

ACT IV.

SCENE I. A dark Cave. A Caldron Boiling.

Entrails . internal organs Gibbet- gallows
Cauldron- a kettle Pernicious- wicked
Germ- source of life

[Thunder. Enter the three Witches.]

FIRST WITCH.

Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd.

SECOND WITCH.

Thrice; and once the hedge-pig whin'd.

THIRD WITCH.

Harpier cries: 'tis time, 'tis time.

FIRST WITCH.

Round about the caldron go;
In the poison'd entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone,
Days and nights has thirty-one
Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' the charmed pot!

ALL.

Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and caldron, bubble.

SECOND WITCH.

Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt, and toe of frog,
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting,
Lizard's leg, and howlet's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

ALL.

Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and caldron, bubble.

THIRD WITCH.

Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witch's mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravin'd salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digg'd i' the dark,
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Sliver'd in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips,
Finger of birth-strangl'd babe
Ditch-deliver'd by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,
For the ingredients of our caldron.

ALL.

Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and caldron, bubble.

SECOND WITCH.

Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

[Enter Hecate.]

Recall Macbeth's purpose in visiting the witches. Note that this "production number" of evil follows immediately the thanes' call for heavenly aid.

D. Where have we heard the offstage cries of these animals earlier in the play?

A. In the eyes of Shakespeare's audience what quality would Turks, Tartars, and Jews share?

HECATE.

O, well done! I commend your pains;
And everyone shall share i' the gains.
And now about the cauldron sing,
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.

Song.

Black spirits and white, red spirits and gray;
Mingle, mingle, mingle, you that mingle may.
[Exit Hecate.]

SECOND WITCH.

By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes:
Open, locks, whoever knocks!
[Enter Macbeth.]

MACBETH.

How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is't you do?

ALL.

A deed without a name.

MACBETH.

I conjure you, by that which you profess,
Howe'er you come to know it, answer me:
Though you untie the winds, and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty waves
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed corn be lodg'd, and trees blown
down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the
treasure
Of nature's germins tumble all together,
Even till destruction sicken, answer me
To what I ask you.

FIRST WITCH.

Speak.

SECOND WITCH.

Demand.

THIRD WITCH.

We'll answer.

FIRST WITCH.

Say, if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?

MACBETH.

Call 'em, let me see 'em.

FIRST WITCH.

Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow; grease that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet throw
Into the flame.

ALL.

Come, high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

[Thunder. An Apparition of an armed Head

B. What is Macbeth willing to have happen so long as he gets answer to his question?

C. When he first heard the witches' prophecies in Act I, what did Macbeth want to know?

What form does the first apparition take, and what does it say to Macbeth? What is Macbeth's reaction?

rises.]

MACBETH.

Tell me, thou unknown power,

FIRST WITCH.

He knows thy thought:

Hear his speech, but say thou naught.

APPARITION.

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff;

Beware the Thane of Fife. Dismiss me: enough.

[Descends.]

MACBETH.

Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks;

Thou hast harp'd my fear aright: but one word

more,

FIRST WITCH.

He will not be commanded: here's another,

More potent than the first.

[Thunder. An Apparition of a bloody Child

rises.]

APPARITION.

Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

MACBETH.

Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.

APPARITION.

Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn

The power of man, for none of woman born

Shall harm Macbeth.

[Descends.]

MACBETH.

Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?

But yet I'll make assurance double sure,

And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;

That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,

And sleep in spite of thunder. What is this,

[Thunder. An Apparition of a Child crowned,

with a tree in his hand, rises.]

That rises like the issue of a king,

And wears upon his baby brow the round

And top of sovereignty?

ALL.

Listen, but speak not to't.

APPARITION.

Be lion-mettled, proud; and take no care

Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:

Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be, until

Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill

Shall come against him.

[Descends.]

MACBETH.

That will never be:

Who can impress the forest; bid the tree

Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements,

good!

Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood

Of Birnam rise, and our high-plac'd Macbeth

What form does the second apparition take, and what does it say to Macbeth? What is Macbeth's reaction?

What form does the third apparition take, and what does it say to Macbeth? What is Macbeth's reaction?

Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom. Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me, if your art
Can tell so much, shall Banquo's issue ever
Reign in this kingdom?

ALL.

Seek to know no more.

MACBETH.

I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know:
Why sinks that cauldron? And what noise is this?

[Hautboys.]

FIRST WITCH.

Show!

SECOND WITCH.

Show!

THIRD WITCH.

Show!

ALL.

Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart!
[Eight kings appear, and pass over in order, the
last with a glass in his hand; Banquo following.]

MACBETH.

Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!
Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs: and thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first;
A third is like the former. Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this? A fourth! Start, eyes!
What, will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?
Another yet! A seventh! I'll see no more:
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That twofold balls and treble sceptres carry:
Horrible sight! Now I see 'tis true;
For the blood-bolter'd Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. What! Is this so?

