

Macbeth abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 3

Fantasy

Situation: Deep in a forest in twelfth century Scotland, three fantasy witches tell bewildered Macbeth and Banquo that Macbeth will receive an additional title and will be king and that Banquo will be the father of kings. Macbeth and Banquo are two of King Duncan's military leaders. Following their revelation, the witches disappear into the air.

Separately, the three witches are talking among themselves when Macbeth and Banquo enter.

MACBETH: Speak if you can. What are you?

WITCH ONE: Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor, though shalt be king hereafter!

BANQUO: To me you speak not. If you can look into the seeds of time and say which grain will grow and which will not, speak, then, to me, who neither beg nor fear your favors nor your hate.

WITCH THREE: Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none. So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo.
The witches vanish.

Macbeth to Banquo

By my father's death I know I am Thane
Of Glamis, but how of Cawdor, the bane
Of all who would be king, a prosperous
Gentleman, who lives? Say from whence they owe
This most strange intelligence; why give us
Such prophetic greeting? Where did they go,
As breath into the wind? If this be ill,
Why do I feel success? If good, why fill
I my head with present fears that unfix
My hair and make my seated heart knock at
My ribs? My fearful thought of murder sticks
As to smother and shake my state, as that
Of one who functions not. But if I were
To be king, chance may crown me without stir.