

Exemplar Drama – The Tragedy of Macbeth

Shakespeare, William. *The Tragedy of Macbeth*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954. (c1611)

ACT V. SCENE I.

Dunsinane. Anteroom in the castle.

Enter a Doctor of Physic and a Waiting Gentlewoman.

Doctor. I have two nights watch'd with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walk'd?

Gentlewoman. Since his majesty went into the field, have seen her rise from her bed, throw her nightgown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep.

Doctor. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching! In this slumbry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

Gentlewoman. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

Doctor. You may to me, and 'tis most meet you should.

Gentlewoman. Neither to you nor anyone, having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter Lady Macbeth, with a taper.

Lo you, here she comes. This is her very guise, and upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

Doctor. How came she by that light?

Gentlewoman. Why, it stood by her. She has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

Doctor. You see her eyes are open.

Gentlewoman. Ay, but their sense are shut.

Doctor. What is it she does now? Look how she rubs her hands.

Gentlewoman. It is an accustom'd action with her, to seem thus washing her hands. I have

known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

Lady Macbeth. Yet here's a spot.

Doctor. Hark! She speaks. I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

Lady Macbeth. Out, damned spot! Out, I say! One; two. Why, then, 'tis time to do't. Hell is murky. Fie, my lord, fie! A soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to accompt? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

Doctor. Do you mark that?

Lady Macbeth. The Thane of Fife had a wife. Where is she now? What, will these hands ne'er be clean? No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that! You mar all with this starting.

Doctor. Go to, go to! You have known what you should not.

Gentlewoman. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that. Heaven knows what she has known.

Lady Macbeth. Here's the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doctor. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charg'd.

Gentlewoman. I would not have such a heart in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

Doctor. Well, well, well.

Gentlewoman. Pray God it be, sir.

Doctor. This disease is beyond my practice. Yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

Lady Macbeth. Wash your hands, put on your nightgown, look not so pale. I tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

Doctor. Even so?

Lady Macbeth. To bed, to bed! There's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed! Exit Lady.

Doctor. Will she go now to bed?

Gentlewoman. Directly.

Doctor. Foul whisp'rings are abroad. Unnatural deeds

Do breed unnatural troubles. Infected minds

To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets.

More needs she the divine than the physician.

God, God, forgive us all! Look after her;

Remove from her the means of all annoyance,

And still keep eyes upon her. So, good night.

My mind she has mated, and amaz'd my sight.

I think, but dare not speak.

Gentlewoman. Good night, good doctor.

Exeunt.

Media Text

Judi Dench (Lady Macbeth) performs this scene in a 1979 production with Ian McKellen:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOkyZWQ2bmQ> McKellen analyzes the "To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow" speech from Act V, Scene 5:

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=883718043846080512#docid=7225091828250988008>

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects