

Model Text – Adaptation of Macbeth

One eerie and cold night, two weary knights, Macbeth and Banquo, were trudging through the misty, murky moors celebrating their victory over an army of rebels. Exhausted yet excited, and covered in the blood of their enemies, they didn't notice three dark and stooped figures lurking conspiratorially in the shadows.

From nowhere one of the figures croaked, "Thane of Glamis," and cackled maniacally. Alerted, Macbeth, who held the title of Thane of Glamis, looked over.

"Thane of Cawdor," chuckled the second witch, without even looking up. Macbeth was confused: there was already a Thane of Cawdor and it wasn't him!

The third witch sniggered at him, "King of Scotland."

"How can that be?" asked Macbeth. "I know I am Thane of Glamis, but there is already a Thane of Cawdor. And as for King of Scotland..."

Confused, the two men looked at the witches, repulsed by their haggard and broken form. Who were they? What were they talking about? Were they making some kind of bizarre prophesy or were they simply mocking him?

Dismissing the witches as deranged, Macbeth and Banquo were planning to continue their journey, when unexpected news arrived: the King had made Macbeth Thane of Cawdor in honour of his magnificent victory!

"How did those women know?" Macbeth exclaimed, confused. "And why did they say I would be King?"

Overwhelmed, Macbeth sent word to his wife, a power-hungry and ambitious woman. As she read his letter, her excitement grew, for she was greedier for power than Macbeth and she could see the golden crown of Scotland on her husband's head. Deep in her own thoughts, Lady Macbeth became determined to destroy anyone who stood in her husband's way.

By the time Macbeth reached his castle, Lady Macbeth had her mind fixed on the crown and had begun to plot King Duncan's death. "King Duncan, will be here soon, my love, to thank you for the victory in the battle!" she laughed scornfully, as she took off his cape. "The crown could be yours, the power could be ours, you must kill him!"

"You do realise what it is you ask of me, don't you?" Macbeth mumbled. He couldn't believe that his wife, the one person he trusted, would make such a request. Macbeth paced the stony floor with a heavy heart and said, "I can imagine nothing less for us, however there must be some other ..."

"There is not! Death is the only way to rid Scotland of the king and for you to claim what is rightfully yours," she hissed at him, whilst admiring herself in the mirror, "We have one chance and we must seize this opportunity."

Their talk, however, was interrupted by the arrival of King Duncan and his two sons, Prince Malcolm, heir to the throne, and Donalbain. Lady Macbeth, welcomed her guests, playing the charming hostess, whilst secretly urging her husband to kill the king that very night.

Later that night in preparation for the evil deed, Lady Macbeth drugged King Duncan's two guards, who lay beside the king as he slept. Now the murder was a reality, Macbeth began agonising over it; King Duncan was a good man, a guest in his house. With trembling hands and his heart beating like a battle drum, he crept along the corridors towards King Duncan's room

Reluctantly, Macbeth picked up the dagger from the drugged guards and plunged it into the King's heart. Almost at once he ran from the room, his hands dark with the king's blood and the daggers clenched in his fists. "I have done the deed!" he cried, overwhelmed by the horror of it.

Like a creeping shadow, word spread quickly around the castle: "Murder, murder, the king is dead!"

As the guards woke from their involuntary slumber they were found with their daggers bloodied and blood covered hands; they were blamed for the death. Claiming vengeance for the King's death, Macbeth raised their daggers and killed both guards, ensuring his dark secret was safe.

Like a dark shadow, the news of the King's death began to creep around the castle and suspicion of the murders quickly fell onto the King's sons. Despite the fact they knew they were innocent, Malcom and Donalbain had quickly fled Scotland, fearing for their own lives. They had been deeply suspicious of Macbeth.

Now nothing stood between Macbeth and the crown.

