

3.1

Enter BANQUO

BANQUO Thou hast it now: King, Cawdor, Glamis, all
As the weird women promised; and I fear
Thou played'st most foully for't. Yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,¹
But that myself should be the root and father

2. Mounting to her highest point in the sky before swooping down.
3. An owl that usually feeds on mice.
4. What good could they expect to gain from the murder?
5. Ancient royal city where Scottish Kings were invested

- with the ceremonial symbols of authority.
6. Iona, the burial place of Scottish Kings.
 7. Macduff is the Thane of Fife.
 - 3.1 Location: The royal palace at Forres.
 1. It should not pass to your descendants.

- Of many kings. If there come truth from them—
 As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine°—
 Why by the verities on thee made good
 May they not be my oracles as well,
 10 And set me up in hope? But hush, no more.
Sennet° sounded. Enter MACBETH as King, LADY MAC-
BETH as Queen, LENNOX, ROSS, lords, and attendants
 MACBETH Here's our chief guest.
 LADY MACBETH If he had been forgotten
 It had been as a gap in our great feast,
 And all-thing° unbecoming.
 MACBETH [to BANQUO] Tonight we hold a solemn° supper, sir,
 And I'll request your presence.
 15 BANQUO Let your highness
 Command upon me, to the which my duties
 Are with a most indissoluble tie
 For ever knit.
 MACBETH Ride you this afternoon?
 20 BANQUO Ay, my good lord.
 MACBETH We should have else desired your good advice,
 Which still° hath been both grave° and prosperous,
 In this day's council; but we'll talk tomorrow.
 Is't far you ride?
 25 BANQUO As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
 Twixt this and supper. Go not my horse the better,²
 I must become a borrower of the night
 For a dark hour or twain.
 MACBETH Fail not our feast.
 30 BANQUO My lord, I will not.
 MACBETH We hear our bloody cousins are bestowed°
 In England and in Ireland, not confessing
 Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
 With strange invention.° But of that tomorrow,
 35 When therewithal we shall have cause of state
 Craving us jointly.³ Hie you to horse. Adieu,
 Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?
 BANQUO Ay, my good lord. Our time does call upon 's.
 MACBETH I wish your horses swift and sure of foot,
 40 And so I do commend° you to their backs.
 Farewell. *Exit BANQUO*
 Let every man be master of his time
 Till seven at night. To make society
 The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
 45 Till supper-time alone. While° then, God be with you.
Exeunt [all but MACBETH and a SERVANT]
 Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men
 Our pleasure?
 SERVANT They are, my lord, without° the palace gate.
 MACBETH Bring them before us. *Exit SERVANT*
 To be thus is nothing
 50 But to be safely thus.⁴ Our fears in° Banquo

2. If my horse does not go faster than I expect.

3. *cause . . . jointly*: state business demanding our joint attention.4. *To be thus . . . thus*: To be a King is no good unless one can reign in safety ("thus" refers to "King").

Stick^o deep, and in his royalty of nature^o
 Reigns that which would be feared. 'Tis much he dares,
 And to^o that dauntless temper of his mind
 He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valour
 55 To act in safety. There is none but he
 Whose being I do fear, and under him
 My genius^o is rebuked as, it is said,⁵
 Mark Antony's was by Caesar.^o He chid the sisters
 When first they put the name of king upon me,
 60 And bade them speak to him. Then, prophet-like,
 They hailed him father to a line of kings.
 Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
 And put a barren sceptre in my grip,
 Thence to be wrenched with^o an unlineal hand,
 65 No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
 For Banquo's issue have I filed^o my mind,
 For them the gracious^o Duncan have I murdered,
 Put rancours^o in the vessel of my peace
 Only for them, and mine eternal jewel^o
 70 Given to the common enemy of man^o
 To make them kings, the seeds of Banquo kings.
 Rather than so, come fate into the list^o
 And champion me to th'utterance.⁶ Who's there?
Enter Servant and two MURDERERS
 [To the Servant] Now go to the door, and stay there till we call.
Exit Servant
 75 Was it not yesterday we spoke together?
 MURDERERS It was, so please your highness.
 MACBETH Well then, now
 Have you considered of my speeches? Know
 That it was he in the times past which held you
 So under^o fortune, which you thought had been
 80 Our innocent self. This I made good to you
 In our last conference, passed in probation^o with you
 How you were borne in hand,^o how crossed,^o the instruments,⁷
 Who wrought with them, and all things else that might
 To half a soul, and to a notion crazed,⁸
 Say 'Thus did Banquo'.
 85 FIRST MURDERER You made it known to us.
 MACBETH I did so, and went further, which is now
 Our point of second meeting. Do you find
 Your patience so predominant in your nature
 That you can let this go? Are you so gosselled⁹
 90 To pray for this good man and for his issue,
 Whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave
 And beggared yours^o for ever?
 FIRST MURDERER We are men, my liege.
 MACBETH Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,
 As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
 95 Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves¹ are clept^o

