

By the end of studying Act 2 Scene 1 I need to know;

Plot: On his way to bed, Banquo senses something is wrong and then encounters Macbeth. Banquo presents him with a gift from the king: a diamond for Lady Macbeth. Banquo tells Macbeth that he dreamt does not think of them. Macbeth is left alone and imagines he sees a dagger in front of him which guides him to kill King Duncan. A bell rings and he decides to go ahead and kill the king.

Ideas: Macbeth's guilt is overwhelming and he is aware that his actions could lead to his eternal damnation; Banquo is unsettled.

<p>Vocabulary</p>	<p>husbandry in heaven: Their Candles are all out - no stars which could be foreshadowing the murder - witchcraft hour after midnight</p> <p>cleave to my consent - approve of my plan</p> <p>augment - support</p> <p>dudgeon - handle</p> <p>gouts - drops</p> <p>Hecate - goddess of witchcraft</p> <p>Tarquin - murderous king of Rome</p>
<p>Context</p>	<p>Christian belief, people at that time bring Christian and believing God is everywhere ties in with 'there's husbandry in heaven, their candles are burnt out'. Also, fear of the afterlife/ going to Hell. In his soliloquy, Macbeth accepts that his soul is damned to Hell if he kills the king, which would be huge at this time.</p> <p>Treatment of women: Lady Macbeth again both conforms and transgresses expectations here. The gift of a diamond, provided by King Duncan further establishes her role as a stereotypical woman who would want to be rewarded with a jewel for her provisions. It also establishes Lady Macbeth as a good hostess- as before, she is good at playing the housewife. However, her control over her husband- again unusual and kept hidden, is evident in the fact she controls the bell, the signal that 'invites' Macbeth to commit the murder of Duncan.</p>
<p>Themes</p>	<p>The supernatural- The constant references throughout the scene remind the audience of the power of the supernatural and witchcraft. Even though we haven't seen the witches since Act 1 Scene 3, they still have power, control and influence over Macbeth. The setting itself reinforces this, Fleance states that 'the moon is down' and Banquo asserts 'and she goes down at twelve'. This places the scene after midnight- known as the witching hour. This is significant as it further reinforces the supernatural control over Macbeth,</p> <p>Disloyalty- Macbeth and Banquo are clear opposites. Shakespeare has Macbeth encounter his foil on the way to committing the murder as a reminder to the audience of the impact Macbeth's ambition has on him and as a reminder of who he was.</p> <p>Religion- The constant references to religion again reflect Macbeth's fears and guilt. He is concerned that his murder of Duncan will lead to his eternal damnation.</p>

Reading:

Read to the punctuation.

Macbeth- preparing to kill King Duncan.

Banquo- Macbeth's cousin, loyal subject of Duncan.

Fleance- Banquo's son

Duncan- is sleep in his chamber after the night's revelry.

Lady Macbeth- rings the bell to signify it's time to kill Duncan.

Links across the text:

<p>Deeper understanding</p>	<p>Macbeth's guilt: Shakespeare intensifies the atmosphere of darkness and evil – this shows how terrified Macbeth is. His guilt also becomes apparent through his transference of guilt onto supernatural beings or inanimate objects throughout this scene. It creates the sense that Macbeth is powerless against these external agents, almost as if in spell, when the reality is that this is what he wants. This further is reinforced when he asserts that the bell is 'a knell that summons thee to heaven or to hell' suggesting that Macbeth is unsure of whether Duncan will go to Heaven or Hell. The prior depictions of Duncan by Macbeth himself (Act 1 Scene 7) shows his awareness that Duncan, God's messenger on Earth, will be going to Heaven- this is merely him, again, trying to unburden himself of his guilt [that maybe he is killing a bad king].</p> <p>Allusions: 'Tarquin's ravishing strides' - Tarquin the Proud was a tyrant and the last king of Rome. His downfall came from his rape of Lucretia- known for her virtue- which ultimately led to her suicide. There are clear links here to Macbeth and Duncan. Duncan, like Lucretia, is known for his virtue 'hath been so meek in his great office' (Act 1 Scene 7) and Macbeth, like Tarquin, becomes a brutal tyrant upon becoming king. The act of raping Lucretia and murdering Duncan leads to the respective downfall of Tarquin and Macbeth. This could be foreshadowing Macbeth's eventually tyrannical rule; it could also suggest that Macbeth himself is aware of how he will become a tyrant, or fears that this act will be his downfall. 'witchcraft celebrates pale Hecate's offerings' - Roman goddess of witchcraft. The fact that Macbeth suggests this crime is an offering of Hecate is another example of Macbeth attempting to alleviate his guilt. He sees his actions as part of a larger plan from Hecate- suggesting that he is being controlled, in a similar way to the dagger being the one that ushers him to Duncan's door. Banquo's loyalty: Macbeth appears to subtly request Banquo's loyalty when they meet: 'If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis, it shall make honour for you', at which point Banquo replies: 'So I lose none in seeking to augment it, but still keep my bosom franchised and allegiance clear'. Macbeth is offering Banquo honour if he remains loyal, to which Banquo responds he will be loyal providing he can do it with a clear conscience. Banquo is clearly willing to sacrifice power and authority in order to keep a clear conscience- offering a foil to Macbeth who allows his ambition to guide him to commit evil acts. It could be argued that Banquo is suspicious of Macbeth even here- for him to have to tell Macbeth, a supposedly loyal thane, that he will be loyal providing it's moral appears to suggest Banquo is uneasy around Macbeth. Could this be the reason why 'a heavy summons lies like lead' upon him and yet he 'would not sleep'? Is he already suspicious?</p>
<p>Quotes</p>	<p>'there's husbandry in heaven, their candles are all out'-Banquo describes how unnatural it is that there are no stars. However, this links back to Macbeth ordering in Act 1 Scene 5 'stars hide your fires, let not light see my black and deep desires'. It is as if Heaven is 'looking away' because of the hideous act that is about to be committed. 'A heavy summons lies like lead upon me'- An unsettling atmosphere is created through Banquo's inability to sleep, even though he is extremely tired. 'Make honour for you' 'False creation, proceeding from the heart oppressed brain' 'She strikes upon the bell' 'Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand?' 'Fatal vision' 'The bell invites me' - Lady Macbeth controls the bell here, at the start of the scene he asks the servant to tell Lady Macbeth to 'strike upon the bell' when his drink is ready- code for the servants are drugged. It reflects the subtle control Lady Macbeth has over Macbeth at this point in the play. It could also reflect his guilt, he places ownership of the crime onto the bell which appears to 'invite' him to commit the murder. 'That summons thee to heaven or to hell'</p>
<p>Terminology</p>	<p>Foreshadowing Metaphor Simile Soliloquy</p>