# Macbeth-poster

**William Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (1606)**

**Selected Passages**

What follows are textual passages that can be interpreted to support arguments on each of the three interpretive arguments. These passages are not the only ones in the play that can be used, but they do have ample relevant and sufficient evidence to enable each group to build strong contentions and counter-arguments.

**Interpretation A: The witches are responsible for Macbeth’s tragic outcome**

(1) *Macbeth*  Speak if you can: what are you?

*1 Witch* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!

*2 Witch* All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!

*3 Witch* All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be king hereafter!

*Banquo* Good Sir, why do you start, and seem to fear

Things that do sound so fair?

(I.iii.47-52)

(2) *Rosse* And, for an earnest of a greater honour,

He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor:

In which addition, hail, most worthy Thane,

For it is thine.

*Banquo* What! can the devil speak true? . . .

*Macbeth [Aside]* Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor:

The greatest is behind.

(I.iii.104-117)

(3) *Banquo*  But ‘tis strange’

And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,

The instruments of Darkness tell us truths;

Win us with honest trifles, to betray’s

In deepest consequence.

(I.iii.122-126)

(4) *Lennox* The night has been unruly: where we lay,

Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,

Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams of death,

And prophesying with accents terrible

Of dire combustion and confused events

New hatch'd to the woeful time: the obscure bird

Clamour'd the livelong night: some say, the earth

Was feverous and did shake.

(II.iii.53-60)

(5) *Banquo* Thou hast it now: king, Cawdor, Glamis, all,

As the weird women promised, and, I fear,

Thou play'dst most foully for't: yet it was said

It should not stand in thy posterity,

But that myself should be the root and father

Of many kings. If there come truth from them--

As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine--

Why, by the verities on thee made good,

May they not be my oracles as well,

And set me up in hope?

(III.i.1-10)

(6) *2 Witch* By the pricking of my thumbs,

Something wicked this way comes.

Open, locks,

Whoever knocks!

*Macbeth* How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!

What is't you do?

*All Witches* A deed without a name.

(IV.i.44-49)

(7) *2 Apparition* Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn

The power of man, for none of woman born

Shall harm Macbeth.

*Macbeth* Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?

But yet I'll make assurance double sure,

And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;

That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,

And sleep in spite of thunder.

(IV.i.79-86)

(8) *Macbeth* I bear a charmed life, which must not yield,

To one of woman born.

*Macduff*Despair thy charm;

And let the angel whom thou still hast served  
Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb  
Untimely ripp'd.

*Macbeth*Accursed be that tongue that tells me so,

For it hath cow'd my better part of man!  
And be these juggling fiends no more believed,  
That palter with us in a double sense;  
That keep the word of promise to our ear,  
And break it to our hope.

(V.viii.12-22)

**Interpretation B: Lady Macbeth is responsible for Macbeth’s tragic outcome**

(9) *Lady Macbeth* Yet do I fear thy nature:

It is too full o’th’milk of human kindness,

To catch the nearest way. Thou wouldst be great;

Art not without ambition, but without

The illness should attend it: what thou wouldst highly,

That wouldst thou holily; wouldst not play false,

And yet woudlst wrongly win.

(I.v.15-22)

(10) *Lady Macbeth*  Hie thee hither,

That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,

And chastise with the valour of my tongue

All that impedes thee from the golden round,

Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem

To have thee crown’d withal.

(I.v.25-30)

(11) *Lady Macbeth* The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan

Under my battlements. Come, you spirits

That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,

And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full

Of direst cruelty! make thick my blood;

Stop up the access and passage to remorse,

That no compunctious visitings of nature

Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between

The effect and it!

(I.v.38-47)

(12) *Lady Macbeth*  Come to my woman's breasts,

And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,

Wherever in your sightless substances

You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,

And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,

That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,

Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,

To cry 'Hold, hold!'