Prick / natural nobility

added to

*tutelary spirit
Octavius Caesar*

by

*defiled
full of grace
bitterness
soul
(the devil)*

arena

out of favor with

*reviewed the proof
deceived / thwarted*

your family

called

5. Said by Plutarch. Shakespeare paraphrases him in *Antony and Cleopatra* (2.3).
 6. And fight with me in single combat to the death.
 7. Agents.
 8. Even to a half-wit or to a crazed mind.
 9. Imbued with the gospel spirit.
 1. Shaggy lapdogs, water dogs (for fowling), and cross-breeds between wolf and dog.

- All by the name of dogs. The valued file²
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper,^o the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed;^o whereby he does receive
Particular addition from the bill
That writes them all alike.³ And so of men.
Now, if you have a station^o in the file,
Not i'th' worst rank of manhood, say't,
And I will put that business in your bosoms
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.
- 105
SECOND MURDERER I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Hath so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.
- FIRST MURDERER And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugged with^o fortune,
That I would set^o my life on any chance
To mend it or be rid on't.
- 115 MACBETH Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.
- MURDERERS True, my lord.
MACBETH So is he mine, and in such distance^o
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life;⁴ and though I could
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch^o it, yet I must not,
For^o certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail^o his fall
Who I myself struck down. And thence it is
That I to your assistance do make love,^o
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.
- 120
125 SECOND MURDERER We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.
- FIRST MURDERER Though our lives—
MACBETH Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most
I will advise you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o'th' time,
The moment on't;⁵ for't must be done tonight,
And something^o from the palace; always thought^o
That I require a clearness;⁶ and with him,
To leave no rubs^o nor botches in the work,
Fleance, his son, that keeps him company—
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's—must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart.⁷
I'll come to you anon.

2. List specifying the value of the cataloged items.
3. *Particular . . . alike*: Distinction apart from a catalog
that lists them indiscriminately.
4. My most vital part, the heart.

5. *Acquaint . . . on't*: I will give you full and precise
instructions as to when it is to be done.
6. A clearance (from suspicion).
7. Make up your minds privately.

watchdog

enclosed

position

mauled by
risk

enmity

warrant
Because of
must bewail

I crave your aid

at some distance / remember

flows

140 MURDERERS We are resolved, my lord.
 MACBETH I'll call upon you straight. Abide within.

[*Exeunt* MURDERERS]

It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight,
 If it find heaven, must find it out tonight.

Exit

3.2

Enter LADY [MACBETH] and a SERVANT

LADY MACBETH Is Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.

LADY MACBETH Say to the King I would attend his leisure
 For a few words.

5 SERVANT Madam, I will.

Exit

LADY MACBETH Naught's had, all's spent,
 Where our desire is got without content.^o

'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
 Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

happiness

Enter MACBETH

10 How now, my lord, why do you keep alone,
 Of sorriest^o fancies your companions making,
 Using^o those thoughts which should indeed have died
 With them they think on? Things without all remedy
 Should be without regard.^o What's done is done.

most wretched

Entertaining

15 MACBETH We have scorched^o the snake, not killed it.
 She'll close^o and be herself, whilst our poor malice
 Remains in danger of her former tooth.¹

not considered

slashed

heal

But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,²
 Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep

20 In the affliction of these terrible dreams
 That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
 Whom we to gain our peace have sent to peace,
 Than on the torture^o of the mind to lie
 In restless ecstasy.^o Duncan is in his grave.

rack

frenzy

25 After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.
 Treason has done his worst. Nor steel nor poison,
 Malice domestic, foreign levy,³ nothing
 Can touch him further.

