
MACBETH



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CHAPTER 1

It is a cold winter in Scotland a thousand years ago. The Scottish Army is fighting a **battle** with the Norwegian army. The King of Norway wants to **invade** Scotland. The Norwegian soldiers are very strong, and they are killing a lot of Scottish soldiers. King Duncan of Scotland is worried because his army is losing the war.

Now King Duncan is at the army camp near his palace at Forres. He is waiting for some news about the battle. On a cold, stormy night, a **wounded** soldier arrives at the camp and stands in front of the King. He delivers the good news about the battle. There is blood on his face. He looks very tired, but he is very excited and happy.

'My Lord!' he cries out. 'The Norwegian soldiers are running away from the battlefield. Their general is dead. We are a free country again!'

He tells the King about the **bravery** of one of the soldiers. He also tells him about the death of the Norwegian general at the hands of this brave soldier.

'That is wonderful!' says the King. 'Who is that brave soldier?'

'His name is Macbeth. He is the best soldier in the army of Scotland.'

'Send Macbeth to me at once,' orders the King to his men. 'I want to see him.'

Then he turns to one of his **guards** and says, 'Take this wounded soldier to the doctor's **tent**. Be quick!'

It is very late at night now. There is thunder and lightning in the sky. Macbeth is on his way to King Duncan's camp. He is walking there with another brave soldier. It's his friend Banquo. Both Macbeth and Banquo are very tired.

'It is so difficult to walk in this weather, after a long battle,' says Macbeth.

'Yes. We are very tired, but we must continue walking,' Banquo says. 'How far is Forres from here? Do you know?'

At that moment, they see three **witches** standing under a tree. The witches are dancing in a circle. They have very old clothes on. They are saying strange things.

'Look at those **creatures!**' Banquo cries out in fear. 'They are so strange and ugly. They look like old women, but they have beards like men.'

Then he turns to the witches and asks, 'What kind of creatures are you? What are you doing?'

The witches do not answer Banquo. They all look at Macbeth and shout, 'Hail, Macbeth!'

Then one of them says, '*Hail to you, Macbeth the good soldier!*'

And another one says, '*Hail to you, Macbeth the general!*'

And finally the third one says, '*Hail to you, Macbeth the King!*'

Macbeth is **startled** now and a little **scared**. 'What are they saying? How do they know my name?' he asks Banquo.

'My dear Macbeth, do not worry. They are saying good things about you.'



*At that moment, they see three witches standing under a tree.
The witches are dancing in a circle.*

'They see your future,' Banquo continues speaking to Macbeth. Then he speaks to the witches. 'Can you tell me my future, too?'

The three witches look at Banquo. One of them says, 'Your sons will be kings, but you will not be a king.' Then they all shout, 'Hail, Banquo, the father of kings!'

Macbeth is very excited now. He begins to speak to the witches. 'Who are you? How do you know those things about my future? Speak to me. Tell me more,' he says to them.

But suddenly the witches disappear. Macbeth and Banquo look around for them. They can't see the witches anywhere. They are startled again.

'Perhaps they are witches,' Banquo says. 'But are they real? Maybe we just **imagine** them because we are very tired and sleepy.'

'I think they are real,' says Macbeth. Then he adds, 'Your sons will be kings. That's very good.'

Banquo smiles and says, 'And you will be the King! But first, you will be a general.'

Macbeth and Banquo continue to walk to Forres. On the way, they meet two noblemen, Angus and King Duncan's cousin Ross.

'We are coming from Forres. The King wants to see Macbeth immediately,' Ross says to the two brave soldiers.

Then Angus looks at Macbeth and says, 'The King also sends his thanks to you, Macbeth. And we have some news for you.'

Then Ross says, 'Macbeth, the King is very happy to hear about

your bravery. He is very **proud** of you. We are going to take you to the King. He will make you the general of our army.'

'So, you are the new general of the Scottish army, Macbeth!' adds Angus.

Both Macbeth and Banquo are shocked. They think about the witches' words.

'Macbeth, the good soldier, and now, Macbeth, the general! And perhaps I will be the King, too,' Macbeth thinks to himself. And to Ross and Angus, he politely says, 'Thank you for the news.'

Then he **whispers** in Banquo's ear, 'The witches' words about the future are coming true. That means you will be the father of kings.'

'I can't believe this! It's so strange. Is this a good thing for you or a good thing?' Banquo says to Macbeth very quietly. Then he begins a conversation with Angus and Ross.

Macbeth thinks to himself again, 'Perhaps this is good for me. But it is bad, too, because I can kill King Duncan. I want to become the King.' Then he is scared of this idea. He says, 'Oh, this is a horrible idea! I must stop imagining things. I don't want to be a **murderer**.'

'Look at Macbeth! He is in a shock,' Banquo says to the two noblemen at that moment. And he asks Macbeth, 'Are you ready to go to the King?'

'I am ready, gentlemen. Let's go,' Macbeth says to the three men. And he thanks Ross and Angus for coming there and for giving him the news. They all set off for the King's camp.

Macbeth and Banquo arrive at the King's camp at Forres together

with the two noblemen. King Duncan is very happy to see Macbeth.

'My brave soldier! I want to thank you. All the Scottish people want to thank you, too. You are now the general of the Scottish army!' the King says to Macbeth.

