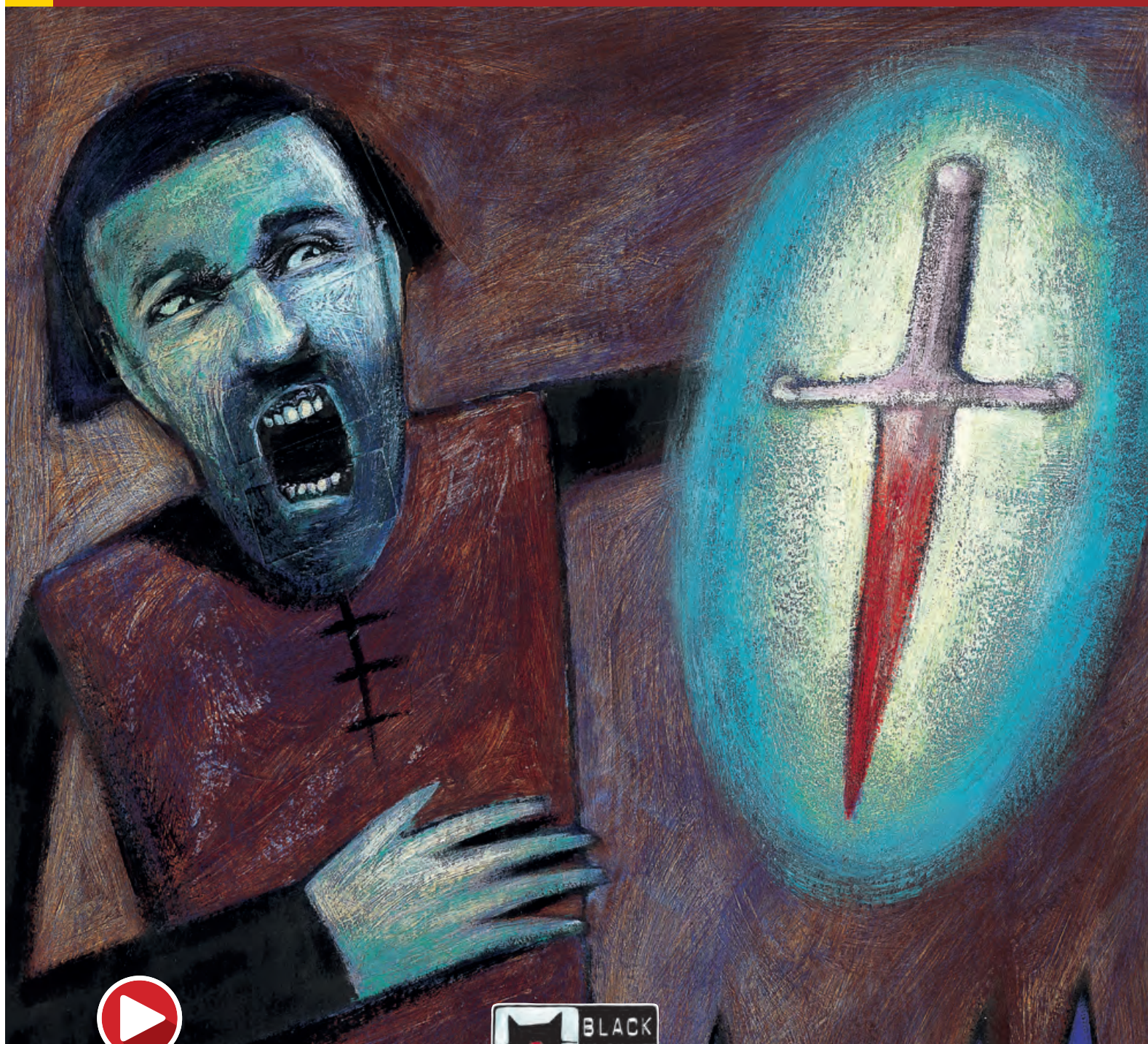


William Shakespeare

# Macbeth



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**VICENS VIVES - MACBETH (BLACK CAT. READING AND TRAINING)**

**- ISBN: 9788853008398**

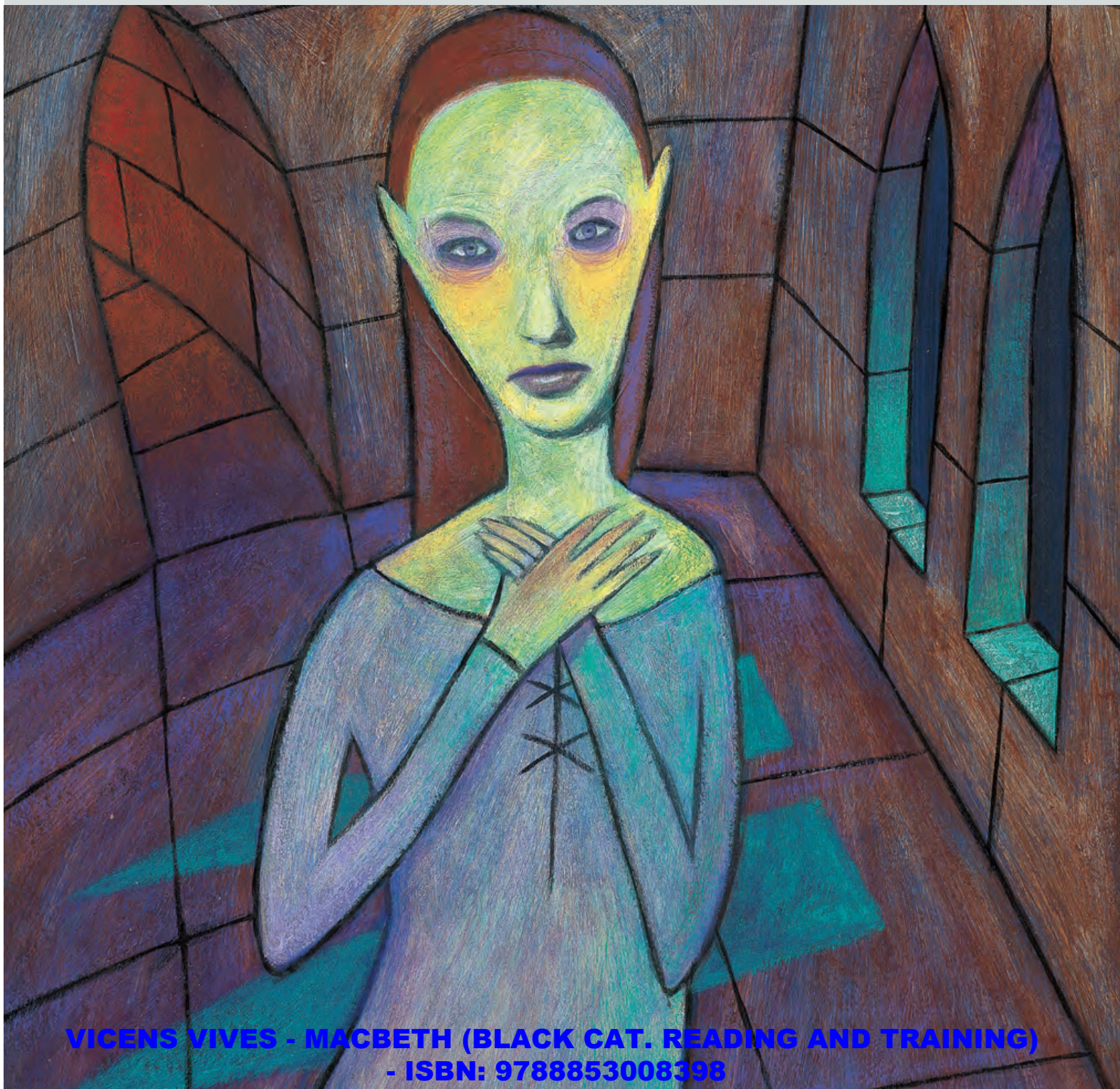
William Shakespeare

# Macbeth

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ISBN 978-88-530-0839-8

Printed in Italy by Litoprint, Genoa

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A portrait of **William Shakespeare** by an unknown artist. It is a copy made in the early 19th century of a portrait that was in the Folio edition of the plays of Shakespeare, which was published in 1623. This copy is called the **Flowers portrait** because it was owned by a family called Flowers.

## The Life of *William Shakespeare*

William Shakespeare was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, a small town in central England. The exact date of his birth is not known, but many people like to believe that he was born on 23 April. This is St George's Day, the day of the patron saint of England.

William Shakespeare's father made and sold gloves.<sup>1</sup> He was involved in local politics in Stratford-upon-Avon, and became the town mayor.<sup>2</sup> It is likely that William Shakespeare was educated at the grammar school in Stratford-upon-Avon, where boys were taught Latin and Roman history.

When he was eighteen Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway, who was eight years older than himself. They had three children: a daughter, Susanna, and twins, Hamnet and Judith. Hamnet died young, at the age of eleven.

We do not know what Shakespeare did immediately after marriage, and there are a lot of stories about what have been called the 'missing years'. It is known,

1. **gloves** : you wear these on your hands.

2. **mayor** [meə] : the head of the government of a town or city.

however, that he later went to London, where he became one of the owners of a theatrical company called the Lord Chamberlain's<sup>1</sup> Men. It seems he was an actor before he began to write plays. He wrote thirty-eight plays, as well as poetry. After his death, some friends of Shakespeare collected his work and published it in 1623.

In 1599, Shakespeare's company built one of the most famous theatres in London, the Globe Theatre. The company changed its name to the King's Men in 1603, when James I became king, and from 1609 its main theatre was the Blackfriars. Shakespeare became rich and successful and retired to Stratford-upon-Avon in 1613. He died there on 23 April 1616.

Visitors to Stratford-upon-Avon today can see many of the buildings associated with Shakespeare's life, including the house where he was born and Anne Hathaway's cottage. They can also visit the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and go to performances of Shakespeare's plays.



