

5: A TRAP FOR BANQUO

Adapted by Neil Richards

SCENE 11: LADY MACBETH'S CHAMBER

NARRATOR	<i>Macbeth has been crowned King of Scotland. The day of his coronation is to end with a great banquet to celebrate. In her bedroom, Lady Macbeth waits for her husband. She's having second thoughts...</i>
LADY MACBETH	All I ever wanted was for Macbeth to be king. Now that he is - I wish it had never happened. Not this way.
MACBETH	Are you ready my queen? We should go down.
LADY MACBETH	What are you planning Macbeth?
MACBETH	Just wait...
LADY MACBETH	I can't go on like this.
MACBETH	You won't have to. Soon it will be night - and in the night, anything is possible.
LADY MACBETH	What do you mean?
MACBETH	Best you don't know. Trust me.
LADY MACBETH	But –
MACBETH	Come!

SCENE 12: THE HEATH

NARRATOR	<i>Out on the heath, night is falling. Banquo and his son Fleance have been hunting and are on their way back to Dunsinane...</i>
FLEANCE	Are we nearly home, father?
BANQUO	Not far now, Fleance. Look, through the trees. The lights of the castle.
FLEANCE	There are people on the path.
FX	<u>Approaching feet on the path.</u>
ASSASSIN 1	My lord Banquo, is it not?





BANQUO It is indeed. Do you come from Dunsinane?

ASSASSIN 1 We do, sir.

BANQUO Looks like rain tonight.

ASSASSIN 2 Worse than rain – for you.

FX **Assassins attack Banquo and they struggle. Sword slides from scabbard...**

NARRATOR ***Before Banquo can draw his sword, the two men attack...***

BANQUO It's a trap, Fleance!

FLEANCE Father!

BANQUO Run, Fleance! Run!

NARRATOR ***Fleance does run...but his father has no time to escape...***

FX **Sword run in.**

BANQUO Aaahh...

ASSASSIN 1 He's finished. Quick! Get the boy.

ASSASSIN 2 No use. He's too fast. We'll never catch him.

ASSASSIN 1 That's not good. There's a feast for the king tonight. We'll have to tell him there. Come on...

SCENE 13: THE GREAT HALL AT DUNSINANE

FX **A fanfare.**

NARRATOR ***Dunsinane Castle...and the feast to celebrate Macbeth's coronation...***

SERVANT All rise for the King and Queen.

FX **The crowd clap Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in rhythmically.**

ALL Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!

MACBETH My lords and ladies - welcome! Tonight we will forget the sad past - and think only of the future. So eat, drink and enjoy!





NARRATOR

The lords and ladies take their seats as Macbeth's servant comes to the table and whispers in his ear...

MACBETH

Yes, what is it?

SERVANT

The two...gentlemen. They have returned.

MACBETH

What?

SERVANT

They wish to speak with you. Over there, by the door.

MACBETH

Ah. Yes. *(TO ALL)* Some urgent business I must deal with. I shall return.

NARRATOR

Macbeth gets up from the table and walks over to the far side of the hall.

ASSASSINS

My lord. / Your majesty.

MACBETH

Is he dead?

ASSASSIN 1

Snick snack.

ASSASSIN 2

Clickety-clack.

MACBETH

Excellent! What about the boy - Fleance?

ASSASSIN 1

Bit of a problem there.

ASSASSIN 2

It was very dark.

ASSASSIN 1

And he was very fast.

ASSASSIN 2

So unfortunately...

ASSASSIN 1

The boy escaped.

MACBETH

What? You let him go? Idiots!

ASSASSINS

He was too quick, your majesty...

MACBETH

Never mind. At least Banquo's dead. We can deal with the boy tomorrow. Now get out of here!

ASSASSINS

Your majesty...

LADY MACBETH

My royal lord! What are you doing in the shadows there? Come, join us again!

MACBETH

Of course, my lady!



**NARRATOR**

Macbeth returns to the table to rejoin the feast...but when he does so...

MACBETH

The table's full...

LENNOX

Here's a place, sir.

MACBETH

Where, Lennox?

LENNOX

Here - right next to me.

NARRATOR

Macbeth looks down the long table. But he can't see an empty seat. In fact, in the chair next to Lennox he sees a figure, sitting still and upright.

MACBETH

But that seat is taken. There's somebody - aagh! Banquo sits at the table! His face...bloody. Which one of you has done this?

ROSS

We have done nothing, my lord.

MACBETH

He's getting up! Coming closer, no! Get away from me! I didn't do it! It wasn't me!

ROSS

Gentlemen, rise - the King is not well.

LADY MACBETH

Please, everyone, stay. This is just - an illness. The King has suffered from it since he was a boy. Don't worry - it will go away. *(TO MACBETH)* What is wrong with you, Macbeth? Are you a man or what?!

MACBETH

Can't you see it? It's Banquo! At the table.

LADY MACBETH

Look! It's just a stool! You're seeing things.

MACBETH

It's gone!

LADY MACBETH

It was never there!

MACBETH

No? *(TO ALL)* Please, everybody, forgive me. I am not myself this evening. We shall have a toast.

FX**Clinking glasses.**

ALL

A toast! A toast!

MACBETH

To absent friends!

LENNOX

To Banquo!

MACBETH

Yes, ha - why not? To Banquo!





ALL To Banquo!

MACBETH Aagh! No! It's here again! Get back to your grave! I shall fight you, ghost!

LADY MACBETH The King is not well! Please, leave us now. Good night.

FX **The shuffling of chairs and feet as they leave.**

NARRATOR *All the guests leave. Macbeth, still shocked, stares into space. His queen comes close...*

LADY MACBETH You need sleep, my lord.

MACBETH Did you notice? Macduff wasn't here tonight.

LADY MACBETH Macduff? What are you talking about now?

MACBETH He's plotting, I'm sure. Tomorrow, I'll go to the Weird Sisters again, find out what else is in store for me. This isn't over.

