

But bear-like I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter YOUNG SIWARD

YOUNG SIWARD What is thy name? 5

MACBETH Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.

YOUNG SIWARD No, though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.

MACBETH My name's Macbeth.

YOUNG SIWARD The devil himself could not pronounce a title
More hateful to mine ear.

MACBETH No, nor more fearful. 10

YOUNG SIWARD Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st.

Fight, and young Siward slain

MACBETH Thou wast born of woman.

But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn,
Brandished by man that's of a woman born.

Exit [with young Siward's body]

Alarums. Enter MACDUFF

MACDUFF That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face! 15

If thou be'st slain, and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns whose arms

4 SD YOUNG SIWARD] F (*young Seyward*) 14 SD.1 *Exit . . . body*] *This edn (after Oxford); Exit* F 16 bc'st] F (*beest*)

ate remark, 'for we are at the stake, / And bayed about with many enemies' (JC 4.1.48-9), and 'To be bound to a stake' (Dent s813.1).

2 course attack (by dogs baiting a bear); see OED Course sb 27b, where this line is the earliest citation. More generally, the word means 'continuous process of time, succession of events' (OED Course sb 17a).

2-3 What's . . . born of woman Adelman (p. 131) points out that this question 'mean[s] both itself and its opposite': only one not of woman born can conquer Macbeth; there is no one not of woman born.

8 Than any is Than any which is.

12 Thou wast born of woman A chilling sardonicism, recalling the Bible (see 4.1.79 n.) and Macbeth's remark to First Murderer (3.4.14).

14 SD.1 *with young Siward's body* E. K. Cham-

bers (*William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, 2 vols., 1930, 1, 472) thought the absence of an SD for removing this corpse indicated textual corruption, and Swander speculates that this body should remain on stage, as it does in some productions, but F may here assume a conventional act (see 3.3.25 SD n.), and Ross says the body was 'brought off the field' (5.9.10). See Textual Analysis, p. 249 below, n. 5.

14 SD.2 The stage has been cleared of actors, and a new scene might be marked here and, for the same reason, at 24 SD; Oxford does so. The continued sound effects, however, and the sense that the Malcolm-Siward dialogue (25-30) concludes the mass battle justify letting F stand. See headnotes to 5.8 and 5.9 and, more generally, Textual Analysis, pp. 249-50 below.

18 kerns See 1.2.13 n.

Are hired to bear their staves; either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword with an unbattered edge 20
I sheath again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, Fortune,
And more I beg not. *Exit*

Alarums. Enter MALCOLM and SIWARD

SIWARD This way, my lord; the castle's gently rendered. 25

The tyrant's people on both sides do fight;
The noble thanes do bravely in the war.
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.

MALCOLM We have met with foes
That strike beside us.

SIWARD Enter, sir, the castle. 30

Alarum

[5.8] *Enter* MACBETH

MACBETH Why should I play the Roman fool and die
On mine own sword? Whiles I see lives, the gashes

24 SD.2 *Alarums*] F (*at right margin opposite 24*) 24 SD.2 SIWARD] F (*Seyward*); *old Seyward / Capell* 25 SH SIWARD] F (*Sey*); *this throughout remainder of play* 30 SD.1-2] F (*as one line following castle*) Act 5, Scene 8 5.8] *Dyce*; *scene continues* F

19 staves lances (*Lexicon* under Staff).

19 either thou, Macbeth i.e. either I strike at you, Macbeth.

20 unbattered undamaged (by use in battle).

21 undeeded having done nothing (*Lexicon*), without accomplishment or 'deed'. This line is OED's sole citation for the word.

21 There i.e. where I hear the most noise ('this great clatter' (22)).

22 The line puns on 'note' as musical sound ('clatter') and as 'reputation' or 'fame'; compare the imagery of 3.2.43-4 and nn.

23 bruited noised, reported.

23-4 Let . . . not A prayer to the goddess who momentarily favoured Macdonald (1.2.9-15).

25 gently rendered calmly (i.e. without further loss of life) or 'nobly' surrendered.

29-30 foes / That strike beside us Either 'enemies who deliberately miss when they attack', or 'enemies who fight on our side'.

