

MACBETH and SEYTON in a room. Suddenly there's a loud scream. MACBETH leaps up.

MACBETH: What was that?!

SEYTON: Sounded like some people screaming.

MACBETH: Yeah, I know that, you idiot. My question is why they're screaming.

SEYTON: They've just discovered that your wife has mysteriously vanished.

MACBETH: Oh. That's sad – wait a second, how did you know that? It was supposed to be a rhetorical question!

SEYTON: Well –

MACBETH: Who are you anyway?

SEYTON: My name's Seyton.

MACBETH: SATAN?

SEYTON: It's not what it sounds like.

MACBETH: ISN'T IT?

SEYTON: It's spelled S-E-Y-T-O-N.

MACBETH: *(thinks a minute)* Oh right. That can't have been much fun for you at school.

SEYTON: It wasn't.

MACBETH: Oh. Why are you here in my castle when I've literally never seen you before in my life?

SEYTON: Basically, I'm an omniscient symbol of your imminent downfall and the metaphorical pact you have made with evil.

MACBETH: But I'm not going to have an imminent downfall. The witches said my downfall wouldn't happen until Birnam Wood came to Dunsinane, and that's literally impossible because woods can't move.

SEYTON: Are you sure about that?

MACBETH: Yes!

SEYTON: Are you really, really sure?

MACBETH: Yes!

The MESSENGER bursts in, still covered in cream.

MESSENGER: Your majesty, I have a message!

MACBETH: What's your message, you cream-faced loon?

MESSENGER: There are ten thousand soldiers out there! The English army! All disguised as trees! It looked like Birnam Wood was moving.

MACBETH: Oh no.

MESSENGER: There was something else I was going to tell you too, but I can't, or the witches will get very annoyed with me.

MACBETH: I don't care right now! Right now I'm under a lot of stress! I'm really tempted to shoot the messenger!

MESSENGER: Please don't shoot me!

MACBETH points a water gun at the MESSENGER, and the MESSENGER runs offstage.

MACBETH: Right. Okay. Well, get me my armour, Seyton. Let's fight some trees.

Scene 22

In the castle dungeons, the dead and supernatural characters from the play - BANQUO'S GHOST, DUNCAN'S GHOST, SHAKESPEARE etc, among others - are partying in the castle dungeons. The 'music' is quite literally the sound of nails scratching down a chalkboard, enthusiastically provided by a small band. The WITCHES arrive (plus LADY MACBETH, COOK and SPLISH) and join in with the festivities.

COOK: Witch 1?

WITCH 1: Yes?

COOK: You really weren't joking about the music.

LADY MACBETH: This might be a bit awkward for me.

WITCH 3: Why?

LADY MACBETH: I helped to kill King Duncan! And Banquo probably wouldn't have died if it wasn't for me, either.

The song ends, and DUNCAN'S GHOST walks up to LADY MACBETH.

DUNCAN'S GHOST: Lady Macbeth! So good to see you again!

LADY MACBETH: Duncan. Hi.

DUNCAN'S GHOST: Oh, it's Duncan's Ghost now. Because I don't really have a body or anything, so it feels weird to refer to myself as Duncan.

LADY MACBETH: Okay. Duncan's Ghost. Right.

COOK: Oh, it's Splosh! Splosh, over here!

For the first time in the play, SPLOSH looks vaguely happy. COOK hugs him and he reluctantly reciprocates.

COOK: I can't believe you're here! Surely you're not a ghost?

SPLOSH: No, no. I'm not a ghost. I'm still alive.

COOK: So why are you here?

SPLOSH: It turns out that although I'm not a ghost, I fit right in among ghosts. I feel at home here! It's so much fun in the dungeon, isn't it, guys?

Cheers.

DUNCAN'S GHOST: By the way, Lady Macbeth, no hard feelings about the whole murdering thing. I know you were just trying to become the queen.

LADY MACBETH: Oh. Thank you.

DUNCAN'S GHOST: I know Banquo's Ghost feels the same, don't you, Banquo's Ghost?

BANQUO'S GHOST does a thumbs-up while dancing enthusiastically to the sound of nails on a chalkboard.

DUNCAN'S GHOST: By the way, there's someone I'd like you to meet. This is Shakespeare. Good friend of mine. He wrote Macbeth.

LADY MACBETH and SHAKESPEARE shake hands.

SHAKESPEARE: Lovely to meet you, Lady Macbeth.

LADY MACBETH: Nice to meet you too. I can't believe you wrote Macbeth. I'm such a huge fan.

SHAKESPEARE: Thank you!

LADY MACBETH: I do have an issue, though, which I'd like you to help me resolve.

SHAKESPEARE: Oh?

LADY MACBETH: Why am I still called Lady Macbeth?

SHAKESPEARE: What's the problem with it?

LADY MACBETH: Well, Macbeth and I aren't really together any more. And I don't want to define myself by my relationship to a man anyway, because I'm a strong woman.

SHAKESPEARE: How do you know that wasn't the name you were christened?

LADY MACBETH: Firstly because people don't generally call their children 'lady'. That's a really weird name to give a child. Secondly because then I would have married someone with the same surname as me, which seems very suspicious.

SHAKESPEARE: Alright then, change your name if it matters that much to you.

