

4.1

[A Cauldron.] Thunder. Enter the three WITCHES

FIRST WITCH Thrice the brindled<sup>o</sup> cat hath mewed.  
 SECOND WITCH Thrice, and once the hedge-pig<sup>o</sup> whined.  
 THIRD WITCH Harpier<sup>o</sup> cries 'Tis time, 'tis time,  
 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,<sup>1</sup>  
 Boil thou first i'th' charmèd pot.

ALL Double, double, toil and trouble,  
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

brindled; streaked  
 hedgehog  
 (her familiar)

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.

- SECOND WITCH Fillet<sup>o</sup> of a fenny<sup>o</sup> snake,  
 In the cauldron boil and bake.  
 Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
 15 Wool of bat and tongue of dog,  
 Adder's fork<sup>o</sup> and blind-worm's sting,  
 Lizard's leg and owlet's wing,  
 For a charm of powerful trouble,  
 Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
- 20 ALL Double, double, toil and trouble,  
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
- THIRD WITCH Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
 Witches' mummy,<sup>o</sup> maw and gulf<sup>2</sup>  
 Of the ravined<sup>o</sup> salt-sea shark,  
 25 Root of hemlock digged i'th' dark,  
 Liver of blaspheming Jew,  
 Gall of goat, and slips of yew  
 Slivered<sup>o</sup> in the moon's eclipse,  
 Nose of Turk, and Tartar's<sup>3</sup> lips,  
 30 Finger of birth-strangled babe  
 Ditch-delivered by a drab,<sup>o</sup>  
 Make the gruel thick and slab.<sup>o</sup>  
 Add thereto a tiger's chaudron<sup>o</sup>  
 For th'ingredience of our cauldron.
- 35 ALL 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.
- Enter HECATE and the other three WITCHES*
- HECATE O, well done! I commend your pains,  
 40 And everyone shall share i'th' gains.  
 And now about the cauldron sing  
 Like elves and fairies in a ring,  
 Enchanting all that you put in.
- Music and a song*
- HECATE Black spirits and white, red spirits and grey,<sup>4</sup>  
 45 Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may.
- FOURTH WITCH Titty,<sup>5</sup> Tiffin, keep it stiff in;  
 Firedrake, Puckey, make it lucky;  
 Liard, Robin, you must bob in.
- ALL Round, around, around, about, about,  
 50 All ill come running in, all good keep out.
- FOURTH WITCH Here's the blood of a bat.  
 HECATE Put in that, O put in that!  
 FIFTH WITCH Here's leopard's bane.  
 HECATE Put in a grain.
- 55 FOURTH WITCH The juice of toad, the oil of adder.  
 FIFTH WITCH Those will make the younker<sup>o</sup> madder.  
 HECATE Put in, there's all, and rid the stench.  
 A WITCH Nay, here's three ounces of a red-haired wench.  
 60 ALL Round, around, around, about, about,  
 All ill come running in, all good keep out.

*Slice / from the swamps**forked tongue**mummified flesh  
ravenous; glutted**Cut off**whore  
viscous  
entrails**fashionable young man*

2. Stomach and gullet.

3. Both thought of as cruel pagans.

4. As in 3.5, the Folio only includes the first line of this

song; see Textual Note.

5. The proper names are the names of spirits.

SECOND WITCH By the pricking of my thumbs,  
Something wicked this way comes.

[*Knock within*]  
Open, locks, whoever knocks.  
*Enter MACBETH*

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

65 ALL THE WITCHES A deed without a name.

MACBETH I conjure you by that which you profess,<sup>o</sup>  
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me.

Though you untie the winds and let them fight  
Against the churches, though the yeasty<sup>o</sup> waves

70 Confound<sup>o</sup> and swallow navigation up,  
Though bladed corn<sup>o</sup> be lodged<sup>o</sup> and trees blown down,  
Though castles topple on their warders' heads,  
Though palaces and pyramids do slope<sup>o</sup>

75 Their heads to their foundations, though the treasure  
Of nature's germens<sup>6</sup> tumble all together  
Even till destruction sicken,<sup>o</sup> 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.

80 FIRST WITCH Pour in sow's blood that hath eaten  
Her nine farrow;<sup>o</sup> grease that's sweaten<sup>o</sup>  
From the murderer's gibbet<sup>o</sup> throw  
Into the flame.

