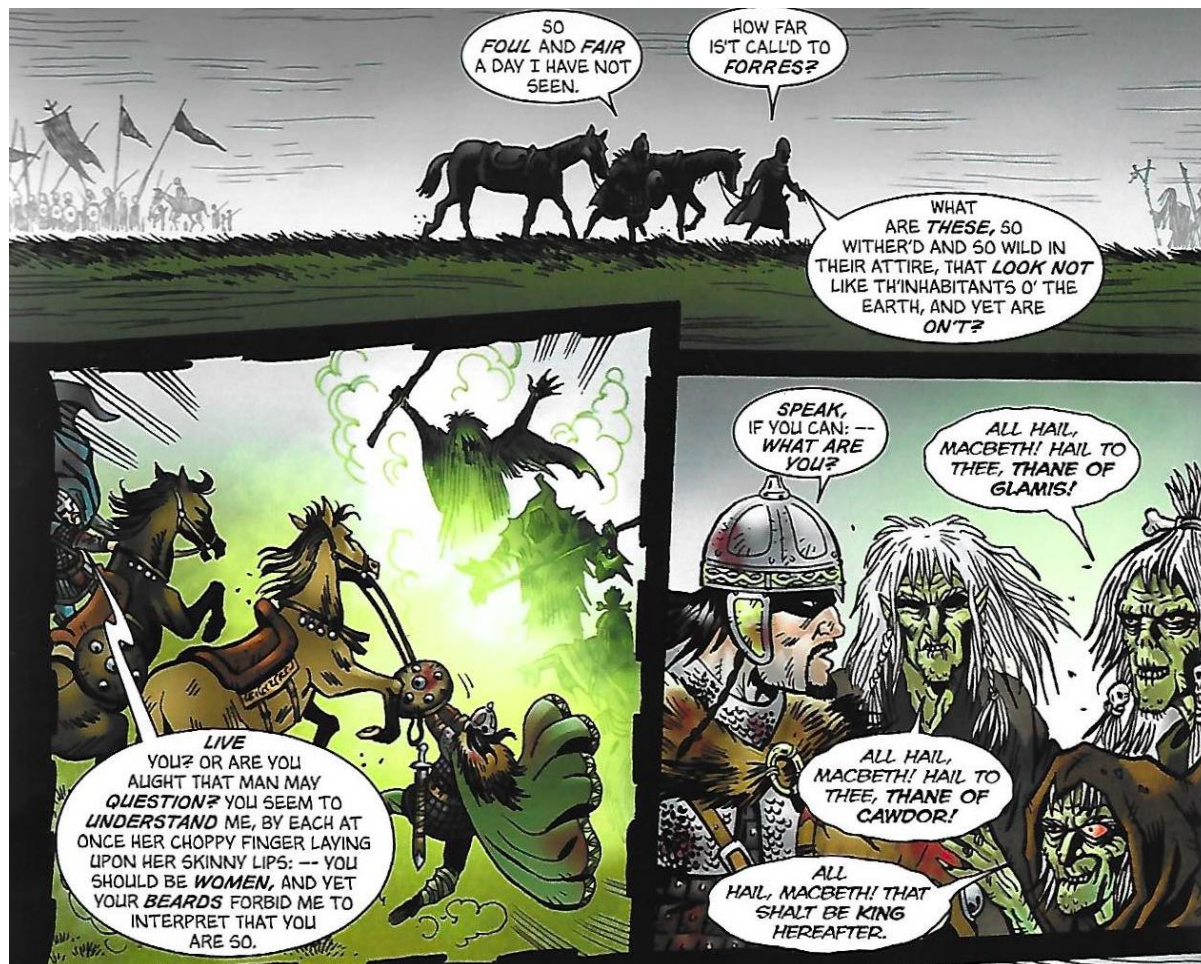


Mystery, temptation and ambition in *Macbeth*

Activity 1

Look at the images below and make notes on what you notice about:

- the setting
- the reaction of the horses
- the dress and appearance of the characters



Answers

Quotations

- A. If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly
- B. we but teach
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague the inventor
- C. I am his kinsman and...host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself.
- D. this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek
- E. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition

Activity 2

What do the quotations above tell you about Macbeth's feelings about killing Duncan?

Answer



Activity 3

In pairs, discuss Lady Macbeth's description of Macbeth in the following quotation. Make notes on:

- phrases which make her seem powerful
- what she thinks about her husband's personality

*Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promised: yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' the milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it*

Answers

Activity 4

Make notes on Lady Macbeth in the scene over the page . Explore:

- why she might need a light beside her
- the actions she performs
- why she rubs her hands
- what she reveals

You should also make notes on the doctor's reaction. What does he mean by 'unnatural deeds / Do breed unnatural troubles'?



Act 5 Scene 1

Enter LADY MACBETH, with a taper

Doctor

How came she by that light?

Gentlewoman

Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command.

Doctor

You see, her eyes are open.

Gentlewoman

Ay, but their sense is shut.

Doctor

What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

Gentlewoman

It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.

LADY MACBETH

Yet here's a spot.

Doctor

Hark! she speaks: I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

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?--No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting.

Doctor

Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

Gentlewoman

She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: heaven knows what she has known.

LADY MACBETH

Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!

Doctor

What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.