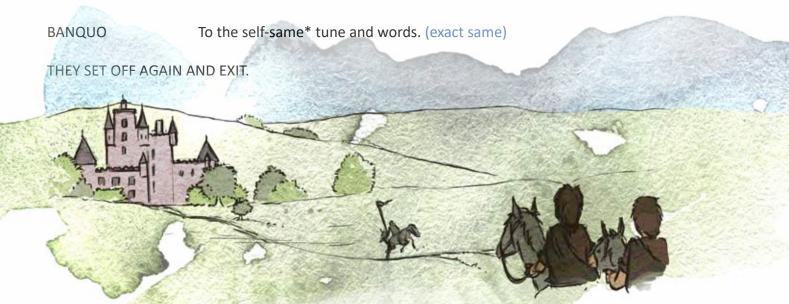
Or have we eaten on the insane root* (trance-making herb)

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?







Acting Challenges – Act 2, Scene 2

- 1. <u>Build Lady Macbeth's Character.</u> Find and list all the clues to Lady Macbeth's state of mind in Scene 2. She changes several times in her attitude to both the murder and to Macbeth in the course of it. Mark where the changes occur, so you can make sure the character is not just the same all the way through the scene, but goes on a 'journey'.
- 2. <u>Create The Sound Effects Needed In The Scene</u>. This scene requires the sound of an owl, and of an increasingly agitated knocking on a huge heavy castle gate. How best can you achieve these effects?
- 3. <u>Build Macbeth's Character.</u> Find and list all the clues to Macbeth's state of mind in Scene 2. How is it different to his wife's? He, like his wife, changes as the scene goes on. Track how and when he changes, so his journey has a shape to it and he is not the same all the way through the scene.
- 4. <u>Create The Blood Effect Needed In The Scene.</u> Obviously 'stage blood' could be bought for this scene, but the school, or you as actors, may not have the budget for this. How else can you solve this? A low budget can often lead to great inventiveness! If you use any sort of liquid or make-up, you need to check skin allergies and safety. Are there any other interesting solutions?
- 5. <u>Find The Moment When Lady Macbeth Take The Daggers From Macbeth.</u> It is not clear in her speech exactly when she takes them from him when is the most truthful and effective place for her to do it? In the middle of the speech or at the end of it? On which line? Professional actors make decisions like these with care.







Act 2, Scene 2

IT IS THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT. LADY MACBETH, FULLY DRESSED, WAITS FOR MACBETH IN THE INNER COURTYARD OF THE CASTLE. HE IS INSIDE THE CASTLE, MURDERING THE KING.

LADY MACBETH That which has made them drunk has made me bold;

What has quenched them has given me fire. (SHE THINKS SHE HEARS SOMETHING)

Hark! (AN OWL HOOTS) Peace!

It was the owl that shrieked. He is about it:

The doors are open; and the surfeited* guards (drugged)

Do mock their charge* with snores: I have drugged (make a mockery of their re-

sponsibility)

their possets,* (hot drinks of milk and wine)

That death and nature do contend about them,* (are in competition over them)

Whether they live or die.

MACBETH (FROM INSIDE. HE THINKS HE'S HEARD A VOICE) Who's there? What, ho!

LADY MACBETH Alas, I am afraid they have awaked,

And 'tis not done. The attempt, and not the deed

Condemns us. Hark! (LISTENS) I laid their daggers ready;

He could not miss them. Had he not resembled

My father as he slept, I had done it.

MACBETH ENTERS, HOLDING DAGGERS, COVERED IN BLOOD.

My husband!

MACBETH I have done the deed. Didst thou* not hear a noise? (you)

LADY MACBETH I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.

Did not you speak?

MACBETH When?

LADY MACBETH Now.

MACBETH As I descended?* (came downstairs)

LADY MACBETH Aye.

MACBETH Hark!

Who lies in the second chamber?* (bedroom)

LADY MACBETH

Donalbain.* (The King's younger son)

MACBETH (LOOKING AT HIS HANDS) This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.





MACBETH (TALKING ABOUT WHAT HE THINKS HE'S HEARD)

Someone did laugh in his sleep; someone cried 'Murder!' So they did wake each other; I stood and heard them. But then they said their prayers, and settled them

Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH There are two lodged* together. (staying)

MACBETH One cried 'God bless us!' and 'Amen' the other;

As if they saw me with these hangman's hands. Listening to their fear, I could not say 'Amen,'

When they did say 'God bless us!'

