

## Act I, Scene vii

### Synopsis

Macbeth ponders his inner conflict – to kill or not to kill Duncan? He decides he will not murder his king. Lady Macbeth interrupts Macbeth, and upon hearing of her husband's decision, she accuses him of cowardice and unmanliness. Rather than be called unmanly, Macbeth decides to proceed in the plot to murder Duncan. Lady Macbeth presents her plan: she will give Duncan's guards so much alcohol they will be oblivious, at which point Macbeth will stab Duncan with his guards' weapons.

### Questions

A **soliloquy** is a dramatic device that allows the speaker to utter his or her deepest thoughts and emotions to the audience. Macbeth reveals his mind to the audience in soliloquies throughout the play, and we can see that he is not a simple character.

This scene gives us the first of Macbeth's soliloquies. Read Macbeth's "If it were done" soliloquy (lines 1-28) and paraphrase his thoughts.

Macbeth	Your Paraphrase
If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well It were done quickly;	
if the assassination Could trammel up the consequence, and catch With his surcease success: that but this blow Might be the be-all and the end-all. Here, But here, upon this bank and shoal of time, We'd jump the life to come.	
But in these cases We still have judgment here; that we but teach Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return To plague the inventor; this even-handed justice Commends the ingredients of our poison'd chalice To our own lips.	
He's here in double trust: First, as I am his kinsman and his subject, Strong both against the deed; then, as his host, Who should against his murderer shut the door, Not bear the knife myself.	
Besides, this Duncan Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been So clear in his great office, that his virtues Will plead like angels trumpet-tongu'd against The deep damnation of his taking-off; And pity, like a naked new-born babe, Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, hors'd Upon the sightless couriers of the air, Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye, That tears shall drown the wind.	
I have no spur To prick the sides of my intent, but only Vaulting ambition, which o'er-leaps itself And falls on the other.—	