ALL THE WITCHES Come high or low,  
Thyself and office<sup>o</sup> deftly show.  
*Thunder.* FIRST APPARITION: *an armed<sup>o</sup> head*

MACBETH Tell me, thou unknown power—  
85 FIRST WITCH He knows thy thought.

Hear his speech, but say thou naught.  
FIRST APPARITION Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth, beware Macduff,  
Beware the Thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

[*APPARITION*] *descends*  
MACBETH Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution thanks.

70 Thou hast harped<sup>o</sup> 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 Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth.  
MACBETH Had I three ears I'd hear thee.  
SECOND APPARITION Be bloody, bold, and resolute. Laugh to scorn  
The power of man, for none of woman born  
Shall harm Macbeth.

[*APPARITION*] *descends*  
MACBETH Then live, Macduff—what need I fear of thee?  
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,

*the black arts*

*foamy*  
*Defeat*

*ripe wheat / beaten down*

*bend*

*be surfeited*

*litter of nine / sweated*  
*gallows*

*function*  
*armored*

*guessed*

6. Seeds from which all nature grows. According to Renaissance theories of biology, if they were tumbled together, they would become barren or produce only monsters.

100 And take a bond of fate thou shalt not live,<sup>7</sup>  
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*<sup>8</sup>

What is this  
That rises like the issue of a king,  
And wears upon his baby-brow the round  
And top° of sovereignty?

crown

105 ALL THE WITCHES Listen, but speak not to't.  
THIRD APPARITION Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care  
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are.  
Macbeth shall never vanquished be until  
Great Birnam Wood to high Dunsinane Hill  
Shall come against him.

[APPARITION] *descends*

110 MACBETH That will never be.  
Who can impress° the forest, bid the tree  
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements,° good!  
Rebellious dead,<sup>9</sup> rise never till the wood  
Of Birnam rise, and on's high place Macbeth  
115 Shall live the lease of nature,° pay his breath  
To time and mortal custom.¹ 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?

force into service  
omens

natural life span

ALL THE WITCHES Seek to know no more.  
120 MACBETH I will be satisfied. Deny me this,  
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.  
[*The cauldron sinks.*] Hautboys  
Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise° is this?

music

FIRST WITCH Show.

SECOND WITCH Show.

125 THIRD WITCH Show.

ALL THE WITCHES 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; and BANQUO*

mirror

MACBETH Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo. Down!  
Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs. And thy hair,  
130 Thy other gold-bound brow, is like the first.  
A third is like the former. Filthy hags,  
Why do you show me this?—A fourth? Start,° eyes!  
What, will the line stretch out to th' crack of doom?  
Another yet? A seventh? I'll see no more—  
135 And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass  
Which shows me many more; and some I see  
That twofold balls and treble sceptres<sup>2</sup> carry.

Bulge out

7. By killing Macduff, Macbeth hopes to bind fate to its promise that no man of woman born shall harm Macbeth.

8. Signifying Malcolm. The tree anticipates 5.5.31ff.

9. Perhaps Banquo. Some editors emend to "Rebellious head" or "Rebellion's head," where "head" means "army."

1. The custom of mortality; natural death.  
2. James I was crowned twice, once as King of Scotland and later as King of England. He carried one orb of each coronation. "Treble sceptres" refers to the fact that he held two scepters in the English coronation and one in the Scottish, or perhaps to his claim to be King of Britain, France, and Ireland.

Horrible sight! Now I see 'tis true,  
For the blood-baltered<sup>3</sup> Banquo smiles upon me,  
And points at them for his.<sup>4</sup>

[*Exeunt kings and BANQUO*]

140 What, is this so?

HECATE Ay, sir, all this is so. But why  
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?<sup>o</sup>  
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,<sup>o</sup>  
And show the best of our delights.

*entranced  
spirits*

145 I'll charm the air to give a sound  
While you perform your antic round,<sup>o</sup>  
That this great king may kindly say  
Our duties did his welcome pay.<sup>5</sup>

*fantastic dance*

*Music. The WITCHES dance, and vanish*

150 MACBETH Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour  
Stand aye<sup>o</sup> accursèd in the calendar.  
Come in, without there.