The modern reconstruction of the **Globe Theatre** in London, very near the site of Shakespeare's Globe, which was destroyed by fire in 1613.

1. **Lord Chamberlain** : a very important official at the royal court.



## PART ONE

# Macbeth and the Witches

Duncan, the King of Scotland, was a good king, who was liked by most of his lords, or thanes. The Thane of Cawdor, however, wanted to kill Duncan and become king. He asked the King of Norway to come to Scotland with a great army.



track 02

At first everything went well for the King of Norway and the Thane of Cawdor. Their army was strong, and they had some victories against the Scottish.

Then King Duncan's army fought against the army of the King of Norway and the Thane of Cawdor. There was a desperate battle to save Scotland. One of Duncan's loyal thanes was called Macbeth. He was Thane of Glamis.<sup>1</sup> Macbeth fought very hard in the battle against the Thane of Cawdor, and he defeated the enemy. Duncan was very pleased with Macbeth, and wanted to reward<sup>2</sup> him for his loyalty. He called one of his Thanes.

1. **Glamis** : pronunciation [glamz].

2. **reward** : something given in return for service or merit.

# Macbeth and the Witches

‘Ross,’ Duncan said, ‘I want you to do something for me. I have decided to execute<sup>1</sup> the Thane of Cawdor because he is a rebel who tried to kill me and become king. I want you to go to Macbeth and to tell him that he will be the new Thane of Cawdor. It is my reward to him for his courage and loyalty.’

‘Yes, sir,’ said Ross. ‘I’ll go immediately and tell Macbeth.’

Macbeth and his friend, Banquo, were both tired after the battle. They were walking together, and they were talking about the events of the day. They were both excited and pleased that Duncan had won the battle. Suddenly Banquo stopped.

‘Look!’ he cried. ‘Look at them!’

Macbeth looked, and saw in front of them three very strange figures. It was difficult to tell if they were men or women. They looked like old women, but they had beards and they were very ugly. They were standing around a fire, and there was a cooking-pot on it. There was a horrible smell coming from the cooking-pot.

‘Are you women, or are you spirits?’ Banquo asked them.

‘Answer him,’ Macbeth said. ‘Are you women or are you spirits?’

The first witch looked at Macbeth, and said,

‘Welcome Macbeth, Thane of Glamis.’

The second witch looked at Macbeth, and said,

‘Welcome, Macbeth, Thane of Cawdor.’

The third witch looked at Macbeth, and said to him,

‘Welcome, Macbeth, King of Scotland.’

Macbeth was very surprised at what the three witches had told him, and he did not say anything. Banquo then asked the witches a question.

‘You tell my friend that he will be Thane of Cawdor, and then King of Scotland, but you say nothing to me. If you can really see into the future, tell us something about my future. What will happen to me?’

One of the witches replied,

‘You will be less than Macbeth, but more than Macbeth.’

The second witch told him,

‘You will be less lucky than Macbeth, but you will be more lucky.’

1. **execute** : kill as a punishment.



The third witch told Banquo,

‘You will never be king, but your children’s children will be kings.’

After making these predictions, the witches suddenly disappeared.

‘It’s very strange!’ Macbeth said to Banquo. ‘They say that I will be Thane of Cawdor, and then king — and your children’s children will be kings! I don’t believe it, though. I don’t know who they are, or what they are, but what they say makes no sense.’

‘I don’t know what to think,’ said Banquo. ‘Perhaps — ’

Just as Banquo was speaking, Ross appeared.

‘I have come from King Duncan,’ he told Macbeth. ‘I have a message for you from the king. He wants to reward you because he is very pleased with your courage and loyalty. He gave me a message to bring to you. You are the new Thane of Cawdor.’



Macbeth and Banquo looked at each other in astonishment.<sup>1</sup>

‘The witches told the truth!’ Macbeth said to Banquo.

‘Be careful, my friend,’ Banquo replied. ‘They also told you that you’d be king, but perhaps the witches were bad spirits. I have heard that such spirits try to make men do wicked<sup>2</sup> things by making them promises.’

Macbeth said nothing to his friend, but he could not stop thinking about what the witches had said. He had always been loyal to Duncan, but now he began to question his loyalty for the first time. ‘The witches told the truth,’ he thought. ‘They said I would be Thane of Cawdor, and now I am Thane of Cawdor. Perhaps I’ll also be king one day!’ He was excited about the idea of becoming king, but he was also frightened. ‘I want to be king,’ he thought, ‘but Duncan is my friend — I don’t want to hurt him.’

1. **astonishment** : great surprise.

2. **wicked** [wɪkɪd] : bad.

## The text and **beyond**

### 1 Comprehension check

Answer the following questions.

- 1 Why did the King of Norway fight against Duncan?
- 2 How did Macbeth feel after the battle?
- 3 Why was the king pleased with Macbeth?
- 4 How did Duncan reward Macbeth?
- 5 Describe the three witches.
- 6 What did the three witches tell Macbeth and Banquo?
- 7 What advice did Banquo give Macbeth about the witches?
- 8 What did Macbeth think about the witches?
- 9 Why were Macbeth and Banquo so astonished at Ross's message?

