

ORIGINAL TEXT

*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,

- 5 But that myself should be the root and father
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
MACBETH, as queen, LENNOX, ROSS, LORDS,
LADIES, 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

- 15 Tonight we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.

BANQUO

Let your highness
Command upon me, to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
Forever knit.

MODERN TEXT

*BANQUO enters.***BANQUO**

Now you have it all: you're the king, the thane of Cawdor,
and the thane of Glamis, just like the weird women
promised you. And I suspect you cheated to win these
titles. But it was also prophesied that the crown would
not go to your descendants, and that my sons and
grandsons would be kings instead. If the witches tell the
truth—which they did about you—maybe what they said
about me will come true too. But shhh! I'll shut up now.

*A trumpet plays. MACBETH enters dressed as king, and
LADY MACBETH enters dressed as queen, together
with LENNOX, ROSS, LORDS, LADIES, and their
attendants*

MACBETH

(*indicating BANQUO*) Here's our most important guest.

LADY MACBETH

If we forgot him, our big celebration wouldn't be
complete, and that wouldn't be any good.

MACBETH

(*to BANQUO*) Tonight we're having a ceremonial
banquet, and I want you to be there.

BANQUO

Whatever your highness commands me to do, it is
always my duty to do it.

Banquo's suspicions:

- He thinks Macbeth may have "played foully" to become king
- He wonders if the witches' predictions about him will come true as well.

Macbeth requests Banquo's presence as "chief guest" at his feast — and Banquo replies loyally, even though he has suspicions

Macbeth's questions about Banquo's whereabouts:
don't seem so innocent now that there is a rift between
them.

Macbeth tells
Banquo not to
miss the feast,
and Banquo
promises that
"he will not" —
and indeed, he
does show up,
as a bloody
ghost.

Macbeth seems
comfortable with
scapegoating
the princes now.

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 2

ORIGINAL TEXT

MACBETH

20 Ride you this afternoon?

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 take tomorrow.

25 Is 't far you ride?

BANQUO

As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twi't this and supper. Go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.

MACBETH

Fail not our feast.

BANQUO

30 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. Hie you to horse. Adieu,
Till your 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 sunnertime alone. While then, God be with you!

MODERN TEXT

MACBETH

Are you going riding this afternoon?

BANQUO

Yes, my good lord.

MACBETH

We would have liked to have heard your good advice,
which has always been serious and helpful, at the
council today, but we'll wait until tomorrow. Are you
riding far?

BANQUO

I'm going far enough that I'll be riding from now until
dinner. Unless my horse goes faster than expected, I will
be back an hour or two after sunset.

MACBETH

Don't miss our feast.

BANQUO

My lord, I won't miss it.

MACBETH

We hear that the princes, those murderers, have hidden
in England and Ireland. They haven't confessed to
cruelly murdering their own father, and they've been
making up strange lies to tell their hosts. But we can talk
more about that tomorrow, when we'll discuss matters of
state that concern us both. Hurry up and get to your
horse. Good-bye, until you return tonight. Is Fleance
going with you?

BANQUO

Yes, my good lord. It's time we hit the road.

MACBETH

I hope your horses are fast and surefooted. And with
that, I send you to them. Farewell.

BANQUO exits.

Everybody may do as they please until seven o'clock
tonight. In order to make your company even more
enjoyable, I'm going to keep to myself until suppertime.
Until then, God be with you!

Exit all except **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**

- 50 To be thus is nothing,
But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep, and **in his royalty of nature**
Reigns that which would be feared. 'Tis much he
dares,
- 55 And to that dauntless temper of his mind
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear, and under him
My genius is rebuked, as it is said
- 60 **Mark Antony's was by Caesar.** He chid the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me
And bade them speak to him. Then, prophetlike,
They hailed him father to a line of kings.
Upon my head they placed **a fruitless crown**
- 65 And put a barren scepter in my grip,
Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered;
- 70 **Put rancors in the vessel of my peace**
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come fate into the list,
And champion me to th' utterance. Who's there?

Enter **SERVANT** and two **MURDERERS**

Everyone exits except **MACBETH** and a **SERVANT**

(to the **SERVANT**) You there, let me have a word with you.
Are those men waiting for me?

SERVANT

They're waiting outside the palace gate, my lord.