*ever*

*Enter LENNOX*

LENNOX What's your grace's will?  
MACBETH Saw you the weird sisters?

LENNOX No, my lord.

MACBETH Came they not by you?  
LENNOX No, indeed, my lord.

155 MACBETH Infected be the air whereon they ride,  
And damned all those that trust them. I did hear  
The galloping of horse. Who was't came by?

LENNOX 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word  
Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH Fled to England?

LENNOX Ay, my good lord.

160 MACBETH [*aside*] Time, thou anticipat'st<sup>o</sup> my dread exploits.

*forestall*

The flighty purpose never is o'ertook  
Unless the deed go with it.<sup>6</sup> From this moment

The very firstlings<sup>o</sup> of my heart shall be

*first notions*

165 The firstlings<sup>o</sup> of my hand. And even now,  
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:

*first acts*

The castle of Macduff I will surprise,  
Seize upon Fife, give to th'edge o'th' sword  
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls

170 That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;  
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.

But no more sights! [*To LENNOX*] where are these gentlemen?  
come bring me where they are.

*Exeunt*

4.2

*Enter MACDUFF'S WIFE, her SON, and ROSS*

LADY MACDUFF What had he done to make him fly the land?

ROSS You must have patience, madam.

LADY MACDUFF He had none.

3. Having hair matted with blood.

4. Banquo was the legendary founder of the Stuart dynasty.

5. Our service repaid the welcome he gave us.

6. *The flighty . . . it:* The fleeting intention is never realized unless the deed is done immediately.

4.2 Location: Macduff's castle in Fife.

His flight was madness. When our actions do not,  
Our fears do make us traitors.<sup>1</sup>

ROSS You know not

5 Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

LADY MACDUFF Wisdom—to leave his wife, to leave his babes,

His mansion, and his titles<sup>o</sup> in a place

estates

From whence himself does fly? He loves us not,

lacks / affection

10 The most diminutive of birds, will fight,

Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.

All is the fear and nothing is the love;

As little is the wisdom, where the flight

So runs against all reason.

ROSS My dearest coz,<sup>o</sup>

kinswoman

15 I pray you school<sup>o</sup> yourself. But for your husband,

control

He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows

The fits o'th' season.<sup>2</sup> I dare not speak much further,

But cruel are the times when we are traitors

And do not know ourselves;<sup>3</sup> when we hold rumour

20 From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,<sup>4</sup>

But float upon a wild and violent sea

Each way and none.<sup>5</sup> I take my leave of you;

Shall<sup>o</sup> not be long but<sup>o</sup> I'll be here again.

It shall / before

25 Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward

To what they were before. My pretty cousin,<sup>o</sup>

(Macduff's son)

Blessing upon you!

LADY MACDUFF Fathered he is, and yet he's fatherless.

ROSS I am so much a fool, should I stay longer

It would be my disgrace and your discomfort.<sup>6</sup>

I take my leave at once.

Exit

30 LADY MACDUFF Sirrah, your father's dead,

And what will you do now? How will you live?

MACDUFF'S SON As birds do, mother.

LADY MACDUFF What, with worms and flies?

MACDUFF'S SON With what I get, I mean, and so do they.

LADY MACDUFF Poor<sup>o</sup> bird, thou'dst never fear the net nor lime,<sup>7</sup>

Pitiful

35 The pitfall nor the gin.<sup>o</sup>

snare

MACDUFF'S SON Why should I, mother? Poor<sup>o</sup> birds they are not

Worthless

set for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

LADY MACDUFF Yes, he is dead. How wilt thou do for a father?

MACDUFF'S SON Nay, how will you do for a husband?

40 LADY MACDUFF Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

MACDUFF'S SON Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

LADY MACDUFF Thou speak'st with all thy wit, and yet, i'faith,  
with wit enough for thee.

MACDUFF'S SON Was my father a traitor, mother?

45 LADY MACDUFF Ay, that he was.

1. *When . . . traitors*: Even when we have committed no treason, our fear of suspicion makes us behave as though we are guilty.

2. The violent convulsions of the present time; what befits the time.

3. *we . . . ourselves*: we are denounced as traitors but do not know why; we have no self-knowledge.

4. *when . . . fear*: when we believe rumors inspired by our fears, but those fears are themselves vague.