### 2 Discussion

What do you think the witches mean when they say 'You will be less lucky than Macbeth, but you will be more lucky.'? (bottom of page 13).

### 3 Speaking: some good advice

You are a good friend of Macbeth's, and your partner is Macbeth. Discuss what Macbeth should do after hearing the predictions of the witches. Explain your choices. The person playing Macbeth should also explain why he/she will follow or not follow the friend's advice.

- A He should do nothing.
- B He should begin planning to become king.
- C He should wait and see what Banquo will do after hearing the prediction.
- D Your idea: ...

### FCE 4 A weird fate

For questions 1-7, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each space. There is an example at the beginning (0).

In the original *Macbeth*, Shakespeare called the witches the 'weird sisters'. Nowadays, when (0) ~~A~~... English speakers hear about 'weird sisters', they probably (1) ..... that these sisters are strange, maybe supernatural and that they might (2) ..... you an uneasy feeling. But in Shakespeare's time the word 'weird' was connected with 'fate' and 'destiny'. In fact, the section on the life of Macbeth in Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1577), an early English history book (3) ..... was Shakespeare's source for his play, presents the weird sisters (4) ..... goddesses of

fate. In Nordic mythology these goddesses of fate were called Norns. Three important (5) ..... keep alive Ygdrasil — the Tree of Existence. One of these Norns governs the past, another the present and another the future. There are (6) ..... other Norns — one of these goddesses governs the life of every person according to Nordic mythology.

Shakespeare, though, combined Nordic Norns, witches and classical

goddesses of the underworld to make his weird sisters. In the end, the new meaning of 'weird' first (7) ..... in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.



**The three witches** as painted by the Swiss Romantic painter Johann Heinrich Füssli (1741-1825).

- |                        |           |           |            |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 0 <b>A</b> native      | B born    | C natural | D resident |
| 1 <b>A</b> consider    | B judge   | C think   | D regard   |
| 2 <b>A</b> offer       | B bring   | C take    | D give     |
| 3 <b>A</b> what        | B who     | C that    | D whose    |
| 4 <b>A</b> like        | B similar | C as      | D for      |
| 5 <b>A</b> individuals | B ones    | C others  | D singles  |
| 6 <b>A</b> lots        | B plenty  | C many    | D number   |
| 7 <b>A</b> comes       | B arrives | C shows   | D appears  |



### 5 Listening

track 03

You will hear two short extracts from the original Shakespeare's play. However, before you listen, read them and try to fill in the gaps with the words from the box. Then listen and check your answers.

Speak    Thane    greater    happier    Cawdor    Banquo    king    Hail

#### Extract One

**Macbeth** (to the witches): Speak if you can! What are you?

**First Witch:** All hail, <sup>1</sup> Macbeth! Hail to thee, <sup>2</sup> (1)..... of Glamis!

**Second Witch:** All hail, Macbeth. Hail to thee, Thane of (2)..... !

**Third Witch:** All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be (3)..... hereafter! <sup>3</sup>

1. **hail** : welcome.

2. **thee** : you.

3. **hereafter** : after this time.

**Extract Two**

**Banquo:** (4)..... then to me, who neither beg<sup>1</sup> nor fear  
Your favours,<sup>2</sup> nor your hate.

**First Witch:** Hail!

**Second Witch:** Hail!

**Third Witch:** (5)..... !

**First Witch:** Lesser than Macbeth, and (6)..... .

**Second Witch:** Not so happy, yet much (7)..... .

**Third Witch:** Thou<sup>3</sup> shalt get<sup>4</sup> kings, though thou be none.

So all hail, Macbeth, and (8)..... !

Now, using a dictionary, rewrite Extract One in modern English.

**FCE 6 Writing**

Imagine you are Banquo. Read this part of a letter from a friend. Write a letter in 120-180 words in an appropriate style.

*Tell me about your meeting with the witches.  
What were they like?  
Did they tell you anything about the future?*

**7 Speaking: the future today**

In Shakespeare's time some people were convinced that witches existed and had the power to see the future. With your partner prepare a short report on how people predict the future today. Use the list of ways of predicting the future and the following questions to help you.

Which of the following do you believe in?

Which don't you believe in?

Which ones do people in your society believe in?

Which ones are the most popular?

**Ways of predicting the future**

- weather reports
- reading tea leaves
- reading palms
- opinion polls for elections
- astrology
- tarot cards
- statistics
- *any others?*

1. **beg** : ask.
2. **favours** : good services.
3. **thou** : old-fashioned, poetic, or religious word for 'you'.
4. **get** : (old-fashioned use), be the father of.



## PART TWO

# The Murder of the King

- 1 After the battle, King Duncan decided to go on a journey around Scotland. He told Macbeth that he would go and stay in his castle.



track 04

'I will be very happy to be your host, Sir,' Macbeth told him. 'I will write to my wife so that she can prepare everything for us.'