Act 5, Scene 8

F does not mark a scene division here, and the action might be continuous with 5.7, but the stage has been cleared (a customary sign of a scene's conclusion), and it is not evident that this scene takes place within 'the castle' Malcolm and Siward entered at 5.7.30. More likely, it takes place on the battlefield before that castle. Adelman (pp. 160-2) compares this scene with the duel ending R3.

1-2 play . . . sword Roman honour required a defeated warrior to commit suicide rather than be captured; see *Ant.* 4.14 and *JC* 5.3, 5.5.

2 Whiles While.

2 lives living creatures (*Lexicon* Life sb 1, though OED Life sb 6c cites this line for 'Vitality as embodied in an individual person').

Do better upon them.

Enter MACDUFF

MACDUFF Turn, hell-hound, turn.

MACBETH Of all men else I have avoided thee,
But get thee back, my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.

MACDUFF I have no words;
My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out.

Fight. Alarum

MACBETH Thou lovest labour.
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed.
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
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 ripped.

MACBETH Accursèd be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cowed my better part of man;

8 labour.] *Collier*; labour F

5 charged weighted, burdened. The Doctor uses the same word of Lady Macbeth (5.1.44).

8 terms words, expressions (*OED* Term sb 14a).

8 SD *Alarum* Battle continues elsewhere.

8 Thou lovest labour You waste effort. The remark is proverbial (Dent 19).

9 easy easily. See 2.3.130 n.

9 intrenchant incapable of being cut. This line is the only citation at *OED* Intrenchant a¹ (Schäfer) and Shakespeare's sole use of the word. The context of sword and flesh parallels 'Let not the virgin's cheek / Make soft thy trenchant sword' (*Tim.* 4.3.115-16).

10 keen sharp; eager, ardent (*OED* Keen a 3a and 6a). This 'keen sword' answers Lady Macbeth's 'keen knife' (1.5.50).

10 impress mark, press (*OED* Impress v¹ 5a, quoting *LLL* 2.1.236 and this line as its earliest examples). The word 'impress' appears here when Macbeth's supposed invulnerability fails, just as it appeared when he was first assured of it (4.1.94-5).

11 vulnerable The earliest citation for the word in *OED* (Schäfer).

13 one of woman born See 4.1.79 n.

13 charm magical incantation; amulet (?). The latter meaning might be supported theatrically with some prop. See 3.5.19 and 4.1.18 and nn.

14 angel i.e. 'genius', tutelary deity. See 3.1.57-8 and n.

16 Untimely ripped i.e. born by Caesarean section. Having to choose, early modern medical practitioners sought to save the baby rather than the mother; Caesarean section always killed the mother. See the popular guide for physicians and midwives, Eucharius Roesslin, *The Birth of Mankynde*, trans. and enlarged by Thomas Raynald (1565), sig. P2r, and p. 22 above.

18 cowed intimidated, dispirited. This line is the first citation at *OED* Cow v¹ a.

18 my better part of man larger proportion ('more than half') of my courage. Compare Falstaff's maxim, 'The better part of valour is discretion' (*1H4* 5.4.119-20) and *OED* Better adj 3b, where 'better half' is first cited from c. 1580 and 'better part' from 1586. *OED* Better adj 3c partly defines 'better part' as 'soul', an appropriate mean-

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. I'll not fight with thee.

MACDUFF Then yield thee coward,
And live to be the show and gaze o'th'time.
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole and underwrit,
'Here may you see the tyrant.'

MACBETH I will not yield
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam Wood be come to Dunsinane
And thou opposed being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last. Before my body,
I throw my warlike shield. Lay on, Macduff,

23 thee coward,] F (Coward); thee, coward, *Rowe* 27 'Here . . . tyrant.'] *Pope*; Heere . . . Tyrant. F

ing here (see 'fiends' (19)); a passage not cited in *OED* makes this second meaning evident: 'Let comme that fatall howre . . . Yit Shall the better part of mee assured bee too clyme / Aloft above the stary skye' (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Arthur Golding (1567), ed. W. H. D. Rouse, 1904, xv, 986, 989-90).

19 juggling deceitful, cheating (*OED* Juggling ppl a). Early audiences might have associated the word with the (Roman Catholic) exorcists who claimed to heal possessed individuals (see 5.1.0 SD n.).

20 palter equivocate, deal evasively, trick (*OED* Palter v 3, quoting 'what other bond / Than secret Romans, that have spoke the word / And will not palter' (*JC* 2.1.124-6) as the earliest instance).

