

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

MACBETH

Bird Publisher, 2012

About this eBook

MACBETH
William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare, 1606
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Dramatis Personae

LEAR, KING OF BRITAIN.

KING OF FRANCE.

DUKE OF BURGUNDY.

DUKE OF CORNWALL.

DUKE OF ALBANY.

EARL OF KENT.

EARL OF GLOUCESTER.

EDGAR, son of Gloucester.

EDMUND, bastard son to Gloucester.

CURAN, a courtier.

OLD MAN, tenant to Gloucester.

DOCTOR.

LEAR'S FOOL.

OSWALD, steward to Goneril.

A CAPTAIN under Edmund's command.

GENTLEMEN.

A HERALD.

SERVANTS to Cornwall.

GONERIL, daughter to Lear.

REGAN, daughter to Lear.

CORDELIA, daughter to Lear.

KNIGHTS attending on Lear, **OFFICERS, MESSENGERS, SOLDIERS, ATTENDANTS.**

Scene:

Britain.

ACT I.

Scene I.

King Lear's Palace.

Enter Kent, Gloucester, and Edmund. [Kent and Gloucester converse. Edmund stands back.]

KENT. I thought the King had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

GLOUCESTER. It did always seem so to us; but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the Dukes he values most, for equalities are so weigh'd that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety.

KENT. Is not this your son, my lord?

GLOUCESTER. His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge. I have so often blush'd to acknowledge him that now I am braz'd to't.

KENT. I cannot conceive you.

GLOUCESTER. Sir, this young fellow's mother could; whereupon she grew round-womb'd, and had indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault?

KENT. I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

GLOUCESTER. But I have, sir, a son by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account. Though this knave came something saucily into the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair, there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged.- Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund?

EDMUND. [*comes forward*] No, my lord.

GLOUCESTER. My Lord of Kent. Remember him hereafter as my honourable friend.

EDMUND. My services to your lordship.

KENT. I must love you, and sue to know you better.

EDMUND. Sir, I shall study deserving.

GLOUCESTER. He hath been out nine years, and away he shall again.

Sound a sennet.

The King is coming.

Enter one bearing a coronet; then Lear; then the Dukes of Albany and Cornwall; next, Goneril, Regan, Cordelia, with Followers.

LEAR. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

GLOUCESTER. I shall, my liege.

Exeunt [Gloucester and Edmund].

LEAR. Meantime we shall express our darker purpose.

Give me the map there. Know we have divided
 In three our kingdom; and 'tis our fast intent
 To shake all cares and business from our age,
 Conferring them on younger strengths while we
 Unburthen'd crawl toward death. Our son of Cornwall,
 And you, our no less loving son of Albany,
 We have this hour a constant will to publish
 Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
 May be prevented now. The princes, France and Burgundy,
 Great rivals in our youngest daughter's love,
 Long in our court have made their amorous sojourn,
 And here are to be answer'd. Tell me, my daughters

(Since now we will divest us both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state),
Which of you shall we say doth love us most?
That we our largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge. Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

GONERIL. Sir, I love you more than words can wield the matter;
Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable.
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

CORDELIA. [aside] What shall Cordelia speak? Love, and be silent.

LEAR. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this,
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make thee lady. To thine and Albany's issue
Be this perpetual. - What says our second daughter,
Our dearest Regan, wife to Cornwall? Speak.

REGAN. Sir, I am made
Of the selfsame metal that my sister is,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love;
Only she comes too short, that I profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys
Which the most precious square of sense possesses,
And find I am alone felicitate
In your dear Highness' love.

CORDELIA. [aside] Then poor Cordelia!
And yet not so; since I am sure my love's
More richer than my tongue.