

Act I

Act 1, Scene 2

Duncan:

“No more that thane of Cawdor shall deceive our bosom interest: go pronounce his present death and with his former title greet Macbeth.”

Translation:

That thane of Cawdor will never again betray me. Go announce his execution, and tell Macbeth that he is now thane of Cawdor.

Act 1, Scene 3

Macbeth:

“My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical shakes so my single state of man.”

Translation:

Even though it’s just a fantasy right now, the thought of committing murder really shakes me up.

Act 1, Scene 3

Banquo:

“What are these so withered and so wild in their attire that look not like th’ inhabitants’ o’ th’ Earth, and yet are on’t?”

Translation:

What are these old and crazily-dressed creatures? They don’t look like they belong on this planet, but I see them standing here on Earth.

Act 1, Scene 3

Banquo:

“And often times, to win us to our harm, the instruments of darkness tell us truths win us with honest trifles, to betray ‘s in deepest consequence.”

Translation:

Evil beings often tell us part of the truth in order to lead us to harm. They earn our trust by telling the truth about little things, and betray us when it will hurt most.

Act I

Act 1, Scene 3

Macbeth:
“If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me.”

Translation:
If fate wants me to be king, maybe it will just happen and I won't have to do anything.

Act 1, Scene 3

Banquo:
“You should be women, And yet your bearts forbid me to interpret that you are so.”

Translation:
You look like women, but your beards would say otherwise.

Act 1, Scene 3

Banquo:
“Were such things here as we do speak about? Or have we eaten on the insane root that takes the reason prisoner.”

Translation:
Were these things we're talking about actually here? Or are we both on drugs?

Act 1, Scene 3

Macbeth:
“If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,
Against the use of nature?”

Translation:
But if this is a good thing, why do I find myself thinking about murdering King Duncan, a thought so horrifying that it makes my hair stand on end and my heart pound inside my chest?

Act I

Act 1, Scene 4

Macbeth:

“Stars, hide your fires; Let not light see my black and deep desires.”

Translation:

Stars, hide your light so that no one can see the terrible desires within me.

Act 1, Scene 4

Duncan:

“I have begun to plant thee, and will labor to make thee full of growing.”

Translation:

I have placed you on a successful path, and will work to help you continue to succeed.

Act 1, Scene 5

Macbeth:

“We will proceed no further in this business. He hath honored me of late, and I have bought Golden opinions from all sorts of people, Which would be worn now in their newest gloss, Not cast aside so soon.”

Translation:

We can't go on with this plan. The king has just honored me, and I have earned the good opinion of all sorts of people. I want to enjoy these honors while the feeling is fresh and not throw them away so soon.

Act 1, Scene 5

Lady Macbeth:

“Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
Of direst cruelty. ”

Translation:

Come, you spirits that assist murderous thoughts, make me less like a woman and more like a man, and fill me from head to toe with deadly cruelty!

Act I & II

Act 1, Scene 5

Lady Macbeth:

“The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements.”

Translation:

So the messenger is short of breath, like a hoarse raven, as he announces Duncan’s entrance into my fortress, where he will die.

Act 1, Scene 5

Lady Macbeth:

“Yet I do fear thy nature; It is too full o’ the milk of human kindness to catch the nearest way.”

Translation:

I worry about whether you have what it takes; you are too full of compassion to strike aggressively at opportunities.”

Act 2, Scene 1

Macbeth:

“So I lose none in seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counselled.”

Translation:

I’ll do whatever you say, as long as I can do it with a clear conscience.

Act 2, Scene 1

Macbeth:

“Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.”

Translation:

Is this a dagger I see in front of me, with its handle pointing toward my hand? Come, let me hold you. I don’t have you but I can still see you.

Act II

Act 2, Scene 1

Macbeth:

“I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going,
And such an instrument I was to use.”

Translation:

I can still see you, and you look as real as this other dagger that I'm pulling out now. You're leading me toward the place I was going already, and I was planning to use a weapon just like you.

Act 2, Scene 1

Macbeth:

“ – I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There's no such thing.
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes.”