FIRST WITCH.

Ay, sir, all this is so: but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights;
I'll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round;
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.
[Music. The Witches dance, and then vanish.]

MACBETH.

Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!
Come in, without there!

[Enter Lennox.]

LENNOX.

What's your grace's will?

MACBETH.

In asking this question, what is Macbeth wishing he can undo?

D. Will Banquo's issue rule? What is the extent of their rule?

[These objects suggest that Banquo's descendants will rule more than one kingdom.]

[Well, at least these evil characters have a sense of humor.]

Saw you the weird sisters?

LENNOX.

No, my lord.

MACBETH.

Came they not by you?

LENNOX.

No indeed, my lord.

MACBETH.

Infected be the air whereon they ride;
And damn'd all those that trust them! I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was't came by?

LENNOX.

'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.

MACBETH.

Fled to England!

LENNOX.

Ay, my good lord.

MACBETH.

Time, thou anticipat'st my dread exploits:
The flighty purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it: from this moment
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And even now,
To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and
done:

The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to the edge o' the sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do before this purpose cool:
But no more sights! Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV SCENE II. Fife. A Room in Macduff's
Castle.

Diminutive- small, weak Prattle- to talk childishly

[Enter Lady Macduff, her Son, and Ross.]

LADY MACDUFF.

What had he done, to make him fly the land?

ROSS.

You must have patience, madam.

LADY MACDUFF.

He had none:
His flight was madness: when our actions do not,
Our fears do make us traitors.

ROSS.

You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.

LADY MACDUFF.

Wisdom! To leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his titles, in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not:

Whom is Macbeth planning to kill, and why?

A. How is Macbeth's mental state in deciding upon these murders different from his mental state before the earlier murders?

B. How is the nature of these murders different from the earlier murders?

C. What do you know about these people that they themselves do not know (dramatic irony)?

D. Knowing what Macbeth is like, what does Lady Macduff fear her husband's flight to England will do?

A. What does Lady Macduff claim here, perhaps not wholly seriously, that her husband's motivation was?

He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
Her young ones in her nest, against the owl.
All is the fear, and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.

ROSS.

My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself: but, for your husband,
He is noble, wise, Judicious, and best knows
The fits o' the season. I dare not speak much
further:
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors,
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumour
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear,
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and move. I take my leave of you:
Shall not be long but I'll be here again:
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before. My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!

LADY MACDUFF.

Father'd he is, and yet he's fatherless.

ROSS.

I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once.

[Exit.]

LADY MACDUFF.

Sirrah, your father's dead;
And what will you do now? How will you live?

SON.

As birds do, mother.

LADY MACDUFF.

What, with worms and flies?

SON.

With what I get, I mean; and so do they.

LADY MACDUFF.

Poor bird! thou'dst never fear the net nor lime,
The pit-fall nor the gin.

SON.

Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set
for.

My father is not dead, for all your saying.

LADY MACDUFF.

Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for father?

SON.

Nay, how will you do for a husband?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.

SON.

Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.

LADY MACDUFF.

Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, i' faith,
With wit enough for thee.

B. What is Scotland like under Macbeth's rule?

[In tragedies, as soon as someone says things will get better,
head for cover.]

C. What parable of Christ's is young Macduff thinking of?
(Matt. Vi.26)

[lime and gin- nets and snares for catching birds]

D. How does this line explain the lack of reason in Macbeth's
plan to murder everyone in this castle?

A. Why is Shakespeare interested in making this mother and son
so appealing to the audience?

SON.

Was my father a traitor, mother?

LADY MACDUFF.

Ay, that he was.

SON.

What is a traitor?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, one that swears and lies.

SON.

And be all traitors that do so?

LADY MACDUFF.

Everyone that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

SON.

And must they all be hanged that swear and lie?

LADY MACDUFF.

Every one.

SON.

Who must hang them?

LADY MACDUFF.

Why, the honest men.

SON.

Then the liars and swearers are fools: for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men and hang up them.

LADY MACDUFF.

Now, God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father?

SON.

If he were dead, you'd weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

LADY MACDUFF.

Poor prattler, how thou talk'st!

[Enter a Messenger.]

MESSENGER.

Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honor I am perfect.
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you!

I dare abide no longer.

[Exit.]

LADY MACDUFF.

Whither should I fly?

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: why then, alas,
Do I put up that womanly defence,

B. How does this lines show that even children recognize the evil in the kind of world Macbeth has created?

C. What first thought does Lady Macduff quickly dismiss after remembering what the world is like?

To say I have done no harm? What are these faces?

[Enter Murderers.]

FIRST MURDERER.

Where is your husband?

