

This resource is intended to support teachers in leading students' analysis of a key scene. This could be used for discussion as a class, in pairs or groups, or as a homework task.

*In this scene, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are hosting a banquet for the other Thanes. During the banquet, Macbeth is haunted by the ghost of Banquo, who only Macbeth can see.*

**ACT III, SCENE IV. Dunsinane. Within the castle.**

**LADY MACBETH**

My royal lord,  
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold  
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,  
'Tis given with welcome: to feed were best at home;  
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;  
Meeting were bare without it.

**MACBETH**

Sweet remembrancer!  
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,  
And health on both!

**LENNOX**

May't please your highness sit.

The **GHOST OF BANQUO** enters, and sits in **MACBETH**'s place.

**MACBETH**

Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,  
Were the graced person of our Banquo present;  
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness  
Than pity for mischance!

**ROSS**

His absence, sir,  
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness  
To grace us with your royal company.

**MACBETH**

The table's full.

**LENNOX**

Here is a place reserved, sir.

**MACBETH**

Where?

**LENNOX**

Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?

**MACBETH**

Which of you have done this?

**Lords**

What, my good lord?

**MACBETH**

Thou canst not say I did it: never shake  
Thy gory locks at me.

**ROSS**

Gentlemen, rise: his highness is not well.

**LADY MACBETH**

Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,  
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;  
The fit is momentary; upon a thought  
He will again be well: if much you note him,  
You shall offend him and extend his passion:  
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?

**MACBETH**

Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that  
Which might appal the devil.

**LADY MACBETH**

O proper stuff!

This is the very painting of your fear:

This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,

Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,

Impostors to true fear, would well become

A woman's story at a winter's fire,

Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!

Why do you make such faces? When all's done,

You look but on a stool.

**MACBETH**

Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo!

how say you?

Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.

If charnel-houses and our graves must send

Those that we bury back, our monuments

Shall be the maws of kites.

**GHOST OF BANQUO** vanishes

**LADY MACBETH**

What, quite unmann'd in folly?

**MACBETH**

If I stand here, I saw him.

**LADY MACBETH**

Fie, for shame!

**LANGUAGE**

1. How is Macbeth's panic and fear shown through his language in this scene?  
Consider: his use of questions, exclamations, language associated with death and hell
2. How is Lady Macbeth's language towards Macbeth assertive and controlling?  
Consider: the imperatives/command verbs used towards Macbeth
3. How is Lady Macbeth's language towards Macbeth insulting in this scene?  
Consider: questioning of his manliness

## **THEME (Men, Women and Power)**

1. What is Macbeth's status in this scene and how has this changed as the play has progressed?
2. What is Lady Macbeth's status in this scene and how has this changed as the play has progressed?
3. What could this suggest about male power in the Jacobean era?

**Challenge:** How is Macbeth's power as a king undermined by his sin of killing Duncan?

## **CHARACTER**

1. Macbeth's journey began with praise and glory. How would you describe this stage of his journey?
2. How is Macbeth portrayed as a tragic character at this point in the play?
3. How is Lady Macbeth portrayed at this point in the play? Is she portrayed as you would expect for a Jacobean noblewoman?