Macbeth wrote a long letter to his wife. He told her that the king was coming to stay in the castle, and he asked her to prepare everything for the visit. He also told her about the encounter with the three witches, and what they had said about the future.

- 2 Lady Macbeth read her husband's letter with great interest and excitement. 'Thane of Cawdor, and then king,' she thought. 'But I know you, husband,' she said to herself. 'You want to be king — but you don't want to do anything wicked to become king. Your nature is too gentle to be really ambitious. This is a great opportunity for us. Hurry home, my love, and I'll teach you to be cruel for the sake of<sup>1</sup> your ambition. I'll put courage into you!'

When Macbeth and the king arrived at the castle, Lady Macbeth had already made a plan. She told her husband that he had to act very cheerfully and innocently — and that she had made a plan to make him king.

1. **for the sake of** : in the interest of.



## PART TWO

- 3 'Leave everything to me,' she said. 'Duncan will never leave the castle alive!'

Macbeth listened to his wife. 'It's true,' he thought, 'I want to be king — but I don't want to kill Duncan — I'm frightened! He's my king, and my guest here in the castle. To murder him would be a terrible crime!'

He argued with Lady Macbeth.

'We cannot kill the king,' he told her. 'He has been a good friend to me, and I can't murder him.'

Lady Macbeth was very angry with her husband.

'Why did you tell me about the three witches?' she demanded angrily.

- 4 'They called you "king", didn't they? Be brave, and you can have the throne!'

'But if we fail?' Macbeth asked her. 'What happens to us if we fail?'

'Don't worry about that,' his wife said. 'We won't fail. I have a plan. Duncan's room is guarded by two soldiers. I'll make sure that the soldiers are given a lot of wine tonight, and I'll put something in the wine to make them sleep very heavily. They won't know what's happening. You'll be able to walk past them and into the king's room without anyone seeing you. Then you can kill Duncan, and we'll blame the soldiers<sup>1</sup> for the murder.'

'You're right!' Macbeth said excitedly. 'If the king is killed with the soldiers' knives, everyone will think they're guilty.'

- 5 'Exactly,' Lady Macbeth said. 'Who would dare<sup>2</sup> to say that you and I knew anything about it? People might suspect us, but they could never say anything.'

Late that night Macbeth was alone in the castle. He was thinking about the murder when suddenly he saw a knife in front of him. The knife was red with blood. He was very frightened. When he looked again, the knife had gone.

- 6 'It was just my imagination,' he told himself. 'There was nothing there at all.' He shuddered<sup>3</sup> with fear. 'I must be brave,' he told himself. 'If I want to be king, I must be brave.'

He went very quietly to the room of the two soldiers. They were fast asleep,<sup>4</sup> and the room smelt of wine. He took a knife from one of the

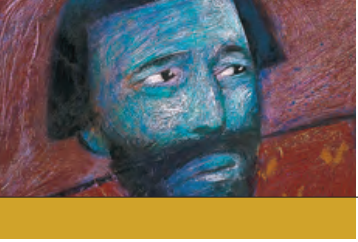
1. **blame the soldiers** : say they are responsible.

2. **dare** : have the courage.

3. **shuddered** : shook, trembled.

4. **fast asleep** : sleeping deeply.





## PART TWO

soldiers, and went into the king's bedroom. The king was asleep. Macbeth killed him with the soldier's knife.

Lady Macbeth saw her husband when he came back out of the soldiers' room. 'Well?' she asked him. 'Did you do it?'

Macbeth was very pale.

'Duncan is dead,' he told her. 'It's a terrible thing I've done. Afterwards, I heard a voice. It said, "There will be no more sleep. Macbeth has murdered sleep." It was a frightening voice.'

Lady Macbeth looked at him. Even she was frightened for a moment.

'Did it say anything else?' she asked.

'The voice was very loud,' Macbeth said. 'It cried out, "Macbeth has murdered sleep — Macbeth will never sleep again". I thought everyone in the castle would hear the voice.'

'You're like a child!' Lady Macbeth told him angrily. 'There was no voice, it was only your own fear which you heard. Go and wash the blood from your hands.' Then she noticed the knife in Macbeth's hand.

'But the knife, why are you carrying the knife? You should have left it with the soldiers! Take it back.'

'I can't go back in there,' Macbeth said. 'I'll never go back in there!'

'Give me the knife,' Lady Macbeth ordered. 'I'm not afraid to go in there.'

7 Lady Macbeth took the knife, and went into the soldiers' room. They were still sleeping. She covered the soldiers with the king's blood, and left the knife in their room. When she came out of the room, she saw that Macbeth was looking at his hands. They were red with blood.

'I'll never be able to wash the blood away,' he said sadly. 'I have done a terrible thing.'

'Look at my hands,' Lady Macbeth told him scornfully.<sup>1</sup> 'They're red like yours — but I'm not afraid like you! A little water will remove the traces of our crime.'

Suddenly they heard a noise at the castle gate. Someone wanted to come in.

'Quickly!' Lady Macbeth commanded. 'We'll go back into our own room — no one must know we've been awake tonight.'

