

*MACBETH*  
*ACT V (ACT 5)*

Scene 1

- This scene takes place in the castle at Dunsinane w/ a “gentlewoman” talking to a doctor about Lady Macbeth’s sleepwalking
- The doctor has observed Lady Macbeth for two days and has witnessed nothing
- He questions the gentlewoman about things Lady Macbeth has said while sleepwalking, but she refuses to answer b/c she thinks no one would believe her
- Lady Macbeth enters the scene in a tranced state – she does not see the others
- She pauses and rubs her hands like she’s washing them
- She screams, “Out, damned spot” (of blood) \*
- She begins to talk, as if speaking to Macbeth, and incriminates both of them
  - o *“Fie, my lord... What need we fear who know it, when none can call our power to account? Yet who would have thought the old man (Duncan) to have so much blood in him?”*
- She continues to reveal Macbeth’s role in the deaths of Banquo and Macduff’s family
- Her thoughts are constantly interrupted by the image of blood on her hands, and she asks, *“Will these hands ne’er be clean?” ...All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.”* ⇒ **GUILTY CONSCIENCE**

**SYMBOLS: Her Hands = Her Soul:**

**-Lady Macbeth is trying to cleanse her soul**

before she says a little water  
will cleanse us of this sin –  
has changed

Scene 2

- This scene takes place in the open country ⇒ A battle is going to take place
- The Scottish soldiers have gathered to prepare for their attack against Macbeth
- The English army, led by Malcolm, Macduff, and Siward is nearby
- One of the Scottish lord says, "Near Birnam Wood shall we meet them," recalling the last prophecy of the three witches
- They are all eager to fight, and are on their way to Birnam Wood for the fulfillment of the prophecy

\* Macbeth \*\*\* Duncan ← position title

Angus says that Macbeth's title, "hangs loose about him, like a giant's robe upon a dwarfish thief." ⇒ Macbeth was a **thief** b/c he **stole lives** from people and peace from his country; who becomes **dwarfish** = (small) when he **stole the giant's robe (Duncan's crown)**

\* **IRONY:** Angus says of Macbeth, "*Now he does feel his secret murders sticking on his hands.*" – Macbeth knew the whole of the ocean **could not wash is blood off his hands**, and **Lady Macbeth** has realized her **hands will never come clean.**

Scene 3

Macbeth's arrogance / feels  
imperveous  
invincible

- This scene opens with Macbeth trying to calm his fears about the approaching army
- He reminds himself that Macduff was definitely "born of woman"
- A servant enters and tells Macbeth that 10,000 English soldiers are marching towards Dunsinane
- Macbeth does not want to hear it and sends him away
- Macbeth asks the doctor about his wife: Doctor replies that she is not really sick but "troubled with thick-coming fancies"
- Macbeth begs the doctor to cure her
- The scene closes with Macbeth going out in his armor

**This scene captures the full chaos that rages in the mind of Macbeth: One moment he is sad the next moment he is ranting and raving**

Act 5, sc. iv

Malcolm → tells soldiers to camouflage w/ branches

"Till Birnam Wood comes to Dunsinane"

Act 5, sc. v

Lady Mac - dead

~~The~~ Woods are moving

Mac - @ least I'll die wearing armor

- tired of living & would like to see world plunge into chaos - evil intentions

Life is short + meaningless

Act 5, scene 6

Malcom arrives @ castle -  
put branches ↓

Act 5, scene 7

- Macbeth still confident:  
"no man born of woman shall  
harm me"
- Macbeth kills Siward's son -
- Macduff hunts Mach's arrogance  
swells ↓  
↓ Macbeth - no interest in killing  
anyone else
- Macbeth's  
armies not putting up a fight -  
some are switching sides

Act 5, scene 8

Macbeth won't commit suicide so long as he can keep killing — murderous rampage

Macbeth vs. Macduff

↓  
admits killing family  
- "I had a charmed life" → can't be harmed  
- was cut out of mother's womb (c-section) → "untimely ripped"

Macduff kills Macbeth & decapitates him (the apparition of the helmeted head)

same thing that Macbeth did @ beginning to Macdonwald

Malcolm → king

Tragic Hero:

Flaw → ambition  
Downfall → death