

# MACBETH

By

William Shakespeare

Act 3, Scene 2



SCENE. The palace.

(Enter LADY MACBETH and a Servant)

LADY MACBETH

Is Banquo gone from court?

Servant

Ay, madam, but returns again to-night.

LADY MACBETH

Say to the king, I would attend his leisure  
For a few words.

Servant

Madam, I will.

(Exit)

LADY MACBETH

Nought'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.

(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.

MACBETH

We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd 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.

LADY MACBETH

Come on;  
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks;  
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

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  
Must lave our honours in these flattering streams,  
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,  
Disguising what they are.

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.

LADY MACBETH

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 cloister'd flight, ere to black Hecate's summons  
The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums  
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done  
A deed of dreadful note.

LADY MACBETH

What's to be done?

MACBETH

Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,  
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,  
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;  
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 the rooky wood:  
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;  
While night's black agents to their preys do rouse.  
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still;  
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill.  
So, prithee, go with me.

(Exeunt)