

CONTEXT OF COMPOSITION: During this time period, feasts are symbols for social harmony and togetherness. This is supposed to be Macbeth's celebration dinner.

**SCENE IV. The same. Hall in the palace.**

A banquet prepared. Enter MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, Lords, and Attendants

**MACBETH**

You know your own degrees; sit down: at first  
And last the hearty welcome.

**Lords**

Thanks to your majesty.

**MACBETH**

Ourself will mingle with society,  
And play the humble host.  
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time  
We will require her welcome.

**LADY MACBETH**

Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;  
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

*First Murderer appears at the door*

**MACBETH**

See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks.  
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' the midst:  
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure  
The table round.

*Approaching the door*

There's blood on thy face.

**First Murderer**

'Tis Banquo's then.

**MACBETH**

'Tis better thee without than he within.  
Is he dispatch'd?

This is Macbeth's chance to put all the evil and bad behind him. He is going to try to be a noble and good man again.

NOTE: the diction prior to the murderer walking in. How is he trying to appear to his guests?

Important to note the timing of the entrance of the murderer. Macbeth isn't going to be able to enjoy his feast OR show his guests how good/together he is.

Bloody face murderer is a SYMBOL. Macbeth can't hide behind his words anymore. His past will always haunt him.

**First Murderer**

My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.

**MACBETH**

Thou art the best o' the cut-throats: yet he's good  
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,  
Thou art the nonpareil.

**First Murderer**

Most royal sir,  
Fleance is 'scaped.

**MACBETH**

Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect,  
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,  
As broad and general as the casing air:  
But now I am cabin'd, cribb'd, confined, bound in  
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe?

**First Murderer**

Ay, my good lord: safe in a ditch he bides,  
With twenty trenched gashes on his head;  
The least a death to nature.

**MACBETH**

Thanks for that:  
There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled  
Hath nature that in time will venom breed,  
No teeth for the present. Get thee gone: to-morrow  
We'll hear, ourselves, again.

*Exit Murderer*

**LADY MACBETH**

My royal lord,  
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold  
That is not often vouch'd, while 'tis a-making,  
'Tis given with welcome: to feed were best at home;  
From thence the sauce to meat is ceremony;  
Meeting were bare without it.

**MACBETH**

Sweet remembrancer!  
Now, good digestion wait on appetite,  
And health on both!

Macbeth is now hysterical.

**LENNOX**

May't please your highness sit.

*The GHOST OF BANQUO enters, and sits in MACBETH's place*

**MACBETH**

Here had we now our country's honour roof'd,  
Were the graced person of our Banquo present;  
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness  
Than pity for mischance!

**ROSS**

His absence, sir,  
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness  
To grace us with your royal company.

**MACBETH**

The table's full.

**LENNOX**

Here is a place reserved, sir.

**MACBETH**

Where?

**LENNOX**

Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?

**MACBETH**

Which of you have done this?

**Lords**

What, my good lord?

**MACBETH**

Thou canst not say I did it: never shake  
Thy gory locks at me.

**ROSS**

Gentlemen, rise: his highness is not well.

**LADY MACBETH**

Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,  
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat;  
The fit is momentary; upon a thought  
He will again be well: if much you note him,  
You shall offend him and extend his passion:  
Feed, and regard him not. Are you a man?

At first she tries to act like everything is okay  
(even though her husband is obviously losing it).  
Lady Macbeth is again trying to make up for  
what Macbeth lacks.

**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!  
Why do you make such faces? When all's done,  
You look but on a stool.

**MACBETH**

Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo!  
how say you?  
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.  
If charnel-houses and our graves must send  
Those that we bury back, our monuments  
Shall be the maws of kites.

*GHOST OF BANQUO vanishes*

**LADY MACBETH**

What, quite unmann'd in folly?

Questioning his manhood again.

**MACBETH**

If I stand here, I saw him.

**LADY MACBETH**

Fie, for shame!

**MACBETH**

Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time,  
Ere human statute purged the gentle weal;  
Ay, and since too, murders have been perform'd  
Too terrible for the ear: the times have been,  
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,  
And there an end; but now they rise again,  
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,  
And push us from our stools: this is more strange  
Than such a murder is.

**LADY MACBETH**

My worthy lord,  
Your noble friends do lack you.

**MACBETH**

I do forget.  
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends,  
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing  
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;  
Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.  
I drink to the general joy o' the whole table,  
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;  
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,  
And all to all.

**Lords**

Our duties, and the pledge.

*Re-enter GHOST OF BANQUO*

**MACBETH**

Avaunt! and quit my sight! let the earth hide thee!  
Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold;  
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes  
Which thou dost glare with!

**LADY MACBETH**

Think of this, good peers,  
But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other;  
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.

**MACBETH**

What man dare, I dare:  
Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,  
The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger;  
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves  
Shall never tremble: or be alive again,  
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;  
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me  
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow!  
Unreal mockery, hence!

*GHOST OF BANQUO vanishes*

Macbeth's behavior is alienating himself from the people he so desperately wanted to impress/look good in front of.

Lady Macbeth makes all the guests leave when she realizes Macbeth isn't going to be able to get it together.

Macbeth's feasts ends in chaos (SYMBOLIC of how everything else ends for him. Everything he tries to make happen, he is unable to do).

Why, so: being gone,  
I am a man again. Pray you, sit still.

**LADY MACBETH**

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,  
With most admired disorder.

**MACBETH**

Can such things be,  
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,  
Without our special wonder? You make me strange  
Even to the disposition that I owe,  
When now I think you can behold such sights,  
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,  
When mine is blanched with fear.

**ROSS**

What sights, my lord?

**LADY MACBETH**

I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse;  
Question enrages him. At once, good night:  
Stand not upon the order of your going,  
But go at once.

**LENNOX**

Good night; and better health  
Attend his majesty!

**LADY MACBETH**

A kind good night to all!

*Exeunt all but MACBETH and LADY MACBETH*

**MACBETH**

It will have blood; they say, blood will have blood:  
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;  
Augurs and understood relations have  
By magot-pies and choughs and rooks brought forth  
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?

**LADY MACBETH**

Almost at odds with morning, which is which.

**MACBETH**

How say'st thou, that Macduff denies his person  
At our great bidding?

NOTE THE LANGUAGE CHANGE HERE: She has gone from long speeches to very short responses. Lady Macbeth either doesn't care or is just too tired to do what it takes to convince him to continue to charade.

**LADY MACBETH**

Did you send to him, sir?

**MACBETH**

I hear it by the way; but I will send:  
There's not a one of them but in his house  
I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow,  
And betimes I will, to the weird sisters:  
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,  
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,  
All causes shall give way: I am in blood  
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,  
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:  
Strange things I have in head, that will to hand;  
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.

Macbeth is in too deep. He knows he is at the point of no return. He is saying that it would be just as hard to go back as it would to keep going.

**LADY MACBETH**

You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

**MACBETH**

Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse  
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use:  
We are yet but young in deed.

*Exeunt*