MACBETH

Bring them to me.

The **SERVANT** exits.

To be the king is nothing if I'm not safe as the king. I'm very afraid of Banquo. There's something noble about him that makes me fear him. He's willing to take risks, and his mind never stops working. He has the wisdom to act bravely but also safely. I'm not afraid of anyone but him. Around him, my guardian angel is frightened, just as Mark Antony's angel supposedly feared Octavius Caesar. Banquo chided the witches when they first called me king, asking them to tell him his own future. Then, like prophets, they named him the father to a line of kings. They gave me a crown and a scepter that I can't pass on. Someone outside my family will take these things away from me, since no son of mine will take my place as king. If this is true, then I've tortured my conscience and murdered the gracious Duncan for Banquo's sons. I've ruined my own peace for their benefit. I've handed over my everlasting soul to the devil so that they could be kings. Banquo's sons, kings! Instead of watching that happen, I will challenge fate to battle and fight to the death. Who's there!

The **SERVANT** comes back in with two **MURDERERS**

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 3

Macbeth has already hired murderers - puts into context his questions about Banquo and Fleance's whereabouts

Allusion:

Mark Antony + Caesar

Antony = Banquo
Caesar = Macbeth

Soliloquy:

- Macbeth's new insecurities emerge: now he is king, but he feels threatened by Banquo's good nature and honorable character - ironic, to fear someone's goodness
- Macbeth wants to keep the kingship in his family - he feels jealous of Banquo's descendants who will kings someday
- Macbeth feels that he has paid a high price for his crown, but that it is all for Banquo now.

ORIGINAL TEXT

75 Now go to the door and stay there till we call.

Exit **SERVANT**

Was it not yesterday we spoke together?

FIRST MURDERER

It was, so please your highness.

MACBETH

Well then, now

Have you considered of my speeches? Know

80 That it was he, in the times past, which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been

Our innocent self. This I made good to you

In our last conference, passed in probation with you,

85 How you were borne in hand, how crossed, the
instruments,

Who wrought with them, and all things else that might

To half a soul and to a notion crazed

Say, "Thus did Banquo."

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

90 That you can let this go? Are you so gospelled

To pray for this good man and for his issue,

Whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave

And beggared yours forever?

FIRST MURDERER

We are men, my liege.

MACBETH

Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men,

95 As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels,
curs,

Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves are clept

All by the name of dogs. The valued file

Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,

100 The housekeeper, the hunter, every one

According to the gift which

bounteous nature hath in him
closed, whereby he does
receive particular addition,
from the bill that writes them
all alike. And so of men.

Now, if you have a station in
the file, not in the worst rank
of manhood, say it. And I
will put that business in your
bosoms.

MODERN TEXT

Now go to the door and stay there until I call for you.

The **SERVANT** exits.

Wasn't it just yesterday that we spoke to each other?

FIRST MURDERER

It was yesterday, your highness.

MACBETH

Well, did you think about what I said? You should know that it was Banquo who made your lives hell for so long, which you always thought was my fault. But I was innocent. I showed you the proof at our last meeting. I explained how you were deceived, how you were thwarted, the things that were used against you, who was working against you, and a lot of other things that would convince even a half-wit or a crazy person to say, "Banquo did it!"

FIRST MURDERER

You explained it all.

MACBETH

I did that and more, which brings me to the point of this second meeting. Are you so patient and forgiving that you're going to let him off the hook? Are you so pious that you would pray for this man and his children, a man who has pushed you toward an early grave and put your family in poverty forever?

FIRST MURDERER

We are men, my lord.

MACBETH

Yes, you're part of the species called men. Just as hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, mutts, shaggy lapdogs, swimming dogs, and wolf-dog crossbreeds are all dogs. But if you list the different kinds of dogs according to their qualities, you can distinguish which breeds are fast or slow, which ones are clever, which ones are watchdogs, and which ones are hunters. You can classify each dog according to the natural gifts that separate it from all other dogs. It's the same with men. Now, if you occupy some place in the list of men that isn't down at the very bottom, tell me. Because if that's the case, I will give you this job. It will get rid of your enemy and bring you closer to me.