Translation:

I can still see you, and I see blood splashes on your blade and handle that weren't there before. There's no dagger here. It's the murder I'm about to do that's making me think I see one.

Act 2, Scene 1

Macbeth:

“Whiles I threat, he lives.
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.”

Translation:

While I stay here talking, Duncan lives. The more I talk, the more my courage cools.

Act 2, Scene 1

Macbeth:

“I go, and it is done. The bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.”

Translation:

I'm going now. The murder is as good as done. The bell is telling me to do it. Don't listen to the bell, Duncan, because it summons you either to heaven or to hell.

Act II

Act 2, Scene 1

Lady Macbeth:

“That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold.
What hath quenched them hath given me fire.”

Translation:

The alcohol that got the servants drunk has made me bold. The same liquor that quenched their thirst has fired me up.

Act 2, Scene 2

Lady Macbeth:

“The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores. I have drugged their
possets That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.”

Translation:

The doors to Duncan’s chamber are open, and the drunk servants are a mockery, snoring instead of protecting the king. I drugged them so much you can’t tell if they’re alive or dead.

Act 2, Scene 2

Macbeth:

“Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,
The death of each day’s life, sore labor’s bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature’s second course,
Chief nourisher in life’s feast.”

Translation:

Sleep that soothes away all our worries. Sleep that puts each day to rest. Sleep that relieves the work and heals hurt minds. Sleep, the main course of life, and the most nourishing.

Act 2, Scene 2

Lady Macbeth:

“’Tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I’ll gild the faces of the grooms withal,
For it must seem their guilt.”

Translation:

Only children are afraid of scary pictures. If Duncan bleeds I’ll paint the servants’ faces with his blood. We must make it seem like they’re guilty.

Act II

Act 2, Scene 2

Macbeth:

“Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
Making the green one red.”

Translation:

Will all the water in the ocean wash this blood from my hands? No, instead my hands will stain the seas scarlet, turning the green waters red.

Act 2, Scene 2

Lady Macbeth:

“My hands are of your color, but I shame
To wear a heart so white.”

Translation:

My hands are as red as yours, but I would be ashamed if my heart were as pale and weak.

Act 2, Scene 2

Macduff:

“Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak.
See, and then speak yourselves.”

Translation:

Go into the bedroom and see for yourself. What’s in there will make you freeze with horror. Don’t ask me to talk about it. Go look and then do the talking yourselves.

Act 2, Scene 2

Macbeth:

“One cried, “God bless us!” and “Amen” the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman’s hands.
List’ning their fear I could not say “Amen,”
When they did say “God bless us!”

Translation:

One servant cried, “God bless us!” and the other replied, “Amen,” as if they had seen my bloody hands. Listening to their frightened voices, I couldn’t reply “Amen” when they said “God bless us!”

Act II

Act 2, Scene 3

Macbeth:

“Had I but died an hour before this chance,
I had lived a blessed time, for from this instant
There’s nothing serious in mortality.”

Translation:

If I had only died an hour before this event I could say I had lived a blessed life. Because from this moment on, there is nothing worth living for.

Act 2, Scene 3

Macbeth:

“All is but toys. Renown and grace is dead.
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.”

Translation:

Everything is a sick joke. The graceful and renowned king is dead. The wine of life has been poured out, and only the dregs remain.

Act 2, Scene 3

Donalbain:

“To Ireland, I. Our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are,
There’s daggers in men’s smiles. The near in blood,
The nearer bloody.”

Translation:

I’ll go to Ireland. We’ll both be safer if we go separate ways. Wherever we go, men will smile at us while hiding daggers. Our closest relatives are the ones most likely to murder us.

Act 2, Scene 3

Macduff:

“– Up, up, and see
The great doom’s image! Malcolm! Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance this horror! Ring the bell.”

Translation:

Get up, get up, and look at this image of doomsday! Malcolm! Banquo! Get up as if you were rising out of your own graves and walk like ghosts to come witness this horror. Ring the bell.

Act III

Act 3, Scene 1

Lady Macbeth:

“If he had been forgotten, it had been as a gap in our great feast, and all-thing unbecoming.”