5. In every direction, and so finally in none.

6. I would disgrace myself and embarrass you by weeping (or perhaps by lingering).

7. Birdlime, a sticky substance smeared on twigs to catch small birds.

MACDUFF'S SON What is a traitor?

LADY MACDUFF Why, one that swears and lies.<sup>8</sup>

MACDUFF'S SON And be all traitors that do so?

LADY MACDUFF Everyone that does so is a traitor, and must be  
50 hanged.

MACDUFF'S SON And must they all be hanged that swear<sup>o</sup> and  
lie?

*Speak profanely*

LADY MACDUFF Every one.

MACDUFF'S SON Who must hang them?

55 LADY MACDUFF Why, the honest men.

MACDUFF'S SON Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there  
are liars and swearers enough to beat the honest men and hang  
up them.

LADY MACDUFF Now God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt  
60 thou do for a father?

MACDUFF'S SON If he were dead you'd weep for him. If you  
would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a  
new father.

LADY MACDUFF Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

*Enter a MESSENGER*

65 MESSENGER Bless you, fair dame. I am not to you known,

Though in your state of honour I am perfect.<sup>9</sup>

I doubt<sup>o</sup> some danger does approach you nearly.

If you will take a homely<sup>o</sup> man's advice,

Be not found here. Hence with your little ones!

70 To fright you thus methinks I am too savage,

To do worse to you were fell cruelty,<sup>1</sup>

Which is too nigh your person.<sup>2</sup> Heaven preserve you.

I dare abide no longer.

*Exit MESSENGER*

LADY MACDUFF Whither should I fly?

I have done no harm. But I remember now

75 I am in this earthly world, where to do harm

Is often laudable, to do good sometime

Accounted dangerous folly. Why then, alas,

80 Do I put up that womanly defence

To say I have done no harm?

*Enter MURDERERS*

What are these faces?

80 A MURDERER Where is your husband?

LADY MACDUFF I hope in no place so unsanctified

Where such as thou mayst find him.

A MURDERER

He's a traitor.

MACDUFF'S SON Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain.

85 A MURDERER [*stabbing him*]

What, you egg!

Young fry<sup>o</sup> of treachery!

MACDUFF'S SON He has killed me, mother.

*spawn*

85 Run away, I pray you.

[*He dies.*] *Exit* [MACDUFF'S WIFE] *crying* 'Murder!'

[*followed by MURDERERS with the Son's body*]

8. Takes an oath and breaks it.

9. Though I know perfectly well your high rank (an apology for bursting in).

1. To fright . . . cruelty: Even to frighten you by speaking

of such danger is savage; actually to harm you would be brutal ("fell") cruelty.

2. Such cruelty is already too near you.

## 4.3

*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<sup>o</sup> sword, and like good men *deadly*  
Bestride our downfall birthdom.<sup>1</sup> Each new morn  
5 New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows  
Strike heaven on the face that<sup>o</sup> it resounds *so that*  
As if it felt with Scotland and yelled out  
Like syllable of dolour.<sup>o</sup> *A similar cry of pain*

MALCOLM What I believe I'll wail,  
What know believe; and what I can redress,  
10 As I shall find the time to friend,<sup>o</sup> I will. *favorable*  
What you have spoke it may be so, perchance.  
This tyrant, whose sole<sup>o</sup> name blisters our tongues, *mere*  
Was once thought honest. You have loved him well.  
He hath not touched<sup>o</sup> you yet. I am young, but something *injured*  
15 You may discern of him through me:<sup>2</sup> and wisdom<sup>o</sup> *it's prudent*  
To offer up a weak poor innocent lamb  
T'appease an angry god.

MACDUFF I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM But Macbeth is.

20 A good and virtuous nature may recoil  
In an imperial charge.<sup>3</sup> But I shall crave your pardon.  
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose.<sup>o</sup> *transform*  
Angels are bright still, though the brightest<sup>o</sup> fell. *(Lucifer)*  
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,  
Yet grace must still look so.<sup>4</sup>

25 MACDUFF I have lost my hopes.<sup>5</sup>

MALCOLM Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.<sup>6</sup>  
Why in that rawness<sup>o</sup> left you wife and child, *unprotected condition*  
Those precious motives,<sup>o</sup> those strong knots of love, *inducements to devotion*  
Without leave-taking? I pray you,  
30 Let not my jealousies<sup>o</sup> be your dishonours, *suspicious*  
But mine own safeties.<sup>o</sup> You may be rightly just, *safeguards*  
Whatever I shall think.