'Your Highness, it is my **duty** to serve you and to protect my country,' Macbeth says. 'I am just doing my duty. My duty to you is like the duty of a servant to his master.'

'This is the beginning of a new life and new career for you, Macbeth,' the King says. Then he speaks to Banquo. 'You are **brave** just like Macbeth. I am thankful to you, too. Everyone must know this.'

'I am most **grateful**, your Highness,' says Banquo.

Afterwards, King Duncan speaks to the soldiers and lords at the camp. 'My sons, relatives, and lords! I want to give my kingdom to my eldest son, Malcolm. So, today I am making him the prince of Cumberland.'

Then to Macbeth, he says, 'Let's go to your **castle**, Macbeth. I will be your guest for a night.'

'Can I go there now? I want to give the news to my wife at once,' Macbeth says to the King. And he leaves the camp. On the way, he thinks about the future and makes some plans.

'The King's son Malcolm is the prince of Cumberland now. So, he will become the King after Duncan. That's not good for me. I must be the King,' he says to himself. 'I will do something about this. I have many **desires**. My wishes are **horrible**. I have horrible plans. I really do not want to do **evil** things, but I must.'



Macbeth and Banquo arrive at the King's camp at Forres together with the two noblemen.

ACTIVITIES

A. Write the names of these characters.

1. The King of Scotland: _____
2. A brave soldier; also a friend of Macbeth: _____
3. The King's oldest son: _____
4. A Scottish noble man; also the King's cousin: _____
5. Another Scottish nobleman: _____

B. Choose the correct word for each picture. Then write the word in the blank under the picture.

whisper

witch

creature

startled

castle

wounded

guard

proud

evil

murderer

scared

tent



1. a(n) _____



2. a(n) _____ bird



3. a(n) _____



4. the _____ s



5. a _____



6. a(n) _____



7. a strange _____



8. He is _____ of his son.



9. He is a(n) _____ man.



10. He seems _____.



11. She's _____ ing to her.



12. He is very _____.

C. Read each definition and put the missing letters to write the word.

1. to enter a country or city by force and to take control of it:

i _ _ a _ e

2. to think about something and form a picture of it in your mind:

_ _ _ g _ _ e

3. job or something you must do: d _ _ _

4. wanting to give thanks to someone: g _ _ _ _ f _ _

5. very unpleasant, very bad: h _ r r _ _ _ _

6. the ability to do dangerous or difficult things without fear:

b _ _ _ _ _ y

7. a strong wish to do or to have something: d _ _ _ _ e

D. Are these statements true or false? Mark T (True) or F (False).

1. The King of Norway wants to take Scotland. _____
2. Macbeth kills the general of the Norwegian army in the battle. _____
3. Scotland loses the battle. _____
4. The three witches say horrible things about Macbeth's future. _____
5. The witches do not say anything about Banquo's future. _____
6. Macbeth goes to the King's camp alone. _____
7. King Duncan is grateful to Macbeth. _____
8. Macbeth and his wife live in a castle. _____
9. The King makes his oldest son the Prince of Forres. _____
10. Macbeth has pleasant plans and desires. _____

GLOSSARY

Chapter 1

battle (n) a fight between armies in a war

brave (adj) dealing with danger with courage; fearless; courageous

bravery (n) actions that show courage

castle (n) a large building with thick walls that was built in the past to protect the city during wars

creature (n) an imaginary animal or person that is strange and frightening

desire (n) a strong wish to do or have something

desire (v)

duty (n) a work that you have to do because it is your job; responsibility

evil (adj) very cruel and morally wrong

grateful (adj) feeling that you need to thank someone because they have done something kind; thankful

guard (n) a person, especially a soldier, whose duty is to protect someone or a place

guard (v)

horrible (adj) very unpleasant and causing horror

horribly (adv)

imagine (v) to form an image or idea in your mind about something

imagination (n)

invade (v) to enter a country with an army to take control of it

invasion (n); invader (n)

murderer (n) someone who killed another person

murder (v)

proud (adj) feeling happy about something good you have done

scared (adj) feeling afraid; frightened

scare (v); scary (adj)

startle (v) to surprise and frighten suddenly and unexpectedly; to shock

startled (adj)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) was an English poet and playwright, who is considered to be the greatest writer in the English language.

Shakespeare was born to a prosperous family in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon. He was the third of six children. He went to a local grammar school where he learned about poetry, history, Greek and Latin.

When he was 18, he married an older woman named Anne Hathaway, and they had three children. Although there are no exact records, it is considered that Shakespeare started to live in London after his marriage. During his time in London, he spent most of his time writing and acting in his plays. In 1590s, Shakespeare became a founding member of a company of actors called The Lord Chamberlain's Men, later known as The King's Men. In 1599, the members of the company built their own theatre which they named The Globe.

Shakespeare wrote most of his well-known works between 1589 and 1613. His early plays were mainly comedies, like *Much Ado About Nothing* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and histories, like *Henry V*. Later, he began to write tragedies, including *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*. They are all considered to be among the finest works in the English language. During his life time, he wrote 38 plays which were all very popular and commercially successful. His plays were performed for both Queen Elizabeth and King James I.

In the 1590s, Shakespeare also wrote poems mainly about love, death and time. In 1609, his poems were published all together in *Sonnets*. Shakespeare's use of language helped shape modern English, and his works influenced generations of writers.

Sources

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