20 double sense equivocal meaning.

21-2 keep . . . hope fulfil the prophecy (of kingship) in a (merely) verbal way, the way we hear (= 'to our ear'), or wish to hear, 'the word of promise' (21), and fail to fulfil 'it' (the promise) as we expected (= 'our hope'). Macbeth now recognises the effective difference between the sisters' ambiguous prophetic speech and his own ambitious hope. See 5.3.27 n.

23 yield thee coward surrender yourself as a coward; state (or concede) you are a coward. On the second meaning compare 'to yield myself / His wife who wins me' (*MV* 2.1.18-19) and 'Antonio's dead! If thou say so, villain, / Thou kill'st thy mistress; but well and free, / If thou so yield him, there is gold' (*Ant.* 2.5.26-8, quoted as sole citation for *OED*

Yield v 12b). See also *OED* Yield v 18, and Celia Millward in *Reader*, pp. 302-4. Rowe and most other editors regard the noun as a vocative: 'yield thee, coward, . . .'

25-7 An accurate, and humorous, description of the circuslike or carnival atmosphere and sights available at a local fair or tavern. Compare Benedick's ultimately futile boast: 'if ever the sensible Benedick bear it [the "yoke" of marriage] . . . let me be vividly painted, and . . . let them signify under my sign, "Here may you see Benedick the married man"' (*Ado* 1.1.262-8); Lovewit's question: 'What should my knave advance, / To draw this company? He hung out no banners / Of a strange calf, with five legs, to be seen? / Or a huge lobster, with six claws?' (Jonson, *Alchemist* 5.1.6-9); Trinculo's first impulse when he encounters Caliban: 'Were I in England now . . . and had but this fish painted [in a sign], not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver' (*Temp.* 2.2.27-30); Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London*, 1978, chapters 1 and 3. See p. 7 above.

28 To kiss the ground A proverbial phrase (*Dent* D651) for surrender or abnegation.

29 baited taunted.

29 rabble crowd, common people, multitude.

32 try the last experience (or undergo) the conclusion (or extremity). See *OED* Last a, adv, and sb⁶ 9c and 9g; 'I will run the hazard to the end' (*Lexicon* Last a).

33 shield Probably a 'target' or 'target', 'held . . . by straps around the forearm' (Edelman,

And damned be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'

Exeunt[, fighting. Alarums

Enter [Macbeth and Macduff,] fighting[, and Macbeth slain

[Exit Macduff, with Macbeth's body]

[5.9] *Retreat, and flourish. Enter with drum and colours, MALCOLM, SIWARD, ROSS, Thanes, and Soldiers*

MALCOLM I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.

SIWARD Some must go off. And yet by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.

MALCOLM Macduff is missing and your noble son.

ROSS Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt;
He only lived but till he was a man,
The which no sooner had his prowess confirmed
In the unshrinking station where he fought,

34 'Hold, enough!'] *Johnson (subst.): hold, enough. F 34 SD.2 fighting} F (Fighting) 34 SD.3 Exit . . . body] Oxford; not in F Act 5, Scene 9 5.9] NS; scene continues F; SCENE VIII Pope 0 SD.2 SIWARD] F (Seyward); old Seyward / Capell*

p. 34, contradicting *OED* Target *sb*¹ 1). One contemporary theatre company had numerous targets made of iron, of copper, and of wood; see Henslowe, p. 320.

34 Hold, enough Stop, I surrender. Compare 1.5.48–52.

34 SD.1–2 Many editors have doubted F's SDS here, suggesting that they are confused, or imprecise, or represent two different stagings (one for the outdoor, one for the indoor theatre?). However inadequate, the SDS convey a shifting duel, moving from place to place on stage. See Textual Analysis, p. 247 below.

34 SD.3 Malcolm's comment (5.9.1) seems to stipulate a stage empty of dead bodies, and Macduff needs to remove Macbeth's body in order to 'be-head' it. On customary dramatic practice, see 3.3.25 SD n.

Act 5, Scene 9

F does not mark a new scene here, although many editors since Pope have done so with at least two good reasons: the stage has emptied of actors, and the audience needs some conventional encouragement to imagine a change of place from wherever Macbeth and Macduff fight to wherever Malcolm

and his company are when they receive the news and evidence of Macbeth's defeat and death. See Textual Analysis, pp. 249–50 below.

