

# **MACBETH**

By

William Shakespeare

**Act 2, Scene 1**



SCENE. Court of Macbeth's castle.

(Enter BANQUO, and FLEANCE bearing a torch before him)

BANQUO

How goes the night, boy?

FLEANCE

The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

BANQUO

And she goes down at twelve.

FLEANCE

I take't, 'tis later, sir.

BANQUO

Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;  
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too.  
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,  
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers,  
Restrain in me the cursed thoughts that nature  
Gives way to in repose!

(Enter MACBETH, and a Servant with a torch)

Give me my sword.

Who's there?

MACBETH

A friend.

BANQUO

What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:  
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and

Sent forth great largess to your offices.  
This diamond he greets your wife withal,  
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up  
In measureless content.

MACBETH

Being unprepared,  
Our will became the servant to defect;  
Which else should free have wrought.

BANQUO

All's well.  
I dreamt last night of the three weird sisters:  
To you they have show'd some truth.

MACBETH

I think not of them:  
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,  
We would spend it in some words upon that business,  
If you would grant the time.

BANQUO

At your kind'st leisure.

MACBETH

If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,  
It shall make honour for you.

BANQUO

So I lose none  
In seeking to augment it, but still keep  
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,  
I shall be counsell'd.

MACBETH

Good repose the while!

BANQUO

Thanks, sir: the like to you!

(Exeunt BANQUO and FLEANACE)

MACBETH

Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,  
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed.

(Exit Servant)

Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.  
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?  
I see thee yet, in form as palpable  
As this which now I draw.  
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going;  
And such an instrument I was to use.  
Mine eyes are made the fools o' the other senses,  
Or else worth all the rest; I see thee still,  
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,  
Which was not so before. There's no such thing:  
It is the bloody business which informs  
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one halfworld  
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse  
The curtain'd sleep; witchcraft celebrates  
Pale Hecate's offerings, and wither'd murder,

Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,  
Whose howl's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace.  
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design  
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,  
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear  
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,  
And take the present horror from the time,  
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:  
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

(A bell rings)

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.  
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell  
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

(Exit)