The knocking at the castle gate continued.

1. **scornfully** : with contempt.

## The text and **beyond**

### 1 Comprehension check

Answer the following questions.

- 1 What did King Duncan decide to do after the battle?
- 2 What did Macbeth tell his wife in his letter?
- 3 In Lady Macbeth's opinion, why did her husband need her help?
- 4 How did Macbeth first react to his wife's plan to kill the king?
- 5 What was Lady Macbeth's plan?
- 6 What strange thing did Macbeth see before he killed the king?
- 7 Macbeth heard a voice after he killed the king. What did the voice tell him?
- 8 What did Lady Macbeth think the voice was?

### 2 Poetic sleep

In Shakespeare's original play, he gives us a complex poetic image of sleep. Read the simplified version below and then choose answers to the question. Briefly justify your answer. You can choose more than one answer.

*Macbeth said, 'I thought I heard a voice that cried, "Sleep no more! Macbeth murders sleep" - innocent sleep, sleep that makes our worries seem smaller, the death of each day's life, the bath that makes us feel better after work, the medicine that calms our hurt feelings, the great food of life.'*

*'What do you mean?' asked Lady Macbeth.*

*Macbeth continued, 'Still the voice cried to the whole castle, "Sleep no more! Glamis has murdered sleep, and so Cawdor will sleep no more. Macbeth will sleep no more.'"*

What does 'Macbeth murders sleep' mean? Discuss in pairs or small groups.

- A Macbeth will not sleep anymore because he will feel so bad about killing the king.
- B Macbeth killed people who were sleeping and without any defence.
- C The people in the castle should sleep no more, in other words they should wake up and see the horrible thing that has happened.
- D Sleep is like a nurse who cares for the sick, a mother who feeds and takes away our worries; and Macbeth has killed her.
- E Your idea: ...

### 3 Getting the stain out

When Macbeth says, 'I'll never be able to wash the blood away' and Lady Macbeth replies 'A little water will remove the traces of our crime', what are they really talking about? Justify your choice.

- A Macbeth is saying he thinks people will discover the crime easily and she disagrees.
- B Macbeth is saying that he will always feel bad about his crime, and she says that she will not.
- C Macbeth is saying that the amount of blood from the king is enormous; she is saying that it is not — after all as a soldier he saw much more blood.
- D *Your idea:* ...

### 4 Speaking: a killing team

With your partner discuss the following. Present your ideas to the class.

- 1 Describe Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. How are they similar? How are they different?
- 2 Have you ever read a book or scene of a film in which a similar relationship existed between two characters who committed a crime?

### 5 Vocabulary – odd word out

Find the word that does not belong with the other three words and then explain why. All the words come from Parts One and Two of this book.

- 0 cruel / ~~ambitious~~ / wicked / evil  
Ambitious is not necessarily a bad thing to be - the other three words are .....
- 1 guilty / shuddered / frightened / afraid  
.....
- 2 execute / crime / murder / kill  
.....
- 3 wicked / strange / cruel / bad  
.....
- 4 army / brave / battle / soldier  
.....
- 5 thane / king / throne / lord  
.....
- 6 wife / lady / children / father  
.....
- 7 loyal / excited / good / brave  
.....

Fill in the gaps with one of the eight 'odd words out'.

- 1 Macbeth was quite ..... when he fought in battle but not when he had to murder his king.
- 2 Macbeth's wife was tired of being just ..... Macbeth: she wanted to be queen.
- 3 The witches said that Banquo's children's children would have the ..... of Scotland.
- 4 Killing another man in battle is not generally considered a ....., but killing one of your guests is.
- 5 Old women with beards standing around a pot is a ..... sight.
- 6 Macbeth feels ..... about killing his king.
- 7 Lady Macbeth is a very..... person. She will stop at nothing to get what she wants.
- 8 Macbeth became ..... when he heard the witches' prediction.



## 6 Listening

track 05

You will hear two short extracts from Shakespeare's original play. Listen and answer the following questions.

- 1 Which of the extracts comes before the murder, and which comes after the murder?
- 2 Listen again and put the first extract into modern English.



## 7 Writing

Imagine that you are Lady Macbeth. Read this part of a letter from your English-speaking friend Elizabeth. Write a letter to Elizabeth and tell her how you feel in 120-180 words in an appropriate style.

*You must write and tell me what has happened.  
How do you feel about these events?*

T: GRADE 8

## 8 Speaking: the supernatural

Macbeth is filled with supernatural elements. Interestingly, in this particular play they are given rational explanations by Lady Macbeth, even if she does accept the predictions of the witches.

What do you think of supernatural things such as ghosts and witches? Present a short report explaining your opinions.

**1 Discussion**

- A** One of the themes of *Macbeth* concerns the nature of personal responsibility. Critics have argued about who is really responsible for the murder of King Duncan. Who do you think is most responsible?

**THE WITCHES**      They predict that Macbeth will become king.  
Do they make their prediction to test Macbeth?

**MACBETH**          He commits the murder.  
Would he have committed the murder without the witches?  
Would he have committed the murder without Lady  
Macbeth's encouragement?