LADY MACBETH Come on, gentle my lord,
 Sleek o'er your rugged looks, be bright and jovial
 Among your guests tonight.

30 MACBETH So shall I, love,
 And so I pray be you. Let your remembrance
 Apply^o to Banquo. Present him eminence^o
 Both with eye and tongue; unsafe the while that we
 Must lave our honours in these flattering streams⁴
 And make our faces visors^o to our hearts,
 Disguising what they are.

Be given / favor

masks

LADY MACBETH You must leave this.

MACBETH O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
 Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance lives.

3.2 Location: The palace.

1. *our . . . tooth*: we remain in danger of her fangs, which are as dangerous as they were before she was slashed.

poor malice: weak enmity.

2. Let the universe fall apart, and heaven and earth

suffer destruction.

3. An army levied abroad against Scotland.

4. *unsafe . . . streams*: we are unsafe at present, so we must make our reputations look clean by flattering others; we are unsafe as long as we must flatter.

- LADY MACBETH But in them nature's copy's⁵ not eterne.⁶ everlasting
- 40 MACBETH There's comfort yet, they are assailable.
Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
His cloistered⁶ flight, ere to black Hecate's summons restricted
The shard-borne⁶ beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal,⁷ there shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.
- 45 LADY MACBETH What's to be done?
MACBETH Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,⁸
Till thou applaud the deed.—Come, seeling⁹ night,
Scarf up⁹ the tender eye of pitiful day, Blindfold
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond⁹ (Banquo's lease on life)
50 Which keeps me pale. Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wing to th' rooky⁹ wood. full of rooks
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
55 Thou marvell'st at my words; but hold thee still.
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.
So prithee go with me. Exeunt

3.3

Enter three MURDERERS

- FIRST MURDERER [to THIRD MURDERER] But who did bid thee
join with us?
- THIRD MURDERER Macbeth.
- SECOND MURDERER [to FIRST MURDERER] He needs not our mis-
trust, since he delivers
Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.¹
- FIRST MURDERER [to THIRD MURDERER] Then stand with us.
5 The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.
Now spurs the lated⁵ traveller apace belated
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
10 That are within the note of expectation⁶ list of expected guests
Already are i'th' court.
- FIRST MURDERER His horses go about.²
- THIRD MURDERER Almost a mile; but he does usually,
So all men do, from hence to th' palace gate
Make it their walk.
- Enter BANQUO and FLEANCE with a torch*
- SECOND MURDERER [aside] A light, a light.
- THIRD MURDERER [aside] 'Tis he.
- 15 FIRST MURDERER [aside] Stand to't.

5. Lease on life (a copyhold lease was subject to cancellation and therefore "not eterne"); the individual human cast from nature's mold.

6. Carried on scaly wings; born in dung ("shards").

7. Macbeth likens the beetle's humming to a bell, signaling the time for sleep.

8. Chick (term of endearment).

9. Eye-closing. Falcons' eyelids were sewn shut ("seeled") as part of their training.

3.3 Location: Near the palace.

1. *He . . . just*: We need not mistrust this man, since he knows perfectly Macbeth's instructions to us.

2. Are led (by servants) to the stables.

BANQUO It will be rain tonight.
 FIRST MURDERER Let it come down.
 [FIRST MURDERER strikes out the torch. The others attack BANQUO]
 BANQUO O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
 Thou mayst revenge.—O slave! [He dies. Exit FLEANCE]
 THIRD MURDERER Who did strike out the light?
 20 FIRST MURDERER Was't 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 [with Banquo's body]

proper thing

3.4

Banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH [as King], LADY [MACBETH as Queen], ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and attendants.
 [LADY MACBETH sits]

MACBETH You know your own degrees;° sit down. At first and last!
 The hearty welcome.

ranks; places

LORDS Thanks to your majesty.