0 SD.1 *Retreat* '[A] signal on the trumpet to recall a pursuing force' (NS). The SD presumably indicates that Macbeth's remaining supporters withdraw (or surrender) off-stage.

0 SD.1 *drum and colours* See 5.2.0 SD n.

0 SD.2 *Thanes* F treats the supporting noblemen collectively. Malone lists Lennox, Angus, Caithness, and Menteith.

2 go off die (Clarendon). Compare 'goes hence' (1.5.57).

5–9 Once again, Ross tells a father of his child's death; compare 4.3.194 ff.

5 soldier's debt what a soldier owes (i.e. his death). See 1.4.10 n. Compare the proverbial 'Death pays all debts' (Dent D148) and 'To pay one's debt to nature' (Dent D168), and Hal's remark to Falstaff before the Battle of Shrewsbury: 'Why, thou owest God a death' (1*H4* 5.1.126).

8 unshrinking station i.e. brave act of standing. 'Station' is the martial posture (*OED* Station *sb*¹) young Siward adopted when he would not retreat (shrink) from Macbeth's attack.

But like a man he died.

SIWARD Then he is dead?

ROSS Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.

SIWARD Had he his hurts before?

ROSS Ay, on the front.

SIWARD Why then, God's soldier be he;
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death.
And so his knell is knolled.

MALCOLM He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.

SIWARD He's worth no more;
They say he parted well and paid his score,
And so God be with him. Here comes newer comfort.

Enter MACDUFF, with Macbeth's head

MACDUFF Hail, king, for so thou art. Behold where stands
Th'usurper's cursèd head. The time is free.

9–20 Siward's reaction – 'heartiness . . . phlegmatic grief' (Ernst Honigmann, *Shakespeare: Seven Tragedies*, 1976, p. 144) – has bothered critics, but it is the play's final response to a loved one's death (compare Malcolm and Donaldbain in 2.3, Macduff in 4.3, Macbeth in 5.5), with the difference that this loss directly serves the cause of freeing Scotland, as Siward's pun on 'hairs' (see 15 n.) suggests. Raphael Holinshed, *The First . . . Volumes of Chronicles* (1587), p. 192a, briefly and confusingly reports this incident, but William Camden may provide a more convincing 'source' (see p. 15 above, n. 2). Compare 'Friends, I owe mo[r]e tears / To this dead man than you shall see me pay' (*JC* 5.3.101–2).

10 brought off the field i.e. the body recovered (for burial).

12 hurts before wounds on the front (of his body), i.e. wounds gained while he fought the enemy, rather than wounds 'behind', on his back, which would indicate he died running away. The idea that only 'hurts before' were honourable has classical origins; see 'Life of Pelopidas' in Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans, Compared*, trans. Thomas North (1595), p. 315.

15 hairs Siward echoes the biblical use of 'the hairs of my head' as a periphrasis for 'a very large number' (see e.g. Ps. 40.13 and 69.4). Mahood (p.

141) finds a homophonic pun on 'heirs' and 'hairs' (see 4.1.112 n.): 'Young Siward's death represents the last blind attempt of Macbeth to render his enemies childless', without heirs (or 'hairs'); Cercignani (p. 335) doubts the pun.

17 knell (church) bell rung to mark the death of a member of the congregation. See 2.1.63 and 4.3.172–3 and n.

19 score bill, amount owing. The word could mean something as mundane as a tavern debt, but here alludes to the soul one owes God. See 5 n.

20 newer more recent, fresher. Compare *OED* New *adj* 6a and 4.3.176.

20 SD *Macbeth's head* Malone added on a *pole*, following *Scotland*, p. 176a, and other bloodthirsty SDS (e.g. Collier's *Sticking the pike in the ground*) may record stage-practice; compare 1.2.23 n., and see illustration 4, p. 31 above. Modern productions rarely follow F's SDS; for both early and later, see William W. French, 'What "may become a man": image and structure in *Macbeth*', *College Literature* 12 (1985), 191–201.

21 Hail The word, repeated twice here (26) and common in Act 1, has not been used since 'all-hail' (1.5.53) and 'hailed' (3.1.61); it now links Macbeth with Malcolm, the sisters with the victorious Scots.

21 so thou art i.e. evidence of Macbeth's death (the head) confirms Malcolm's kingship.