**LADY MACBETH**    She knows that her husband is ambitious but that he does  
not want to be 'cruel'.  
She plans the murder of Duncan, and encourages Macbeth  
to carry it out.

- B** One of the themes of the play concerns the nature of courage. At the beginning of the play Macbeth is described as being a brave man in battle, but there are moments when he seems afraid. How does he behave in the following situations?

- 1 When Lady Macbeth tells him of her plan to kill Duncan?
- 2 Just before the murder? Just after the murder?
- 3 At the end of the play, when he realises that he is going to be killed?

**In your opinion, what does courage consist of?**

- C** Many critics have pointed out that the positions of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth become reversed throughout the play. Can you find evidence of this reversal of positions in what you have read? Compare the following scenes:

- 1 Macbeth's vision of the dagger before the murder — Lady Macbeth's vision of the blood on her hands towards the end of the play.
- 2 Macbeth telling his wife that he cannot kill Duncan because the king is his guest — the murder of Banquo after inviting him to the feast.

- D** Another of the play's themes concerns the way that Macbeth's crime isolates him from 'nature' and human affection. Can you find evidence for this gradual isolation of Macbeth in the text you have read? You may find it helpful to consider the following:

- 1 The relationship between Macbeth and his wife. Does this change throughout the play? Is there any sign that Macbeth keeps secrets from his wife?
- 2 The relationship between Macbeth and Banquo. How does this change before Banquo's murder?
- 3 The relationship between Macbeth and the thanes. How does this change throughout the play?

- E Another of the play's themes is about the nature of remorse and conscience. Macbeth and his wife do not acknowledge their guilt in words, but both of them see or hear things that symbolise their guilt. Macbeth sees the dagger before the murder, and he hears the voice that says 'Macbeth shall sleep no more' after the murder. He also sees Banquo's ghost. Lady Macbeth sees the blood on her hands. Do you think the audience is meant to believe in the 'reality' of these phenomena, or do they have another purpose?

## INTERNET PROJECT

### Filming Madness

Go to the Internet and go to [www.blackcat-cideb.com](http://www.blackcat-cideb.com) or [www.cideb.it](http://www.cideb.it). Insert the title or part of the title of the book into our search engine. Open the page to *Macbeth*. Click on the Internet project link. Scroll down the page until you find the title of this book and click on the relevant link for this project. Watch the two versions of the scene in which Lady Macbeth walks in her sleep. Present the one you prefer to the class (you can use some of the film terms you learned on page 47).

### Describe one or two improvements you would make, for example

- ▶ Would you show exactly what Lady Macbeth thinks she sees?
- ▶ Would you film Lady Macbeth only from a distance?
- ▶ *your own idea(s)*



# Macbeth

## Playscript

### ACT ONE

*It is the evening after the battle against the Thane of Cawdor and the King of Norway. Banquo and Macbeth are walking together.*

BANQUO : We won, my friend. The king will be pleased with us. You were very brave today.

MACBETH : The Thane of Cawdor is defeated. We have done well.

*Banquo sees the three witches. He points excitedly.*

BANQUO : Look over there. Who are you? Are you women, or are you spirits?

FIRST WITCH : Welcome, Macbeth, Thane of Glamis.

MACBETH : How do you know who I am?

SECOND WITCH : Welcome, Macbeth, Thane of Cawdor.

MACBETH : Thane of Cawdor? — I'm not the Thane of Cawdor.

THIRD WITCH : Welcome, Macbeth, King of Scotland.

BANQUO : You tell my friend he will be Thane of Cawdor, and then King of Scotland. What about me? What is my future?

FIRST WITCH : You will be less than Macbeth, but more than Macbeth.

SECOND WITCH : You will be less lucky than Macbeth, but you will be more fortunate.

THIRD WITCH : You will never be king, but you will be the father of kings.

*The three witches suddenly disappear.*

MACBETH : How strange! They said I would be Thane of Cawdor, and then king — and you will be the father of kings! I don't know who they are, but I don't believe what they said. It makes no sense.

*Ross now enters. He is looking for Macbeth.*

ROSS : I have come from King Duncan. I have a message for you, Macbeth. The king is very pleased with you, and he wants to reward you. You will be the new Thane of Cawdor.

BANQUO : Thane of Cawdor!

MACBETH : The witches told the truth!

BANQUO : Be careful, my friend. Remember they also said you would be king. That's not possible. Perhaps they are bad spirits. I have heard that bad spirits try to make men do bad things by making them promises.

### ACT TWO

*Macbeth's castle. Lady Macbeth is reading the letter from her husband.*

LADY MACBETH : 'Prepare everything for Duncan's visit. We must talk about what the witches told me. Thane of Cawdor, then King of Scotland — what can it mean?' It's a great

chance for us, that's what it is. But I know you, Macbeth. You'd like to be the king, but you don't want to do anything bad. Come home, my love — I'll make you full of courage!