LADY MACBETH Consider it not so deeply.* (Don't worry about it so much)

MACBETH But wherefore* could not I pronounce 'Amen'? (why)

I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'

Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH These things must not be thought

Of in this way; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more!

Macbeth does murder sleep', the innocent sleep-

LADY MACBETH What do you mean?

MACBETH The voice 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, (like that)

You do unbend your noble strength, to think So brainsickly of things. Go get some water, And wash this filthy witness from your hand.

(SHE SUDDENLY REALISES HE IS HOLDING THE DAGGERS)

Why did you bring these daggers from the place? They must lie there. Go carry them; and smear

The sleepy guards with blood.

MACBETH I'll go no more:

I am afraid to think what I have done;

Look on it again I dare not.

LADY MACBETH Infirm* of purpose! (weak)

Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead

Are but as pictures. It is the eye of childhood * (only the imagination of children)

That fears a painted devil.* If he does bleed, (a picture – even of a devil)

I'll paint the faces of the grooms with it;

For it must seem their guilt.





SHE EXITS WITH THE DAGGERS. THERE IS A KNOCKING AT THE CASTLE GATE.

MACBETH What is that knocking?

How is it with me, when every noise appals me?

(HE LOOKS AT HIS HANDS)

What hands are here? Ha! They pluck out mine eyes.* (my hands pull my eyes onto

'stalks' – also make me want to pull my eyes out)

Will all great Neptune's* ocean wash this blood (god of the sea)

Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather Turn multitudinous seas incarnadine,* (crimson)

Making the green sea red.* (if I tried to wash the red blood off my hands in the

green sea, I would instead turn the sea red)

LADY MACBETH RE-ENTERS WITHOUT THE DAGGERS. HER HANDS ARE NOW COVERED IN BLOOD.

LADY MACBETH My hands are of your colour; but I shame* (would be ashamed)

To wear a heart so white.

THERE IS A KNOCKING AT THE CASTLE GATE.

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

Has left you unattended.* (firmness has deserted you)

THERE IS MORE KNOCKING.

Hark! more knocking.

Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,* (in case anything happens) And shows us to be watchers.* Be not lost (shows we are up and awake)

So poorly in your thoughts.

MACBETH To know my deed, it is best not know myself.* (to face up to my deed, it is best if I

don't face up to the fact that I did it)

THERE IS MORE KNOCKING STILL.

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst! (I wish you could)









Act 5, Scene 1 – Acting Challenges

- 1. <u>Create A Night-Time Atmosphere.</u> How can you as actors show that it is the dead of night? Think about how the two 'watchers' move and how they talk.
- 2. <u>Create Their Hiding-Place.</u> Where and how can the Doctor and the Gentlewoman (or Lady-in-waiting) hide to watch Lady Macbeth?
- 3. <u>Create Convincing Sleep-Walking.</u> How can you make it look as if Lady Macbeth is walking in her sleep? How does she move? Does she move in the same way that she does when she is awake? Or not? What is her eye focus like? How does she speak? Does she speak as she normally does, or differently?
- 4. <u>Speaking In Quotations</u>. Whilst she is sleep-walking, Lady Macbeth quotes several things she's said in the past, on several different occasions, some of them to Macbeth. Work out which lines belong to which time. Which sentences come from the past (and from which occasion exactly) and which are spoken in the present? Which things are said to Macbeth and which are said to herself? How can the actor playing Lady Macbeth make these different jumbled memories and feelings clear?
- 5. <u>Create Clear Characters For The Doctor And The Gentlewoman.</u> The Doctor and the Gentlewoman are very different characters. List the clues that you can find about each of them in the scene. What are the main differences between them? What are their ages, do you think? How are they affected by their different jobs and their different relationships to the Queen? What are their different attitudes to the sleep-walking, and why are they different?







Act 5, Scene 1

NIGHT-TIME. A DOCTOR AND GENTLEWOMAN ENTER A CASTLE CHAMBER.

DOCTOR I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive* (see) no truth in your report.

When was it she last walked?

GENTLEWOMAN Since His Majesty went into the field,* (has called his army together) I have seen her

rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet,* (desk) take out paper, fold it, write upon it, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed;

yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

DOCTOR A great perturbation* (disturbance) in nature, to receive at once the benefit of

sleep, and do the effects of watching! In this slumbery 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 it is most meet* (right) you should.

GENTLEWOMAN Neither to you nor anyone; having no witness to confirm my speech.

