

Characters in the Play

1. MACBETH - (30's - 50's, Male presenting).

Macbeth is the top general in King Duncan's army and the Thane of Glamis. He is led to wicked thoughts by the prophecies of the three witches, especially after their prediction that he will be made Thane of Cawdor comes true. Although Macbeth is a great soldier and a cunning commander, his ambition drives him to commit murder. After he kills King Duncan and is crowned king, he embarks on further atrocities with increasing ease. Ultimately, Macbeth proves to be better suited to the battlefield than to political intrigue. His ambition for power becomes his downfall, as his paranoia regarding the prophecies leads him to tyranny. In response to every problem, he resorts to violence and murder. He is ultimately unable to cope with the psychological consequences of his actions.

2. LADY MACBETH - (30's - 50's, Female presenting).

Lady Macbeth is an extremely ambitious woman who craves power and influence, motivating her husband to pursue their shared goals. However, once the bloodshed begins, she becomes increasingly consumed by guilt and madness, even more so than Macbeth. Her conscience weighs heavily on her, ultimately leading to her suicide. Despite this tragic turn, Lady Macbeth and Macbeth are deeply in love and share a strong connection, driving each other in their ambitions. Their joint alienation from the world, brought about by their partnership in crime, initially seems to strengthen their bond. However, this connection eventually fractures as their relationship spirals into turmoil.

3. FIRST WITCH / FIRST MURDERER - (13+, Female presenting).

4. SECOND WITCH / SECOND MURDERER - (13+, Female presenting).

5. THIRD WITCH / THIRD MURDERER - (13+, Female presenting).

Witches: The witches who can see into the future, summon spirits, and whose otherworldly powers lead Macbeth to murder Duncan, order the deaths of Banquo and his son, and foolishly believe in his own immortality. The play leaves the witches' true identities unclear; besides being servants of Hecate, we know little about their role in the cosmos. In some ways, they resemble the mythological Fates, who impersonally weave the threads of human destiny. They take twisted pleasure in their knowledge of the future, and although they cannot control the future, they ensure the future that Macbeth chooses comes true.

Murderers: The witches in disguise and hired by Macbeth to murder Banquo, Fleance (whom they fail to kill), and Macduff's wife and children. Macbeth is unaware that they are the witches, but they are there in order that the path he has chosen to embark on is followed through.

6. KING DUNCAN - (40+, Male presenting).

The King of Scotland, whom Macbeth, in his ambition for the crown, murders. Duncan is the model of a virtuous, benevolent, and farsighted ruler. His death symbolizes the destruction of an order that can be restored only when Duncan's line, in the person of Malcolm, once more occupies the throne.

7. MALCOLM - (20 - 30, Male presenting).

The son of Duncan, whose restoration to the throne signals Scotland's return to order following Macbeth's reign of terror. Malcolm becomes a serious challenge to Macbeth with Macduff's aid (and England's support).

8. BANQUO - (30's - 50's, Any presenting).

The brave, noble general whose children, according to the witches' prophecy, will inherit the Scottish throne. Like Macbeth, Banquo thinks ambitious thoughts, but he does not act on them. In a sense, Banquo's character stands as a rebuke to Macbeth, since he represents the path Macbeth chose not to take: a path in which ambition need not lead to betrayal and murder. Appropriately, then, it is Banquo's ghost—and not Duncan's—that haunts Macbeth. In addition to embodying Macbeth's guilt for killing Banquo, the ghost also reminds Macbeth that he did not emulate Banquo's reaction to the witches' prophecy.

9. MACDUFF - (30's - 60's, Male presenting).

A Scottish nobleman hostile to Macbeth's kingship from the start. He eventually becomes a leader of the crusade to unseat Macbeth. The crusade's mission is to place the rightful king, Malcolm, on the throne, but Macduff also desires vengeance for Macbeth's murder of Macduff's wife and young son.

10. ROSS - (20+, Any presenting).

A nobleman in the Scottish court. Working to try to save as many from Macbeth's Tyranny as possible.

11. THE PORTER / SEYTON - (40+, Any presenting).

Porter: The drunken doorman of Macbeth's castle.

Seyton: A Servant who waits on Macbeth during the play's final act. Seyton confirms reports of the arriving army, and he delivers the news of Lady Macbeth's suicide.

12. LADY MACDUFF / GENTLEWOMAN - (30's - 60's, Female presenting).

Lady Macduff: The scene in her castle provides our only glimpse of a domestic realm other than that of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. She and her home serve as contrasts to Lady Macbeth and the hellish world of Inverness. She and her son are killed by the Murderers as a final cementation of Macbeth's tyranny.

Gentlewoman: A servant of Lady Macbeth, she and the Doctor view Lady Macbeth's descent into Madness and offer a glimpse into the downfalls of the Macbeths.'

13. MACDUFF'S SON / SERVANT - (13s - 20's, Any presenting).

Macduff's Son: The young son of Macduff and Lady Macduff. Clever and resilient, he asks his mother questions about his absent father until three murderers arrive at the castle and kill the family.

14. FLEANCE / YOUNG SIWARD - (13 - 20's, Any presenting).

Fleance: Banquo's son, who survives Macbeth's attempt to murder him. At the end of the play, Fleance's whereabouts are unknown. Presumably, he may come to rule Scotland, fulfilling the witches' prophecy that Banquo's sons will sit on the Scottish throne.

Young Siward: Siward's son, who joins him on the battlefield at Dunsinane. He encounters Macbeth during the fight, and despite his attempts to bring his enemy down, Macbeth ultimately kills him.

15. DONALBAIN / DOCTOR - (20+, Any presenting).

Donalbain: One of King Duncan's two sons and Malcolm's younger brother. After Macbeth kills King Duncan, Donalbain flees to safety in Ireland.

Scottish Doctor: A doctor who tends to Lady Macbeth after she has begun sleepwalking. The Scottish Doctor hears her admit to her role in King Duncan's murder, but he is powerless to take any action against her. Instead, he continues to observe her and draws Macbeth's ire when he admits that he cannot cure her.

16. MENTEITH / CAPTAIN/ LORD - (20+, Male presenting).

Menteith: Menteith is a Scottish nobleman and a loyal supporter of King Duncan. He is one of the Thanes of Scotland and is known for his bravery and honor. Menteith is often seen as a voice of reason and moderation, providing a counterbalance to the ambition and violence that drive the main characters.

Captain: The Captain who reports on the deeds of Macbeth in the opening of the play, he succumbs to a wound in his side and is taken to the doctor.

17. CAITHNESS / SIWARD/ LORD - (20+, Male presenting).

Caithness: Caithness is one of the leaders the Scottish forces that are marching to join Malcolm and the English army in Birnam wood in preparation for an assault on Macbeth's castle.

Siward: The Earl of Northumberland and the leader of the English army. Known for his strength and honor, Siward fearlessly heads into battle alongside Macduff and Malcolm in order to defeat Macbeth. His desire to remove Macbeth from the throne grows even greater when he learns that he killed his son during the fighting.