[They sit]

MACBETH Ourself will mingle with society
 And play the humble host. Our hostess keeps her state,°
 5 But in best time we will require° her welcome.

chair of state
 request

LADY MACBETH Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends,
 For my heart speaks they are welcome.

Enter FIRST MURDERER [to the door]

MACBETH See, they encounter° thee with their hearts' thanks.
 Both sides are even. Here I'll sit, i'th' midst.

answer

10 Be large° in mirth. Anon we'll drink a measure
 The table round. [To FIRST MURDERER] There's blood upon thy face.

unrestrained

FIRST MURDERER [aside to MACBETH] 'Tis Banquo's, then.

MACBETH 'Tis better thee without than he within.²
 Is he dispatched?

15 FIRST MURDERER My lord, his throat is cut. That I did for him.

MACBETH Thou art the best o'th' cut-throats. Yet he's good
 That did the like for Fleance. If thou didst it,
 Thou art the nonpareil.°

paragon (without equal)

FIRST MURDERER Most royal sir,
 Fleance is scaped.

20 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 cabined, cribbed,° confined, bound in
 To saucy° doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

immovable
 unconstrained / surrounding
 penned up
 importunate

25 FIRST MURDERER Ay, my good lord. Safe in a ditch he bides,
 With twenty trenchèd 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,

young serpent

3.4 Location: The palace.
 1. To one and all.

2. Better on you than inside him.

- 30 No teeth for th' present. Get thee gone. Tomorrow
We'll hear ourselves^o again. *Exit [FIRST] MURDERER* confer
- LADY MACBETH My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer.^o The feast is sold entertain
That is not often vouched, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome.³ To feed^o were best at home. Mere eating
35 From thence^o the sauce to meat is ceremony, Away from home
Meeting were^o bare without it. Company would be
Enter the Ghost of Banquo, and sits in Macbeth's place
- MACBETH Sweet remembrancer.^o reminder
Now good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both.
- LENNOX May't please your highness sit?
- MACBETH Here had we now our country's honour roofed⁴
- 40 Were the graced person of our Banquo present,
Who may I rather challenge for^o unkindness accuse of
Than pity for mischance.
- ROSS His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company?
- MACBETH The table's full.
- 45 LENNOX Here is a place reserved, sir.
- MACBETH Where?
- LENNOX Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?
- MACBETH Which of you have done this?
- LORDS What, my good lord?
- MACBETH [*to the Ghost*] Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake
50 Thy gory locks at me.
- ROSS [*rising*] Gentlemen, rise. His highness is not well.
- LADY MACBETH [*rising*] Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat.
The fit is momentary. Upon a thought^o In a moment
55 He will again be well. If much you note him
You shall offend him, and extend his passion.^o prolong his suffering
Feed, and regard him not.
[*She speaks apart with MACBETH*]
- Are you a man?
- MACBETH Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.
- LADY MACBETH O proper stuff!^o mere nonsense
60 This is the very painting of your fear;
This is the air-drawn dagger⁵ which you said
Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws^o and starts, outbursts
Impostors to^o true fear, would well become compared with
A woman's story at a winter's fire
65 Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself,
Why do you make such faces? When all's done
You look but on a stool.
- MACBETH Prithee see there. Behold, look, lo—how say you?
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak, too!
70 If charnel-houses and our graves must send

3. The . . . welcome: A feast is like a purchased meal if the guests are not assured often that they are welcome.

4. All the Scottish nobility under one roof.

5. The dagger made of, or carried on, the air.

Those that we bury back, our monuments
 Shall be the maws of kites.⁶ [Exit Ghost]

LADY MACBETH What, quite unmanned in folly?

MACBETH If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH Fie, for shame!

MACBETH Blood hath been shed ere now, i'th' olden time,

75 Ere human statute purged the gentle weal;⁷
 Ay, and since, too, murders have been performed
 Too terrible for the ear. The time has been
 That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
 And there an end. But now they rise again
 80 With twenty mortal murders^o on their crowns,^o
 And push us from our stools. This is more strange
 Than such a murder is.

deadly wounds / heads

LADY MACBETH [aloud] My worthy lord,
 Your noble friends do lack you.