MACDUFF Bleed, bleed, poor country!

Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis<sup>o</sup> sure, *foundation*  
For goodness dare not check thee. Wear thou thy wrongs;<sup>o</sup> *wrongful gains*  
35 The title is affeered.<sup>o</sup> Fare thee well, lord. *confirmed*  
I would not be the villain that thou think'st  
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,  
And the rich east to boot.<sup>o</sup> *as well*

MALCOLM Be not offended.

I speak not as in absolute fear<sup>o</sup> of you. *complete distrust*  
40 I think our country sinks beneath the yoke.  
It weeps, it bleeds, and each new day a gash  
Is added to her wounds. I think withal<sup>o</sup> *nonetheless*

4.3 Location: England, before King Edward's palace.

1. Stand in defense over our downtrodden native land.

2. *I . . . me*: I am inexperienced, but you might gain favor with Macbeth by betraying me. Many editions emend "discern" to "deserve."

3. *recoil . . . charge*: give way to a royal command.

4. *Though . . . so*: Though everything evil disguises itself as virtue, virtue still looks like itself.

5. Hopes of Malcolm's help in a campaign against Macbeth.

6. Doubts of Macduff's loyalty, because he has left his wife and children.



45 There would be hands uplifted in my right,  
 And here from gracious England° have I offer  
 Of goodly thousands. 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.

*the King of England*

50 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 opened° black Macbeth  
 Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state  
 55 Esteem him as a lamb, being compared  
 With my confineless° harms.

*in more various*

*Who*

*varieties  
disclosed*

MACDUFF Not in the legions  
 Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned  
 In evils to top Macbeth.

*infinite*

MALCOLM I grant him bloody,  
 Luxurious,° avaricious, false, deceitful,  
 60 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

*Lecherous  
Violent*

65 All continent° impediments would o'erbear  
 That did oppose my will. Better Macbeth  
 Than such an one to reign.

*restraining; chaste*

MACDUFF Boundless intemperance  
 In nature° is a tyranny. It hath been  
 Th'untimely emptying of the happy throne,  
 70 And fall of many kings. But fear not yet°  
 To take upon you what is yours. You may  
 Convey° your pleasures in a spacious plenty  
 And yet seem cold.° The time° you may so hoodwink.°  
 We have willing dames enough. There cannot be  
 75 That vulture in you to devour so many  
 As will to greatness dedicate themselves,  
 Finding it so inclined.

*human nature*

*nevertheless*

*Manage secretly  
indifferent / age / deceive*

MALCOLM With this there grows  
 In my most ill-composed affection° such  
 A staunchless° avarice that were I king  
 80 I should cut off the nobles for their lands,  
 Desire his jewels and this other's house,  
 And my more having would be as a sauce  
 To make me hunger more, that I should forge  
 Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,  
 Destroying them for wealth.

*character  
An insatiable*

85 MACDUFF This avarice  
 Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root  
 Than summer-seeming<sup>7</sup> lust, and it hath been  
 The sword° of our slain kings. Yet do not fear.  
 Scotland hath foisons° to fill up your will