Translation:

If we forget him, our big celebration wouldn't be complete, and that wouldn't be good.

Act 3, Scene 1

Macbeth:

“It is concluded. Banquo, thy soul's flight, if it find heaven, must find it out tonight.”

Translation:

The deal is closed. Banquo, if your soul is going to make it to heaven, tonight's the night.

Act 3, Scene 1

Macbeth:

“Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown, and put a barren sceptre in my gripe, thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand, no son of mine succeeding.”

Translation:

By not having an heir, the throne is left vulnerable.

Act 3, Scene 2

Macbeth:

“And make our faces vizards to our hearts, disguising what they are.”

Translation:

Let us disguise our faces and mask our unease.

Act III

Act 3, Scene 2

Macbeth:

“The bat hat 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.”

Translation:

Macbeth is planning another murder.

Act 3, Scene 2

Macbeth:

“O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!
Thou know’st that Banquo, and his Fleance, lives.”

Translation:

**My mind is uneasy, dear wife as long as Banquo and
Fleance live.**

Act 3, Scene 3

Second Murderer:

“He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers our offices
and what we have to do to the direction just.”

Translation:

**We can trust this guy. He was given exactly the same
orders we were.**

Act 3, Scene 4

Macbeth:

“It will have blood they say. Blood will have blood.
Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak.”

Translation:

**The dead will have their revenge. Gravestones have
been known to move, and trees to speak, to bring
guilty men to justice.**

Act III

Act 3, Scene 4

Macbeth:

“I do forget. Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends, I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing to those that know me.”

Translation:

I forgot to tell you, don't laugh at me, my guests, as I have a strange disorder which doesn't shock those that know me.”

Act 3, Scene 4

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.”

Translation:

Oh, that's nonsense! This is just another one of the hallucinations you get when you're afraid. This is like that floating dagger you said was leading you toward Duncan.

Act 3, Scene 4

Macbeth:

“There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled. Hath nature that in time will venom breed.”

Translation:

Macbeth is unhappy about the escape because the throne is unsecure.

Act 3, Scene 5

Hecate:

“He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear his hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear. And you all know, security is mortals' chiefest enemy.”

Translation:

He will be fooled into thinking he is greater than fate, will mock death, and think he is above wisdom, grace, and fear. As you all know, overconfidence is man's greatest enemy.

Act III & IV

Act 3, Scene 6

Lennox:

“The gracious Duncan was pitied of Macbeth. Marry, he was dead. And the right-valiant Banquo walked too late, whom, you may say, if’t please you, Fleance killed, for Fleance fled. Men must not walk too late.”

Translation:

Macbeth pitied Duncan after he was dead. And Banquo went walking too late at night. Fleance may have killed him because she fled.

Act 4, Scene 1

Third Apparition:

“Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are.”

Translation:

Be brave like the lion and proud. Don’t even worry about who hates you, who resents you, and who conspires against you.

Act 4, Scene 2

Lady Macduff:

“I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world, where to do harm
Is often laudable, to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly.”

Translation:

I haven’t done anything wrong. But I have to remember that I’m here on Earth, where doing evil is often praised, and doing good is sometimes a stupid and dangerous mistake.

Act 4, Scene 2

Lady Macduff:

“All is the fear and nothing is the love,
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.”

Translation:

His running away has everything to do with fear and nothing to do with love. And since it’s so unreasonable for him to run away, it has nothing to do with wisdom either.

Act IV

Act 4, Scene 3

Macduff (to Malcolm):
“Fit to govern?
No, not to live.—O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-sceptered,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again.”

Translation:

Fit to be king? You’re not fit to live!—Oh miserable nation, ruled by a usurping, murderous tyrant, when will you see peaceful days again?

Act 4, Scene 3

Macduff:
“Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny. It hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne
And fall of many kings.”

Translation:

Endless greed and lust in a man’s nature is a kind of tyranny. It has caused the downfall of many kings.

Act 4, Scene 3

Malcolm:
“What I believe I’ll wail;
What know believe, and what I can redress,
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.”