MACBETH I do forget.
 Do not muse^o at me, my most worthy friends.

85 I have a strange infirmity which is nothing
 To those that know me. Come, love and health to all,
 Then I'll sit down.

wonder

To an [attendant] Give me some wine. Fill full.
 Enter Ghost

I drink to th' general joy of th' whole table,
 And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss.
 90 Would he were here. To all and him we thirst,^o
 And all to all.⁸

drink

LORDS Our duties, and the pledge.^o
 [They drink]

toast

MACBETH [seeing the Ghost] Avaunt, and quit my sight! Let the
 earth hide thee.

Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold.
 Thou hast no speculation^o in those eyes
 Which thou dost glare with.

sight

95 LADY MACBETH Think of this, good peers,
 But as a thing of custom. 'Tis no other;
 Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

MACBETH What man dare, I dare.
 Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,
 100 The armed^o rhinoceros, or th' Hyrcan^o tiger;
 Take any shape but that,^o and my firm nerves^o
 Shall never tremble. Or be alive again,
 And dare me to the desert^o with thy sword.

armored
 (Banquo's) / sinews

If trembling I inhabit then,¹ protest me
 105 The baby of a girl.² Hence, horrible shadow,
 Unreal mock'ry, hence!

deserted place

[Exit Ghost]

Why so, being gone,
 I am a man again. Pray you sit still.

LADY MACBETH You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting
 With most admired^o disorder.

wondered at

6. If . . . kites: If the dead return from their graves, nothing will prevent them from being consumed by birds of prey.

7. Before human or humane (Elizabethans did not spell the two words differently) law cleansed the common-

wealth and made it peaceable.

8. All good wishes to everyone.

9. From Hyrcania, a region near the Caspian Sea.

1. If then I tremble; if, trembling, I stay indoors.

2. A baby girl; a girl's doll.

- MACBETH Can such things be
 110 And overcome° us like a summer's cloud, *pass over*
 Without our special wonder? You make me strange
 Even to the disposition that I owe,³
 When now I think you can behold such sights
 And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks
 When mine is blanched with fear.
- 115 ROSS What sights, my lord?
 LADY MACBETH I pray you, speak not. He grows worse and worse.
 Question enrages° him. At once, good night. *Talk aggravates*
 Stand not upon the order of your going,
 But go at once.⁴
- LENNOX Good night, and better health
 Attend his majesty.
- 120 LADY MACBETH A kind good-night to all. *Exeunt Lords*
 MACBETH It will have blood, they say. Blood will have blood.
 Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak,
 Augurs° and understood relations° have *Auguries*
 By maggot-pies and choughs and rooks⁶ brought forth° *revealed*
 125 The secret'st man of blood.° What is the night?⁷ *murderer*
- LADY MACBETH Almost at odds with morning, which is which.
 MACBETH How sayst thou⁸ that Macduff denies his person
 At our great bidding?
- LADY MACBETH Did you send to him, sir?
 MACBETH I hear it by the way,⁹ but I will send. *indirectly*
- 130 There's not a one of them but in his house
 I keep a servant fee'd.° I will° tomorrow,
 And betimes° I will, to the weird sisters. *paid to spy / will go*
 More shall they speak, for now I am bent° to know *early*
 By the worst means the worst. For mine own good *determined*
- 135 All causes° shall give way. I am in blood
 Stepped in so far that, should I° wade no more,⁹ *other concerns*
 Returning were° as tedious as go° o'er. *were I to / no further*
 Strange things I have in head that will to hand, *would be / going*
 Which must be acted ere they may be scanned.⁹
- 140 LADY MACBETH You lack the season° of all natures, sleep. *preservative*
 MACBETH Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse° *self-delusion*
 Is the initiate fear that wants hard use.¹
 We are yet but young in deed.° *Exeunt crime*