*undoing  
plenty*

7. Appropriate to youth ("summer") but passing with age, unlike avarice; summerlike.

- 90 Of your mere own.<sup>8</sup> All these are portable,<sup>o</sup> bearable  
 With other graces weighed.
- MALCOLM But I have none. The king-becoming graces,  
 As justice, verity, temp'rance, stableness,  
 Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,  
 95 Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude, humility  
 I have no relish<sup>o</sup> of them, but abound trace  
 In the division<sup>o</sup> of each several<sup>o</sup> crime, variations / separate  
 Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power I should  
 Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,  
 100 Uproar the universal peace, confound  
 All unity on earth.
- MACDUFF O Scotland, Scotland!
- MALCOLM If such a one be fit to govern, speak.  
 I am as I have spoken.
- MACDUFF Fit to govern?  
 No, not to live. O nation miserable,  
 105 With an untitled<sup>o</sup> tyrant bloody-sceptered, a usurping  
 When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,  
 Since that the truest issue of thy throne  
 By his own interdiction<sup>o</sup> stands accursed declaration of unfitness  
 And does blaspheme his breed?<sup>9</sup> Thy royal father disgrace his heritage  
 110 Was a most sainted king. The Queen that bore thee,  
 Oft'ner upon her knees than on her feet,  
 Died<sup>o</sup> every day she lived. Fare thee well.  
 These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself  
 Hath banished me from Scotland. O, my breast—  
 Thy hope ends here!
- 115 MALCOLM Macduff, this noble passion,  
 Child of integrity, hath from my soul  
 Wiped the black scruples,<sup>o</sup> reconciled my thoughts dark suspicions  
 To thy good truth and honour. Devilish Macbeth stratagems  
 By many of these trains<sup>o</sup> hath sought to win me prudent moderation  
 120 Into his power, and modest wisdom<sup>o</sup> plucks me  
 From over-credulous haste; but God above  
 Deal between thee and me, for even now  
 I put myself to thy direction and  
 Unspeak<sup>o</sup> mine own detraction, here abjure Retract  
 125 The taints and blames I laid upon myself  
 For<sup>o</sup> strangers to my nature. I am yet As  
 Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,  
 Scarcely have coveted what was mine own,  
 At no time broke my faith, would not betray  
 130 The devil to his fellow, and delight  
 No less in truth than life. My first false-speaking  
 Was this upon myself. What I am truly  
 Is thine and my poor country's to command,  
 Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,  
 135 Old Siward with ten thousand warlike men,  
 Already at a point,<sup>o</sup> was setting forth. prepared  
 Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness

8. *Scotland . . . own*: Scotland is bountiful enough to satisfy your greed with your own royal property alone.

9. *Dead to the world*. ("By your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily," I Corinthians 15:31).

Be like our warranted quarrel!<sup>1</sup>—Why are you silent?  
 MACDUFF Such welcome and unwelcome things at once

140 'Tis hard to reconcile.  
 Enter a DOCTOR

MALCOLM Well, more anon. [To the DOCTOR] Comes the King  
 forth, I pray you?

DOCTOR Ay, sir. There are a crew of wretched souls  
 That stay<sup>o</sup> his cure. Their malady convinces *await*

145 The great essay of art,<sup>2</sup> but at his touch,  
 Such sanctity hath Heaven given his hand,  
 They presently amend.<sup>o</sup> *heal*

MALCOLM I thank you, doctor. Exit [DOCTOR]

MACDUFF What's the disease he means?

MALCOLM 'Tis called the evil<sup>3</sup>—

A most miraculous work in this good King,  
 Which often since my here-remain in England  
 150 I have seen him do. How he solicits<sup>o</sup> heaven *moves by entreaty*  
 Himself best knows, but strangely visited<sup>o</sup> people, *afflicted*

All swoll'n and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,  
 The mere<sup>o</sup> despair of surgery, he cures,  
 Hanging a golden stamp<sup>o</sup> about their necks, *utter*  
 Put on with holy prayers; and 'tis spoken, *coin*

155 To the succeeding royalty he leaves  
 The healing benediction. With this strange virtue<sup>o</sup> *power*  
 He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,  
 And sundry blessings hang about his throne

That speak him full of grace.<sup>o</sup> *divine grace*

Enter ROSS

160 MACDUFF See who comes here.

MALCOLM My countryman, but yet I know<sup>o</sup> him not. *recognize*

MACDUFF My ever gentle cousin, welcome hither.

MALCOLM I know him now. Good God betimes<sup>o</sup> remove *quickly*  
 The means that makes us strangers!

ROSS Sir, amen.

MACDUFF Stands Scotland where it did?

165 ROSS Alas, poor country,

Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot  
 Be called our mother, but our grave, where nothing  
 But who knows nothing is once seen to smile;<sup>4</sup>

170 Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air  
 Are made, not marked;<sup>o</sup> where violent sorrow seems *noticed*  
 A modern ecstasy.<sup>o</sup> The dead man's knell *commonplace emotion*

Is there scarce asked for who,<sup>5</sup> and good men's lives  
 Expire before the flowers in their caps,  
 Dying or ere<sup>o</sup> they sicken.