LADY MACDUFF.

I hope, in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.

FIRST MURDERER.

He's a traitor.

SON.

Thou liest, thou shag-haar'd villain!

FIRST MURDERER.

What, you egg!

[Stabbing him.]

Young fry of treachery!

SON.

He has kill'd me, mother:

Run away, I pray you!

[Dies. Exit Lady Macduff, crying Murder, and
pursued by the Murderers.]

AVT IV SCENE III. England. The King's Palace.

Dolor- woe	Foison- plenty, wealth
Withal- besides	Covet- desire other's property
Graft- to insert a living plant into another	<u>Benediction- blessing</u> Teem- abundant with life
<u>Avarice- greed</u>	Niggard- stingy
Intemperance- inability to control one's desires	Whetstone- sharpening stone

[Enter Malcolm and Macduff.]

MALCOLM.

Let us seek out some desolate shade and there
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

MACDUFF.

Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and, like good men,
Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom: each new morn
New widows howl; new orphans cry; new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it resounds
As if it felt with Scotland, and yell'd out
Like syllable of dolor.

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.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole name blisters our tongues,
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well;
He hath not touch'd you yet. I am young; but
something
You may deserve of him through me; and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
To appease an angry god.

MACDUFF.

I am not treacherous.

MALCOLM.

How does this scene help create a character, Macduff, who can serve as the equal in substance and the opposite in character to Macbeth?

D. Rather than weeping for Scotland's woes, for what does Macduff call?

A. What does Malcolm suggest is the real reason for Macduff's coming to him? How is Malcolm trying to avoid his father's mistake?

But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your
pardon;
That which you are, my thoughts cannot transpose;
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell;
Though all things foul would wear the brows of
grace,
Yet grace must still look so.

MACDUFF.

I have lost my hopes.

MALCOLM.

Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness left you wife and child,
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love,
Without leave-taking? I pray you,
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,
But mine own safeties: you may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.

MACDUFF.

Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dare not check thee! wear thou thy
wrongs,
The title is affeer'd. Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp
And the rich East to boot.

MALCOLM.

Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps, it bleeds; and each new day a gash
Is added to her wounds. I think, withal,
There would be hands uplifted in my right;
And here, from gracious England, have I offer
Of goodly thousands: but, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country
Shall have more vices than it had before;
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.

MACDUFF.

What should he be?

MALCOLM.

It is myself I mean: in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be open'd, black Macbeth
Will seem as pure as snow; and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compar'd
With my confineless harms.

MACDUFF.

Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd
In evils to top Macbeth.

B. To what famous ex-angel does this refer, and how does the reference apply to this situation and to the entire play?

C. How is Malcolm trying to be wiser than his father? Compare Duncan's words in Act I Scene IV?

D. How does Malcolm here repeat Lady Macduff's own questions?

A. How does this speech distinguish Macduff from Macbeth?

B. What help has England promised Malcolm?

C. What does Malcolm say about himself here?

[Compare to swan/crow imagery of *Romeo and Juliet*.]

MALCOLM.

I grant him bloody,
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name: but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust; and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear,
That did oppose my will: better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.

MACDUFF.

Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
The untimely emptying of the happy throne,
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours: you may
Convey your pleasures in a spacious plenty,
And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclin'd.

MALCOLM.

With this there grows,
In my most ill-compos'd affection, such
A stanchless avarice, that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands;
Desire his jewels, and this other's house:
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more; that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal,
Destroying them for wealth.

MACDUFF.

This avarice
Sticks deeper; grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust; and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear;
Scotland hath foysons to fill up your will,
Of your mere own: all these are portable,
With other graces weigh'd.

MALCOLM.

But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them; but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I power, I should
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.

MACDUFF.

O Scotland, Scotland!

MALCOLM.

D. This is the first in a list of evils Malcolm will say he possesses. What is this vice?

A. Why is Macduff not worried about this vice?

B. What is the second vice?

C. How does Macduff answer this vice?

D. Finally, Malcolm says that he lacks any virtues. Why is he saying all this to Macduff?

If such a one be fit to govern, speak:

I am as I have spoken.

MACDUFF.

Fit to govern!

No, not to live! O nation miserable,
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accurs'd
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king; the queen that bore thee,
Oftener upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare-thee-well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banish'd me from Scotland. O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!

MALCOLM.

Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul
Wiped the black scruples, reconcil'd my thoughts
To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power; and modest wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste: but God above
Deal between thee and me! For even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction; here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman; never was forsworn;
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own;
At no time broke my faith; would not betray
The devil to his fellow; and delight
No less in truth than life: my first false speaking
Was this upon myself: what I am truly,
Is thine and my poor country's to command:
Whither, indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Siward, with ten thousand warlike men
Already at a point, was setting forth:
Now we'll together; and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel! Why are you silent?