Translation:

I will avenge whatever I believe is wrong. And I’ll believe whatever I’m sure is true. And I’ll put right whatever I can when the time comes.

Act 4, Scene 3

Malcolm (to Macduff):
“Be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief
Convert to anger. Blunt not the heart, enrage it.”

Translation:

Let this anger sharpen your sword. Transform your grief into anger. Don’t block the feelings in your heart; let them loose as rage.

Act IV & V

Act 4, Scene 3

Ross:
“That of an hour’s age doth hiss the speaker.
Each minute teems a new one.”

Translation:
Even news an hour old is old news. Every minute another awful thing happens.

Act 5, Scene 1

Lady Macbeth:
“Here’s the smell of the blood still; all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.”

Translation:
I still have the smell of blood on my hand. All the perfumes of Arabia couldn’t make my little hand smell better.

Act 5, Scene 2

Augus:
“Those he commands move only in command. Nothing in love; now does he feel his title hang loose about him, like a giant’s robe upon a dwarfish thief.”

Translation:
The soldiers he commands are only following orders. They don’t fight because they love Macbeth. Now he seems too small to be a great king, like a midget trying to wear the robe of a giant.

Act 5, Scene 3

Macbeth:
“I would applaud thee to the very echo that should applaud again.”

Translation:
I will praise you to the end of the Earth, where the sound will echo so you can hear the applause again.

Act V

Act 5, Scene 4

Macduff:

“Let our just censures attend the true event, and put we on industrious soldiership.”

Translation:

We shouldn't make any judgements until we achieve our goal. Let's go fight like hardworking soldiers.

Act 5, Scene 5

Macbeth:

“I 'gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish th' estate o' th' world were now undone.”

Translation:

I'm getting tired of living, and would like to see the world plunged into chaos.

Act 5, Scene 5

Macbeth:

“—Blow, wind! Come, wrack!
At least we'll die with harness on our back.”

Translation:

Blow, wind! Come, destroy! At least we'll die with our armor on.

Act 5, Scene 5

Macbeth:

“Hang out our banners on the outward walls. The cry is still “They come!” Our castle's strength will laugh a siege to scorn.”

Translation:

Hang our flags on the outer walls. Everyone keeps yelling, “Here they come!” Our castle is strong enough to laugh off their siege.

Act V

Act 5, Scene 6

Macduff:

“Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath,
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death.”

Translation:

Blow all the trumpets. They loudly announce the news of blood and death.

Act 5, Scene 8

Macbeth:

“Why should I play the Roman fool and die
On mine own sword? Whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them.”

Translation:

Why should I commit suicide like one of the ancient Romans? As long as I see enemies of mine alive, I would rather see my sword wound them than me.

Act 5, Scene 8

Macbeth:

“Of all men else I have avoided thee.
But get thee back. My soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.”

Translation:

You are the only man I have avoided. But go away now. I'm already guilty of killing your whole family.

Act 5, Scene 8

Macduff:

“I have no words.
My voice is in my sword. Thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out!”

Translation:

I have nothing to say to you. My sword will talk for me. You are too evil for words!

Act V

Act 5, Scene 8

Macduff:

“Despair thy charm,
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother’s womb
Untimely ripped.”

Translation:

You can forget about your charm. The evil spirit you serve can tell you that I was not born. They cut me out of my mother’s womb before she could bear me naturally.

Act 5, Scene 8

Macbeth:

“And be these juggling fiends no more believed,
That palter with us in a double sense,
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I’ll not fight with thee.”

Translation:

I don’t believe those evil creatures anymore. They tricked me with their wordgames, raising my hopes and then destroying them. I won’t fight you.

Act 5, Scene 8

Macduff:

“Then yield thee, coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o’ th’ time.”

Translation:

Then surrender, coward, and we’ll put you in a freakshow.

Act 5, Scene 8

Macbeth:

“Lay on, Macduff,
And damned be him that first cries, “Hold, enough!”

Translation:

Fight me. The first who cries “enough” loses.