MACDUFF O relation<sup>o</sup> *before*  
 Too nice<sup>o</sup> and yet too true! *report*

175 MALCOLM What's the newest grief? *detailed*

ROSS That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;<sup>6</sup>  
 Each minute teems<sup>o</sup> a new one. *yields*

1. the . . . quarrel: may the chance of success be equal to the justice of our cause.

2. convinces . . . art: defeats the best efforts of medical skill.

3. "The king's evil," scrofula, thought to be cured by the

royal touch.

4. No one smiles except he who knows nothing.

5. Scarcely anyone asks for whom it is rung.

6. Cause the speaker to be hissed for telling old news.

MACDUFF How does my wife?  
ROSS Why, well.  
MACDUFF And all my children?  
ROSS Well, too.  
MACDUFF The tyrant has not battered at their peace?  
180 ROSS No, they were well at peace when I did leave 'em.  
MACDUFF Be not a niggard of your speech. How goes't?  
ROSS When I came hither to transport the tidings  
Which I have heavily<sup>o</sup> borne, there ran a rumour *gravely*  
Of many worthy fellows that were out,<sup>o</sup> *in arms*  
185 Which was to my belief witnessed the rather<sup>o</sup> *made more credible*  
For that I saw the tyrant's power<sup>o</sup> afoot. *army*  
Now is the time of<sup>o</sup> help. [*To MALCOLM*] Your eye in scotland *moment for*  
Would create soldiers, make our women fight  
To doff<sup>o</sup> their dire distresses. *remove*  
MALCOLM Be't their comfort  
190 We are coming thither. Gracious England hath  
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;  
An older and a better soldier none<sup>o</sup> *there is none*  
That Christendom gives out.<sup>o</sup> *proclaims; provides*  
ROSS Would I could answer  
This comfort with the like. But I have words  
195 That would be howled out in the desert air  
Where hearing should not latch<sup>o</sup> them. *catch*  
MACDUFF What concern they—  
The general cause, or is it a fee-grief<sup>o</sup> *private woe*  
Due to<sup>o</sup> some single breast? *Owned by*  
ROSS No mind that's honest  
But in it shares some woe, though the main part  
Pertains to you alone.  
200 MACDUFF If it be mine,  
Keep it not from me; quickly let me have it.  
ROSS Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,  
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound  
That ever yet they heard.  
MACDUFF H'm, I guess at it.  
205 ROSS Your castle is surprised, your wife and babes  
Savagely slaughtered. To relate the manner  
Were on the quarry of these murdered deer  
To add the death of you.<sup>7</sup>  
MALCOLM Merciful heaven!  
[*To MACDUFF*] What, man, ne'er pull your hat upon your  
brows.<sup>o</sup> *conceal your grief*  
210 Give sorrow words. The grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'erfraught<sup>o</sup> heart and bids it break. *overburdened*  
MACDUFF My children too?  
ROSS Wife, children, servants, all  
That could be found. *had to be*  
MACDUFF And I must be<sup>o</sup> from thence!  
My wife killed too?  
ROSS I have said.  
MALCOLM Be comforted.

7. To tell how they were murdered would be to add your death to the heap of slaughtered game ("quarry").

215 Let's make us medicines of our great revenge  
To cure this deadly grief.

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?

220 MALCOLM Dispute<sup>o</sup> it like a man.

MACDUFF I shall do so,  
But I must also feel it as a man.

*Fight*

225 I cannot but remember such things were  
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on  
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,  
They were all struck for<sup>o</sup> thee. Naught<sup>o</sup> that I am,  
Not for their own demerits but for mine  
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now.

*on account of / Wicked*

230 MALCOLM Be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief  
Convert<sup>o</sup> 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.<sup>o</sup> Front to front<sup>o</sup>

*Be changed*

235 Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself.  
Within my sword's length set him. If he scape,  
Heaven forgive him too.

*delay / Face-to-face*

MALCOLM This tune goes manly.  
Come, go we to the King. Our power<sup>o</sup> is ready;

*army*

240 Our lack is nothing but our leave.<sup>8</sup> Macbeth  
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above  
Put on their instruments.<sup>9</sup> Receive what cheer you may:  
The night is long that never finds the day.

*Exeunt*