3.5

Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES meeting HECATE

- FIRST WITCH Why, how now, Hecate? You look angrily. *hags*
 HECATE Have I not reason, beldams° as you are?
 Saucy and over-bold, how did you dare
 To trade and traffic with Macbeth
 5 In riddles and affairs of death,
 And I, the mistress of your charms,
 The close° contriver of all harms, *secret*

3. You . . . owe: You make me a stranger to my own nature, which I had supposed brave.

4. Stand . . . once: Do not follow the order of precedence in departing, but all go at once.

5. Formerly hidden, now revealed relationships between causes and effects.

6. Magpies, traditionally sacrificed by augurers, and birds (choughs and rooks) of the crow family.

7. What time of night is it?

8. What do you think of the fact that.

9. are . . . scanned: at once, before they can be considered.

1. Is the fear of a novice who lacks toughening experience.

3.5 Location: An open place.

Was never called to bear my part
 Or show the glory of our art?—
 10 And, which is worse, all you have done
 Hath been but for a wayward son,
 Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
 Loves for his own ends, not for you.
 But make amends now. Get you gone,
 15 And at the pit of Acheron°
 Meet me i'th' morning. Thither he
 Will come to know his destiny. *river in hell*
 Your vessels and your spells provide,
 Your charms and everything beside.
 20 I am for th'air. This night I'll spend
 Unto a dismal and a fatal end.¹
 Great business must be wrought ere noon.
 Upon the corner of the moon
 There hangs a vap'rous drop profound.²
 25 I'll catch it ere it come to ground,
 And that, distilled by magic sleights,
 Shall raise such artificial sprites³
 As by the strength of their illusion
 Shall draw him on to his confusion.
 30 He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
 His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear;
 And you all know security°
 Is mortals' chiefest enemy. *overconfidence*
 SPIRITS [*singing dispersedly within*]° Come away, come away.
 35 Hecate, Hecate, come away. *offstage*
 HECATE Hark, I am called! My little spirit, see,
 Sits in a foggy cloud and stays for me.
 [*The Song*]
 40 SPIRITS [*within*] Come away, come away,⁴
 Hecate, Hecate, come away.
 HECATE I come, I come, I come, I come,
 With all the speed I may,
 With all the speed I may.
 Where's Stadlin?
 SPIRIT [*within*] Here.
 HECATE Where's Puckle?
 ANOTHER SPIRIT [*within*] Here.
 OTHER SPIRITS [*within*] And Hoppo, too, and Hellwain, too,
 45 We lack but you, we lack but you.
 Come away, make up the count.
 HECATE I will but 'noint,⁵ and then I mount.
 [*Spirits appear above. A SPIRIT LIKE A CAT descends*]
 SPIRITS [*above*] There's one comes down to fetch his dues,
 50 A kiss, a coll,^o a sip of blood,
 And why thou stay'st so long I muse,^o I muse,
 Since the air's so sweet and good. *an embrace wonder*
 HECATE O, art thou come? What news, what news?

1. Working toward a disastrous and fateful end.

2. Of deep or hidden significance; ready to fall.

3. Spirits produced by magic art.

4. The Folio only includes the first line of this song; the remaining lines, supplied here, come from a song with

the same opening words from Thomas Middleton's play *The Witch* (c. 1613). See Textual Note.

5. Anoint myself, perhaps with an ointment to enable flying.

- SPIRIT LIKE A CAT All goes still to our delight.
 Either come, or else refuse, refuse.
- 55 HECATE Now I am furnished^o for the flight. *provided*
 [She ascends with the SPIRIT and sings]
 Now I go, now I fly,
 Malkin my sweet spirit and I.
- SPIRITS and HECATE O what a dainty pleasure 'tis
 To ride in the air
 60 When the moon shines fair,
 And sing, and dance, and toy,^o and kiss. *play amorously*
 Over woods, high rocks and mountains,
 Over seas and misty fountains,
 Over steeples, towers and turrets,
 65 We fly by night 'mongst troops of spirits.
 No ring of bells to our ears sounds,
 No howls of wolves, no yelps of hounds.
 No, not the noise of waters-breach^o *breaking waves*
 Or cannons' throat our height can reach.
- 70 SPIRITS [above] No ring of bells to our ears sounds,
 No howls of wolves, no yelps of hounds.
 No, not the noise of waters-breach
 Or cannons' throat our height can reach.
 [Exeunt into the heavens the
 SPIRIT LIKE A CAT and HECATE]
- FIRST WITCH Come, let's make haste. She'll soon be back again.
 Exeunt

