

William Shakespeare: Macbeth
Extract from Act I, Scene 3

=====
[Enter MACBETH and BANQUO]

MACBETH

5 So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BANQUO

How far is't call'd to Forres? What are these

10 So wither'd and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are you aught

15 That man may question? You seem to understand me,

By each at once her chappy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,

20 And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

MACBETH

Speak, if you can: what are you?

25 First Witch

All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

Second Witch

30 All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

Third Witch

35 All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter!

BANQUO

Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear

40 Things that do sound so fair? I' the name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner

45 You greet with present grace and great prediction

Of noble having and of royal hope,

That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.

50 If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear

55 Your favours nor your hate.

First Witch

Hail!

60 Second Witch

Hail!

Third Witch

Hail!

65

First Witch

Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

Second Witch

70 Not so happy, yet much happier.

Third Witch

Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:

75 So all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

First Witch

Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

80 MACBETH

Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:

By Sinel's death I know I am thane of Glamis;

85 But how of Cawdor? the thane of Cawdor lives,

A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
No more than to be Cawdor. Say from

90 whence

You owe this strange intelligence? or why
Upon this blasted heath you stop our way
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you.

95 [Witches vanish]

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