Banquo is blamed
for the murderers'
suffering

Macbeth goods the
murderers into being
angry - but they
don't seem to rise
to his bait

18/2017

No Fear Shakespeare: Macbeth: Act 3, Scene 1

Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
110 Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death were perfect.

As long as Banquo lives, I am sick. I'll be healthy when he is dead.

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 4

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 5

ORIGINAL TEXT

SECOND MURDERER

I am one, my liege.

Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what
I do to spite the world.

FIRST MURDERER

And I another

115 So weary with disasters, tugged with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on 't.

MACBETH

Both of you

Know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS

True, my lord.

MACBETH

So is he mine; and in such bloody distance
120 That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life. And though I could
With barefaced power sweep him from my sight
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
125 Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Who I myself struck down. And thence it is,
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye
For sundry weighty reasons.

MODERN TEXT

SECOND MURDERER

My lord, I've been so kicked around by the world, and I'm so angry, that I don't even care what I do.

FIRST MURDERER

I'm the same. I'm so sick of bad luck and trouble that I'd risk my life on any bet, as long as it would either fix my life or end it once and for all.

MACBETH

You both know Banquo was your enemy.

BOTH MURDERERS

It's true, my lord.

MACBETH

He's my enemy too, and I hate him so much that every minute he's alive it eats away at my heart. Since I'm king, I could simply use my power to get rid of him. But I can't do that, because he and I have friends in common whom I need, so I have to be able to moan and cry over his death in public even though I'll be the one who had him killed. That's why I need your help right now. I have to hide my real plans from the public eye for many important reasons.

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 5

The murderers basically say they don't care much what they do - they are desperate

He wants it done secretly and quietly

ORIGINAL TEXT

SECOND MURDERER

130 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,

135 Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' th' time,
The moment on 't; for 't must be done tonight,
And something from the palace; always thought
That I require a clearness. And with him—
To leave no rubs nor botches in the work—

140 **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.
I'll come to you anon.

BOTH MURDERERS

We are resolved, my lord.

MACBETH

145 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

MODERN TEXT

SECOND MURDERER

We'll do what you want us to, my lord.

FIRST MURDERER

Though our lives—

MACBETH

(interrupts him) I can see the determination in your eyes.
Within the next hour I'll tell you where to go and exactly
when to strike. It must be done tonight, away from the
palace. Always remember that I must be free from
suspicion. For the plan to work perfectly, you must kill
both Banquo and his son, Fleance, who keeps him
company. Getting rid of Fleance is as important to me as
knocking off Banquo. Each of you should make up your
own mind about whether you're going to do this. I'll
come to you soon.

BOTH MURDERERS

We have decided, my lord. We're in.

MACBETH

I'll call for you soon. Stay inside.

The MURDERERS exit.

The deal is closed. Banquo, if your soul is going to make
it to heaven, tonight's the night.

He exits.

Here they seem
convinced, but
a bit worried about
their lives

Macbeth is specific
about wanting
both Banquo and
Fleance dead
(because of the
prophecy)

Act 3 Scene 2

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ORIGINAL TEXT

*Enter LADY MACBETH and a SERVANT***LADY MACBETH**

Is Banquo gone from court?

SERVANT

Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.

LADY MACBETHSay to the king I would attend his leisure
For a few words.**SERVANT**

Madam, I will.

*Exit SERVANT***LADY MACBETH**Naught's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content.
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.*Motif: fair is foul
(usually being dead is
bad), but LM envies
Duncan*

MODERN TEXT

*LADY MACBETH and a SERVANT enter.***LADY MACBETH**

Has Banquo left the court?

SERVANT

Yes, madam, but he'll be back tonight.

LADY MACBETHGo tell the king I want to talk to him for a
few minutes.**SERVANT**

No problem, madam.

*The SERVANT exits.***LADY MACBETH**If you get what you want and you're still not
happy, you've spent everything and gained
nothing. It's better to be the person who
gets murdered than to be the killer and be
tormented with anxiety.

Enter **MACBETH**

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

*The snake = threats to LM and M.
MACBETH (metaphor)*

We have scorched the snake, not killed it.
She'll close and be herself whilst our poor
malice
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both
the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
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 of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. **Duncan is in his grave.**
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well,
Treason has done his worst; nor steel nor
poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further.

*Macbeth affirms that death is peaceful, and
preferable, to life.*

MACBETH enters.