3.6

Enter LENNOX and another LORD

- LENNOX My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
 Which can interpret farther.¹ Only I say
 Things have been strangely borne.^o The gracious Duncan *carried on*
 Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he was dead;²
 5 And the right valiant Banquo walked too late,
 Whom you may say, if't please you, Fleance killed,
 For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
 Who cannot want the thought^o how monstrous *can help thinking*
 It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
 10 To kill their gracious father? Damnèd fact,^o *deed*
 How it did grieve Macbeth! Did he not straight
 In pious^o rage the two delinquents tear, *loyal*
 That were the slaves of drink, and thralls^o of sleep? *slaves*
 Was not that nobly done? Ay, and wisely too,
 15 For 'twould have angered 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^o please heaven, he shall not—they should find *if it*
 20 What 'twere to kill a father. So should Fleance.
 But peace, for from broad words,³ and 'cause he failed
 His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear

3.6 Location: Somewhere in Scotland.

1. My . . . farther: What I have said has coincided with your thoughts. I need not say more; you can draw your own further conclusions.

2. The . . . dead: Macbeth pitied Duncan after he was dead, but not before. of: by.

3. As a result of his plain speaking.

Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?⁴

LORD The son of Duncan

lodges

25 From whom this tyrant holds⁵ the due of birth⁶
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward⁴ with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect.⁵ Thither Macduff
30 Is gone to pray the holy King upon his aid⁶
To wake Northumberland and warlike Siward,
That by the help of these—with Him above
To ratify the work—we may again
Give to our tables meat,⁷ sleep to our nights,
35 Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives,⁶
Do faithful homage, and receive free⁷ honours,
All which we pine for now. And this report
Hath so exasperate their king⁸ that he
Prepares for some attempt of war.

withholds / birthright

in aid of Malcolm

food

exasperated (Macbeth)

40 LENNOX Sent he to Macduff?

LORD He did, and with⁹ an absolute 'Sir, not I,'
The cloudy messenger turns me his back
And hums, as who should say 'You'll rue the time
That clogs me with this answer.'⁸

on receiving

LENNOX And that well might

45 Advise him to a caution t'hold what distance
His wisdom can provide.⁹ Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country
Under a hand accursed.¹

50 LORD I'll send my prayers with him.

Exeunt

4.1

[A Cauldron.] *Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES*

FIRST WITCH Thrice the brinded¹⁰ cat hath mew'd.

brindled; streaked

SECOND WITCH Thrice, and once the hedge-pig¹⁰ whined.

hedgehog

THIRD WITCH Harpier¹⁰ cries 'Tis time, 'tis time.'

(her familiar)

FIRST WITCH Round about the cauldron go,

In the poisoned entrails throw.

Toad that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one

Sweltered venom sleeping got,¹

Boil thou first i'th' charmed pot.

10 ALL Double, double, toil and trouble,

Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

4. received . . . *Edward*: received by the saintly King Edward (Edward the Confessor, reigned 1042–1066).

5. Does not deprive Malcolm of respect.

6. Free our feasts from bloody knives.

7. Freely given; enjoyed in freedom.

8. *He did* . . . *answer*: Macduff says, "Sir, not I." The scowling ("cloudy") messenger from Macbeth turns his back and hums. His rudeness seems to say ominously, "You'll rue the time that burdens ('clogs') me with this

answer."

9. *And* . . . *provide*: Warn Macduff to keep as far from Macbeth as he can.

1. *country* . . . *accursed*: country suffering under an accursed hand.

4.1 Location: A cave with a boiling cauldron.

1. *has* . . . *got*: has for thirty-one days and nights exuded poison formed during sleep.