LADY MACBETH: Maybe I will.

WITCH 3: What are you going to name yourself?

Awkward silence.

LADY MACBETH: That's still a work in progress.

BANQUO'S GHOST: Why are all you witches down here anyway?

WITCH 2: The army's arriving outside, and we don't want them to see Lady M - sorry, her, whatever her name is.

DUNCAN'S GHOST: The army's arriving? I love me a good battle! We don't want to miss that, do we, my ghastly ghostly companions?

SHAKESPEARE: Certainly not!

Everyone rushes off to watch the battle, leaving only LADY MACBETH and WITCH 3.

LADY MACBETH: I suppose I have to wait here.

WITCH 3: I'll wait with you.

LADY MACBETH: Thanks.

Awkward silence for a minute. Then they both speak at once.

LADY MACBETH: I was thinking -/WITCH 3: Lady Macbeth, I -

WITCH 3: Sorry, you go.

LADY MACBETH: No, you go.

WITCH 3: Okay. Erm - well I think you're really wonderful and I - I was wondering if you'd like to go and curse some poor farmer's sheep for no reason with me at some point this week?

LADY MACBETH: As a date?

WITCH 3: Yes, as a date.

LADY MACBETH: I'd really like to. That would be lovely.

WITCH 1 looks around the door, having apparently not left.

WITCH 1: Ahh, you're doing the romance! That's so sweet! Lady Macbeth and Witch 3, sitting in a -

WITCH 3: Shut up, Witch 1! Get out! Get out!

WITCH 1: Enjoy your romantic time in the dungeons together!

WITCH 3: Shut up!

Scene 23

MACDUFF and other ARMY MEMBERS enter the room where Macbeth is waiting.

MACDUFF: Macbeth! I am here to kill you!

MACBETH: You shall not kill me! I have been told that I shall not be killed by anyone born of woman! And thou wast born of woman, so.

MACDUFF: Oh. I see. Well, I'll just go then.

MALCOLM: Hang on, Macduff?

MACDUFF: What?

MALCOLM: I remember once we were on a Scottish Thanes business retreat, to bond as a group and experience the wonder of connection and all that nonsense. We arrived at this castle and drank the hotel's whole supply of mead in one evening.

It was excellent fun. I only attended one of the sessions, but I did explore the hotel, and got lost several times, and met about a hundred ghosts - you know, typical conference stuff.

MACDUFF: Malcolm, if you could get to the point within, you know, the next couple of hundred years, it would be greatly appreciated.

MALCOLM: Well, as one of your icebreaker fun facts, you said you were born by c-section.

MACBETH: That's an embarrassingly boring fun fact.

MACDUFF: I'm allowed to be boring if I want!

MACBETH: But how's it relevant?

MALCOLM: Well, that means thou wast not born of woman.

MACBETH: But he still came out of a woman.

MALCOLM: Yes, but he wasn't really born, was he?

MACBETH: I think it really depends on your definition of born. Do you have to go through the birth canal?

MACDUFF: (*Covering his ears*) TMI, everyone! Do we really have to be discussing this here?

MACBETH: And I don't think the witches would leave the semantics of their prophecies quite so flimsy. So you cannot kill me, Macduff! Nobody can!

MESSENGER: Erm -

MACBETH: What is it, Messenger? You haven't spotted something, have you?

MESSENGER: Well, my parent is trans.

MACBETH: Oh.

MESSENGER: So I was actually born of a man. So I think I could technically kill you.

MACBETH: Well, draw your sword, you scoundrel! If I am to die, I'll certainly go down fighting!

MACBETH draws his sword. MESSENGER steps back.

MESSENGER: I don't want to kill you though! Murder is strictly forbidden according to the Messenger Code. I'd lose my job!

MACDUFF: So what are we going to do?

MESSENGER: Ooh, ooh! I have an idea! We could use my lettucifier!

EVERYONE: The lettucifier?

MESSENGER: Well we all know that the traditional way of counting down how many days a leader has left is to see how long it takes a lettuce version of them to rot.

MACDUFF: Obviously.

MESSENGER: And I recently bought a lettucifier, to protect myself after Macbeth almost shot me with a water gun.

MALCOLM: So if we turn Macbeth into a lettuce, we're just following tradition!

SEYTON: You're not wrong.

MACBETH: Please, no! I'll do anything. It's my worst nightmare. I hate lettuce!

MACBETH runs offstage. The MESSENGER points the lettucifier after him. There's a loud sound effect, and the sound of a thud.

MACDUFF runs offstage and retrieves a lettuce with a face drawn on it.

MACDUFF: Macbeth is a lettuce!

Everyone cheers. LADY MACDUFF and SON come onstage.

LADY MACDUFF: Macduff!

MACDUFF: Family members! *(They hug)*

SPLISH: But how did you escape the strawberry jam?

LADY MACDUFF: We looked a little closer and realised it was actually raspberry jam.

COOK: I think we should all sing my song to celebrate!

Nobody looks very enthusiastic. COOK looks very miserable.

COOK: It's sadder than that!

MALCOLM: Alright, alright. As I'm now the king, I order everyone to sing along with Cook's song! On pain of strawberry jam!

Enthusiastic rendition of Ten Spooky Daggers.

Bows