What's going on, my lord? Why are you
keeping to yourself, with only your sad
thoughts to keep you company? Those
thoughts should have died when you killed
the men you're thinking about. If you can't
fix it, you shouldn't give it a second
thought. What's done is done.

*LM demonstrates that she really does
care about Macbeth.
She wants to move on and avoid guilt.*

MACBETH

We have slashed the snake but not killed it.
It will heal and be as good as new, and
we'll be threatened by its fangs once again.
But the universe can fall apart, and heaven
and earth crumble, before I'll eat my meals
in fear and spend my nights tossing and
turning with these nightmares I've been
having. I'd rather be dead than endure this
endless mental torture and harrowing
sleep deprivation. We killed those men and
sent them to rest in peace so that we could
gain our own peace. Duncan lies in his
grave, through with life's troubles, and he's
sleeping well. We have already done the
worst we can do to him with our treason.
After that, nothing can hurt him further—
not weapons, poison, rebellion, invasion, or
anything else.

LM once again asks M to show a false face.

Act 3 Scene 2

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ORIGINAL TEXT

LADY MACBETH

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

MACBETH

So shall I, love.
And so, I pray, be you. Let your
remembrance
Apply to Banquo: present him eminence,
Both with eye and tongue: unsafe the
while that we
35 Must lave our honors in these flattering
streams,
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

LADY MACBETH

You must leave this.

MACBETH

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MODERN TEXT

LADY MACBETH

Come on, relax, dear. Put on a happy face
and look cheerful and agreeable for your
guests tonight.

MACBETH

That's exactly what I'll do, my love, and I
hope you'll do the same. Give Banquo your
special attention. Talk to him and look at
him in a way that will make him feel
important. We're in a dangerous situation,
where we have to flatter him and hide our
true feelings.

LADY MACBETH

You have to stop talking like this.

MACBETH

1/4

M is now the one telling LM to hide her feelings with a false face, and act for his best friend.

Scorpions = another poisonous animal (snakes, now scorpions).
Echoes 1.7 when M talks about drinking from a
"poisoned chalice."

11/21/2019

No Fear Shakespeare: Macbeth: Act 3 Scene 2 Page 2

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

LADY MACBETH

40 But in them nature's copy's not eterne.

MACBETH

There's comfort yet; they are assailable.
Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
His cloistered flight, ere to black Hecate's summons
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums

45 Hath rung night's yawning peal, **there shall be done**
A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH

What's to be done?

Argh! I feel like my mind is full of scorpions, my dear wife. You know that Banquo and his son Fleance are still alive.

LADY MACBETH

But they can't live forever.

MACBETH

That's comforting. They can be killed, it's true. So be cheerful. Before the bat flies through the castle, and before the dung beetle makes his little humming noise to tell us it's nighttime, a dreadful deed will be done.

— Banquo's murder

LADY MACBETH

What are you going to do?

Personification of night and day. Night is characterized as evil

Act 3 Scene 2

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ORIGINAL TEXT

MACBETH

Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest
chuck,

Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling
night,

Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day

50 And with thy bloody and invisible hand

Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond

Which keeps me pale. Light thickens, and
the crow

Makes wing to th' rooky wood.

Good things of day begin to droop and
drowse;

55 Whiles night's black agents to their preys
do rouse.

Thou marvel'st at my words: but hold thee
still.

Things bad begun make strong

themselves by ill

So, prithee, go with me.

MODERN TEXT

MACBETH

It's better you don't know about it until after
it's done, when you can applaud it. *(to the
night)* Come, night, and blindfold the
kindhearted day. Use your bloody and
invisible hand to tear up Banquo's lease on
life, which keeps me in fear. *(to himself)* The
sky's getting dark, and the crow is returning
home to the woods. The gentle creatures
of the day are falling asleep, while night's
predators are waking up to look for their
prey. *(to LADY MACBETH)* You seem
surprised at my words, but don't question
me yet. Bad deeds force you to commit
more bad deeds. So please, come with me.

https://www.sparknotes.com/nofear/shakespeare/macbeth/page_100/

1/3

"great bond" = friendship with Banquo

"Things bad begun" : M is aware that the decision to murder Duncan was a bad one - but he feels stuck and thinks he needs to do more bad things to secure his position.