*Macbeth's castle. Lady Macbeth is talking to her husband about Duncan's visit.*

LADY MACBETH : You must act very cheerfully and innocently during the king's visit. Leave everything to me — Duncan will never leave the castle alive.

MACBETH : We cannot kill the king! He's been a good friend to me, and I can't murder him.

LADY MACBETH : Why did you tell me about the three witches, then? Don't you want to be king? Are you just frightened? Be brave, and you can have the throne!

MACBETH : But if we fail? What happens to us if we fail?

LADY MACBETH : Don't worry about that. We won't fail. I've got a plan. Duncan's room is guarded by two soldiers. I'll make sure that they drink a lot of wine. They won't know what's happening. It will be easy for you to go into the king's room and kill him. We can blame the soldiers for the murder.

MACBETH : You're right! No one will think it was us.

*It is late at night in the castle. Macbeth comes out of the two soldiers' room. He is holding a knife, and his hands are covered in blood. He looks frightened. Lady Macbeth is waiting for him.*

LADY MACBETH : Well? Did you do it?

MACBETH : Duncan is dead. I have done a terrible thing. Afterwards, I heard a voice. It said, 'There will be no more sleep. Macbeth has murdered sleep'. It was a frightening voice.

LADY MACBETH : Did it say anything else?

MACBETH : Yes. It cried out, 'Macbeth has murdered sleep — Macbeth will never sleep again'. It was a loud voice. I thought everyone in the castle would hear it.

LADY MACBETH : You're like a child! There was no voice, it was just your fear you heard. But the knife — why are you still carrying the knife? Go and put it in the soldiers' room!

MACBETH : I can't go back in there — I'll never go back in there!

LADY MACBETH : Give the knife to me. I'm not afraid. I'll put it in the soldiers' room.

*Lady Macbeth goes into the soldiers' room. Macbeth is alone. He is looking at the blood on his hands.*

MACBETH : I have done a terrible thing. This blood will never go away. I wish I hadn't done it!

*Lady Macbeth comes back from the soldiers' room. Her hands are covered with blood.*

LADY MACBETH : Look at my hands. They're red like yours — but I'm not afraid like you! A little water will remove the traces of our crime.

### ACT THREE

*Macduff and Lennox have just entered the castle. It is very early in the morning. They have made a noise, and woken up the porter. Macbeth comes down to see what is happening.*

MACDUFF : Did you go to bed late, my friend? Perhaps you drank too much before you went to bed. Is that why you didn't hear the knocking on the gate?

PORTER : It's true, sir. I did drink too much last night.

This reader uses the **EXPANSIVE READING** approach, where the text becomes a springboard to improve language skills and to explore historical background, cultural connections and other topics suggested by the text.

The new structures introduced in this step of our **READING & TRAINING** series are listed below. Naturally, structures from lower steps are included too. For a complete list of structures used over all the six steps, see *The Black Cat Guide to Graded Readers*, which is also downloadable at no cost from our website, blackcat-cideb.com.

The vocabulary used at each step is carefully checked against vocabulary lists used for internationally recognised examinations.

## Step Four B2.1

All the structures used in the previous levels, plus the following:

### Verb tenses

Present Perfect Simple: *the first / second* etc. *time that ...*

Present Perfect Continuous: unfinished past with *for* or *since* (duration form)

### Verb forms and patterns

Passive forms: Present Perfect Simple

Reported speech introduced by precise reporting verbs (e.g. *suggest, promise, apologise*)

### Modal verbs

*Be / get used to + -ing*: habit formation

*Had better*: duty and warning

### Types of clause

3rd Conditional: *if + Past Perfect, would(n't) have*

Conditionals with *may / might*

Non-defining relative clauses with: *which, whose*

Clauses of concession: *even though; in spite of, despite*

Available at **Step Four**:

- **American Horror** Edgar Allan Poe
- **Beowulf**
- **The Big Mistake and Other Stories** Nella Burnett-Stuart and Bruna Deriu
- **The Canterbury Tales** Geoffrey Chaucer
- **A Christmas Carol** Charles Dickens
- **Daisy Miller** Henry James
- **Dracula** Bram Stoker
- **Famous British Criminals from The Newgate Calendar**
- **The House of the Seven Gables** Nathaniel Hawthorne
- **Jack the Ripper** Peter Foreman
- **The Last of the Mohicans** James Fenimore Cooper
- **Moby Dick** Herman Melville
- **The Moonstone** Wilkie Collins
- **Le Morte d'Arthur** Sir Thomas Malory
- **The Secret Agent** Joseph Conrad
- **The Sign of Four** Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
- **A Study in Scarlet** Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
- **Tom Jones** Henry Fielding
- **The Tragedy of Dr Faustus** Christopher Marlowe
- **The Turn of the Screw** Henry James
- **The Valley of Fear** Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
- **Washington Square** Henry James
- **Wicked and Humorous Tales** Saki
- **The Woman in White** Wilkie Collins

### READING SHAKESPEARE

- **Macbeth**
- **The Merchant of Venice**
- **A Midsummer Night's Dream**
- **Much Ado About Nothing**
- **Othello**