ENTER LADY MACBETH, IN HER NIGHTDRESS, HOLDING A CANDLE.

Look you, here she comes! This is her very guise;* (look) 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.

LADY MACBETH RUBS AT HER HANDS.

DOCTOR What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

GENTLEWOMAN It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus* (in this way) 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. I will set* (write) down what comes from her, to satisfy my re-

membrance the more strongly.

HE MAKES SOME NOTES.





LADY MACBETH Out, damned spot! Out, I say! (SHE LISTENS) One; two; why, then, 'tis time to do it.

Hell is murky! Fie,* (expression of disgust, like 'tut tut') my lord, fie! a soldier, and afraid? What need we fear who knows it,* (know the truth) 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* (notice) that?

LADY MACBETH The Thane of Fife* (Macduff) had a wife: where is she now?

What, will these hands never be clean? No more of that, my lord, no more of that:

you spoil all with this starting.* (nervous jumping)

DOCTOR (TO THE GENTLEWOMAN) Go to, go to* (let's go). 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: 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.* (even

to be the Queen)

DOCTOR Well, well, well-

GENTLEWOMAN Pray God it be, sir.* (yes, I hope all will be well)

DOCTOR This disease is beyond my practice. Yet I have known those who 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, Ban-

quo's buried; he cannot come out of his grave.

DOCTOR Even that?

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!

LADY MACBETH EXITS, STILL SLEEP-WALKING.

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 (tell) their secrets;

More needs she the divine* (God) than a physician.* (doctor)

God, God forgive us all! Look after her;

Remove from her the means of all annoyance,* (things she might use to harm her-

self)

And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night.

My mind she has mated, * (defeated) and amazed my sight.

I think, but dare not speak.

GENTLEWOMAN

Good night, good doctor.

THEY EXIT.







Act 5, Scene 5 – Acting Challenges

- 1. <u>Create The Beginning To The Scene.</u> What is Macbeth doing if anything, at the start of the scene? He knows Malcolm's Army is close (although the Witches' latest prophecy has made him feel invincible). But he's also just been told his wife has died. He doesn't ask how, so does he care? What he is thinking? How can you begin the scene excitingly to draw in the audience?
- 2. <u>Create The Messenger's Status.</u> What can the actor playing the Messenger do to show that this character is low status; a servant in a King's presence?
- 3. <u>Create The Messenger's Character.</u> Decide why the Messenger hesitates before telling the King about Birnham Wood. Is it to do with his feelings about what he's seen or his feelings about the King or both? What are his feelings about both of these things? How can you as an actor make these clear?
- 4. <u>Create An Action For Macbeth.</u> Decide what Macbeth does physically (if anything) when he shouts "Liar and slave" at the Messenger.
- 5. <u>Create Two Exits</u>. Create an interesting exit for the Messenger. When should he exit. Before or after Macbeth? And how does he exit? Does he run, walk, crawl, bow, sneer his way out? Create an exciting exit for Macbeth. How does he feel at the end of the scene? Undefeated, or scared? What is he doing as he leaves and how does he look?







Act 5, Scene 5

INSIDE THE CASTLE. MALCOLM'S ARMY IS GETTING CLOSE AND MACBETH HAS HIS ARMOUR BESIDE HIM READY TO PUT ON. THE MESSENGER ENTERS

MACBETH Thou comest to use thy* tongue; thy story quickly. (your)

MESSENGER Gracious my lord,

I should report that which I say I saw,

But know not how to do it.

MACBETH Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER As I did stand my watch upon the hill,

I looked toward Birnam, and anon,* methought, (soon)

The wood began to move.

MACBETH Liar and slave!

MESSENGER Let me endure your anger, if it be not so:

Within this three miles, may you see it coming;

I say, a moving grove.* (wood)

MACBETH If thou speaks false,

Upon the next tree shall thou hang alive,

Till famine* kills you! If thy speech be sooth,* (starvation) (truth)

I care not if you do as much for me.

THE MESSENGER EXITS.

"Fear not, till Birnam wood

Do come to Dunsinane"; and now a wood

Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!* (put on my armour and go)

If this which he avouches* does appear, (vows to be true)

There is no flying hence nor tarrying* here. (flying from here or waiting here)

I begin to be a-weary of the sun,

And wish the state of the world was now undone.
Ring the alarm-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack!* (ruin)

At least we'll die with harness on our back.

HE EXITS.