(I.v.47-54)

(13) *Macbeth* I dare do all that may become a man;

Who dares do more is none.

*Lady Macbeth* What beast was't, then,

That made you break this enterprise to me?

When you durst do it, then you were a man;

And, to be more than what you were, you would

Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place

Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:

They have made themselves, and that their fitness now

Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know

How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:

I would, while it was smiling in my face,

Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,

And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you

Have done to this.

(I.vii.46-59)

(14) *Lady Macbeth* Infirm of purpose!

Give me the daggers: the sleeping and the dead

Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood

That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,

I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;

For it must seem their guilt.

(II.ii.51-56)

(15) *Lady Macbeth* Are you a man?

*Macbeth* Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that

Which might appal the devil.

*Lady Macbeth* O proper stuff!

This is the very painting of your fear:

This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,

Led you to Duncan. O, these flaws and starts,

Impostors to true fear, would well become

A woman's story at a winter's fire,

Authorized by her grandam. Shame itself!

(III.iv.57-65)

(16) *Lady Macbeth* Out, damned spot! out, I say!--One: two: why,

then, 'tis time to do't.--Hell is murky!--Fie, my  
lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we  
fear who knows it, when none can call our power to  
account?--Yet who would have thought the old man  
to have had so much blood in him.

*Doctor* Do you mark that?

*Lady Macbeth* The Thane of Fife had a wife – where is she

now? What, will these hands ne’er be clean?  
(V.i.33-41)

**Interpretation C: Macbeth is responsible for his own tragic outcome**

(17) *Macbeth*  I am Thane of Cawdor:

If good, why do I yield to that suggestion

Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair,

And make my seated heart knock at my ribs,

Against the use of nature? Present fears

Are less than horrible imaginings.

My thought, whose murther yet is but fantastical,

Shakes so my single state of man,

That function is smother’d in surmise,

And nothing is, but what is not.

(I.iii.133-142)

(18) *Macbeth* If Chance will have me King, why, Chance may crown me,

Without my stir.

(I.iii.144-145)

(19) *Macbeth* The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step

On which I must fall down, or else o’erleap,

For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires!

Let not light see my black and deep desires;

The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,

Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.

(I.iv.48-53)

(20) *Macbeth* Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,

And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,  
Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,  
No son of mine succeeding. If 't be so,  
For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind;  
For them the gracious Duncan have I murder'd;  
Put rancours in the vessel of my peace  
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel  
Given to the common enemy of man,  
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!  
Rather than so, come fate into the list.  
And champion me to the utterance!

(III.i.60-71)

(21) *Macbeth* Ere to black Hecate's summons

The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums  
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there shall be done  
A deed of dreadful note.

*Lady Macbeth* What's to be done?

*Macbeth* Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,  
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling night,  
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day;  
And with thy bloody and invisible hand  
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond  
Which keeps me pale!

(III.ii.41-49)

(22) *Malcolm* I grant him bloody,

Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,

Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin

That has a name.

(IV.iii.57-60)

(23) *Rosse* Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes

Savagely slaughter'd: to relate the manner,  
Were, on the quarry of these murder'd deer,  
To add the death of you.

*Malcolm* Merciful heaven!  
What, man! ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;  
Give sorrow words: the grief that does not speak  
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break.

*Macduff*My children too?

*Rosse*Wife, children, servants, all  
That could be found.

*Macduf* And I must be from thence!  
My wife kill'd too?

*Rosse* I have said.

*Malcolm*Be comforted:  
Let's make us medicines of our great revenge,  
To cure this deadly grief.

*Macduff* He has no children. All my pretty ones?  
Did you say all? O hell-kite!

(IV.iii.205-217)

(24) *Macbeth* I have almost forgot the taste of fears;

The time has been, my senses would have cool'd  
To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair  
Would at a dismal treatise rouse and stir  
As life were in't: I have supp'd full with horrors;  
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts  
Cannot once start me.

(V.v.9-15)