

Macbeth – Act II

Scene i

Macbeth's castle after midnight.

Banquo and his son Fleance walk in the hall of the castle. Then Macbeth enters; they talk about the witches' prophecy.

Macbeth suddenly has a vision of a dagger floating in the air before him. A bell tolls and Macbeth goes on toward Duncan's chamber.

Scene ii

Macbeth's castle after midnight.

Macbeth leaves the hall, Lady Macbeth enters. She imagines Macbeth killing the king, but then fears he could fail. Macbeth enters, his hands covered in blood; the deed is done. Macbeth is confused and talks about a voice he has heard. He forgets to leave the daggers in Duncan's room and refuses to go there again. Lady Macbeth calls him a coward and goes to take the daggers back to Duncan's room. Suddenly there is a knocking.

Scene iii

Macbeth's castle, early morning.

A porter stumbles through the hallway to answer the knocking. Macduff and Lennox enter the castle asking for the king. Macduff discovers the king lying dead in his chamber. General chaos ensues. The daggers have been found in the chamberlains' room. Macbeth claims to have identified them as the murderers and therefore he has killed them at once. Malcolm and Donalbain arrive and realise they are not safe any more. Malcolm flees to England and Donalbain to Ireland.

Scene iv

Outside the castle.

Ross and an old man discuss the strange happenings. Macduff emerges from the castle and tells Ross that Macbeth has been made king. Suspicion has now fallen on Malcolm and Donalbain because they have fled. Ross departs for Scone to see the new king's coronation.