

SCENE II. The same.

Enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath quenched them hath given me fire.
Hark! Peace!

It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. He is about it:
The doors are open; and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugg'd
their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die.

MACBETH

[Within] Who's there? what, ho!

LADY MACBETH

Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,
And 'tis not done. The attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.

Enter MACBETH

My husband!

MACBETH

I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

LADY MACBETH

I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?

MACBETH

← When? →

LADY MACBETH

← Now. →

MACBETH

← As I descended? →

LADY MACBETH

Ay.

Lady Macbeth tried to kill Duncan but couldn't do it because he looked like her father. What could this tell us about Lady Macbeth's character? Is she more human/relatable than we thought?

THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT: The murder does not occur on stage. Why would Shakespeare do this? What purpose does it serve? (Possibly to allow the audience to feel guilty for Macbeth? If we don't see the act, just the result after—he's crazy—we can feel sorry for him. If we see the brutality of murder, we are less likely to feel sorry for Macbeth.)

Pauses before speaking could indicate being nervous/on edge.

MACBETH

Hark!

Who lies i' the second chamber?

LADY MACBETH

Donalbain.

Duncan's son.

MACBETH

This is a sorry sight.

Looking on his hands

LADY MACBETH

A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.

MACBETH

There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried
'Murder!'

That they did wake each other: I stood and heard them:
But they did say their prayers, and address'd them
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH

There are two lodged together.

MACBETH

One cried 'God bless us!' and 'Amen' the other;
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
Listening their fear, I could not say 'Amen,'
When they did say 'God bless us!'

LADY MACBETH

Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH

But wherefore could not I pronounce 'Amen'?
I had most need of blessing, and 'Amen'
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH

These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH

Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep', the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast,--

LADY MACBETH

What do you mean?

MACBETH

Still it cried 'Sleep no more!' to all the house:
'Glamis hath murder'd sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more; Macbeth shall sleep no more.'

LADY MACBETH

Who was it that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength, to think
So brainsickly of things. **Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.**
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there: go carry them; and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.

Macbeth screwed up. He should have left the daggers with the guards, but instead brought them with him (filthy witness). What could this show the audience about Macbeth? Guilt?

MACBETH

←—————→ I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.

Remorse?

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.

Back to her regular/crazy self to make up for Macbeth's mistake. LM has to finish the job for him (go back to the "unsex me here" comment; has to give up "female" tendencies in order to get things done & make up for what Macbeth lacks). Role reversal?

Exit. Knocking within

MACBETH

Whence is that knocking?
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here? ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas in incarnadine,
Making the green one red.

Paranoid!! The knocking shocks him back to reality.

Re-enter LADY MACBETH

LADY MACBETH

My hands are of your colour; but I shame
To wear a heart so white.

Knocking within

I hear a knocking
At the south entry: retire we to our chamber;
A little water clears us of this deed:
How easy is it, then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended.

EXTENDED METAPHOR (carries throughout the play) - wishing water (something seemingly simple) will wash away proof of the horrible sin. (Signs of guilt?)

Knocking within

Hark! more knocking.
Get on your nightgown, lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.

MACBETH

To know my deed, 'twere best not know myself.

Knocking within

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou couldst!

Regret?

Exeunt