MACDUFF.

Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'Tis hard to reconcile.

[Enter a Doctor.]

MALCOLM.

Well; more anon. Comes the king forth, I pray you?

DOCTOR.

Ay, sir: there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure: their malady convinces
The great assay of art; but, at his touch,
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.

MALCOLM.

I thank you, doctor.

A. How does Macduff pass the test Malcolm has set for him?

What was Malcolm's purpose in accusing himself? How does Macduff prove his loyalty to Scotland?

B. Although Malcolm says that Macduff's speech has changed Malcolm's vices into virtues, this speech describes the sort of person Malcolm has always been. Why should Malcolm be the King of Scotland?

[Macduff is, and many readers have been, confused by Malcolm's testing of Macduff's loyalties.]

[The Doctor explains that a real king is given by heaven the power to cure certain diseases. In this case, a skin disease.]

[Exit Doctor.]

MACDUFF.

What's the disease he means?

MALCOLM.

'Tis call'd the evil:

A most miraculous work in this good king;
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows: but strangely-visited people,
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures;
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers: and 'tis spoken,
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy;
And sundry blessings hang about his throne,
That speak him full of grace.

MACDUFF.

See, who comes here?

MALCOLM.

My countryman; but yet I know him not.

[Enter Ross.]

MACDUFF.

My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither.

MALCOLM.

I know him now. Good God, betimes remove
The means that makes us strangers!

ROSS.

Sir, amen.

MACDUFF.

Stands Scotland where it did?

ROSS.

Alas, poor country,
Almost afraid to know itself! It cannot
Be call'd our mother, but our grave: where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile;
Where sighs, and groans, and shrieks, that rent the
air,
Are made, not mark'd; where violent sorrow seems
A modern ecstasy; the dead man's knell
Is there scarce ask'd for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken.

MACDUFF.

O, relation
Too nice, and yet too true!

MALCOLM.

What's the newest grief?

ROSS.

That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;
Each minute teems a new one.

MACDUFF.

How does my wife?

ROSS.

C. What contrast to Macbeth is Shakespeare at pains to make here?

[After the digression into righteous kingship, this speech returns us to the matter at hand, Scotland's misery.]

Why, well.
MACDUFF.
And all my children?
ROSS.
Well too.
MACDUFF.
The tyrant has not batter'd at their peace?
ROSS.
No; they were well at peace when I did leave
'em.
MACDUFF.
Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes't?
ROSS.
When I came hither to transport the tidings,
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumor
Of many worthy fellows that were out;
Which was to my belief witness'd the rather,
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot:
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland
Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.
MALCOLM.
Be't their comfort
We are coming thither: gracious England hath
Lent us good Siward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.
ROSS.
Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words
That would be howl'd out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch them.
MACDUFF.
What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief
Due to some single breast?
ROSS.
No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe; though the main part
Pertains to you alone.
MACDUFF.
If it be mine,
Keep it not from me, quickly let me have it.
ROSS.
Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.
MACDUFF.
Humh! I guess at it.
ROSS.
Your castle is surpris'd; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,
To add the death of you.
MALCOLM.

D. What does Macduff recognize as a danger of his coming to England?

A. What is there about Ross's response that makes Macduff suspicious?

[Finally Ross gets up the gumption to tell Macduff.]

B. Why does Shakespeare have Malcolm respond to Ross's news? What is Macduff doing onstage?

Merciful heaven!
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break.
MACDUFF.

My children too?

ROSS.

Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.

MACDUFF.

And I must be from thence!
My wife kill'd too?

ROSS.

I have said.

MALCOLM.

Be comforted:
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.

MACDUFF.

He has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say all? O hell-kite! All?
What, all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?

MALCOLM.

Dispute it like a man.

MACDUFF.

I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look
on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff,
They were all struck for thee! naught that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls: heaven rest them now!

MALCOLM.

Be this the whetstone of your sword. Let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart, enrage it.

MACDUFF.

O, I could play the woman with mine eye,
And braggart with my tongue! But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission; front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he 'scape,
Heaven forgive him too!

MALCOLM.

This tune goes manly.
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave: Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the powers above
Put on their instruments. Receive what cheer you
may;

The night is long that never finds the day.

[Exeunt.]

C. What common reaction to sudden grief do we see in the following lines?

D. What kind of emotional response does young Malcolm urge to the horrible news?

A. To whom might this "he" refer? What does the line mean with "he" referring to different people?

B. How does the definition of "man" discussed in the following exchange compare to Macbeth's and Lady Macbeth's discussion of the same word earlier in the play (I.vii)?

[Macduff's resolution prepares us for the final scenes.]

How does Malcolm plan to dethrone Macbeth?