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Macbeth

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WITH DETAILED NOTES
FROM THE WORLD'S
LEADING CENTER FOR
SHAKESPEARE STUDIES

EDITED BY BARBARA A. MOWAT
AND PAUL WERSTINE

ACT 1

Scene 1

Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

FIRST WITCH

When shall we three meet again?

In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

SECOND WITCH

When the hurly-burly's done,

When the battle's lost and won.

THIRD WITCH

That will be ere the set of sun.

5

FIRST WITCH

Where the place?

SECOND WITCH Upon the heath.

THIRD WITCH

There to meet with Macbeth.

FIRST WITCH I come, Graymalkin.

「SECOND WITCH」 Paddock calls.

10

「THIRD WITCH」 Anon.

ALL

Fair is foul, and foul is fair,

Hover through the fog and filthy air.

They exit.

1.2 Duncan, king of Scotland, hears an account of the success in battle of his noblemen Macbeth and Banquo. Duncan orders the execution of the rebel thane of Cawdor and sends messengers to announce to Macbeth that he has been given Cawdor's title.

0 SD. **Alarum:** a trumpet "call to arms"

4. **sergeant:** soldier, officer (also called *Captain* in the Folio stage directions and speech prefixes)

7. **broll:** battle

10. **spent:** exhausted

11. **choke their art:** prevent each other from using their skill (in swimming) **art:** skill

12. **to that:** to make him that (i.e., a rebel)

13. **villainies:** shameful evils

14. **Western Isles:** the Hebrides (islands off the west coast of Scotland)

15. **kerns and gallowglasses:** lightly armed undisciplined foot soldiers and soldiers heavily armed and well trained (The terms were usually applied to Irish soldiers.)

16. **damnèd quarrel:** the accursed cause (for which he fought)

17. **Showed . . . whore:** appeared to have granted the rebellious Macdonwald her favors; **all:** everything that Macdonwald and Fortune can do

21. **valor's minion:** the chosen darling of Valor

22. **slave:** villain (i.e., Macdonwald)

24. **unseamed . . . chops:** ripped him open from his navel to his jaw

27. **his reflection:** its apparent backward turning

Scene 2

Alarum within. Enter King [Duncan,] Malcolm, Donalbain, Lennox, with Attendants, meeting a bleeding Captain.

DUNCAN

What bloody man is that? He can report,
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.

MALCOLM

This is the sergeant
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity.—Hail, brave friend!
Say to the King the knowledge of the broil
As thou didst leave it.

5

CAPTAIN Doubtful it stood,

As two spent swimmers that do cling together
And choke their art. The merciless Macdonwald
(Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villainies of nature
Do swarm upon him) from the Western Isles
Of kerns and [gallowglasses] is supplied;
And Fortune, on his damnèd [quarrel] smiling,
Showed like a rebel's whore. But all's too weak;
For brave Macbeth (well he deserves that name),
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valor's minion, carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseamed him from the nave to th' chops,
And fixed his head upon our battlements.

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25

DUNCAN

O valiant cousin, worthy gentleman!

CAPTAIN

As whence the sun 'gins his reflection
Shipwracking storms and direful thunders [break,]

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