THE WEIRD SISTERS
AN EDITED SCRIPT COMPRISED EXTRACTS FROM MACBETH
Thunder. Enter the three Witches.

FIRST WITCH
Round about the cauldron go;
In the poisoned entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights has thirty-one
Sweltered venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i’th charmèd pot.

ALL
Double, double toil and trouble:
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

THIRD WITCH
A drum, a drum!
Macbeth doth come.

ALL
The weird sisters, hand in hand,
Posters of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine and thrice to mine
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace! The charm’s wound up.

Enter MACBETH and BANQUO

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

BANQUO
What are these
So withered and so wild in their attire,
That look not like the inhabitants o’ the earth,
And yet are on’t? Live you? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips.

MACBETH
Speak, if you can: what are you?

FIRST WITCH
All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, thane of Glamis!

SECOND WITCH
All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor!

THIRD WITCH
All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter!
BANQUO
Good sir, why do you start; and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?

MACBETH
Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:
The thane of Cawdor lives, and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief,
Say from whence
You owe this strange intelligence? Speak!

BANQUO
The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanished?

MACBETH
Into the air; and what seemed corporal melted
As breath into the wind. Would they had stayed!
Your children shall be kings.

BANQUO
You shall be king.

MACBETH
And thane of Cawdor too: went it not so?

BANQUO
To the selfsame tune and words. Who's here?

ROSS
The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success.

ANGUS
We are sent
To give thee from our royal master thanks;

ROSS
And, for an earnest of a greater honour,
He bade me, from him, call thee “Thane of Cawdor”:
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.

BANQUO
What, can the devil speak true?
Look, how our partner's rapt.

MACBETH
(Aside) If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me,
Without my stir. Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.

Witches vanish

Enter ROSS and ANGUS

BANQUO, ROSS and LENNOX
MACBETH is alone. Through the speech the WITCHES appear, present the dagger and lead MACBETH to the sleeping KING DUNCAN.

MACBETH
Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee.
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight?
Or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressëd brain?
I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall’st me the way that I was going,
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o’ the other senses,
Or else worth all the rest. I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before. There’s no such thing:
It is the bloody business which informs
Thus to mine eyes. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout.
Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives.

A bell rings

I go, and it is done: the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

Exit

The King’s chamber. As the WITCHES chant, MACBETH murders KING DUNCAN.

SECOND WITCH
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the cauldron boil and bake:
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder’s fork and blindworm’s sting,
Lizard’s leg and owlet’s wing.

WITCHES
Double, double toil and trouble:
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

MACBETH
I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

WITCHES
Double, double toil and trouble:
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

MACBETH is crowned King
MACBETH
It will have blood, they say: blood will have blood.
I will tomorrow, to the weird sisters:
More shall they speak. For now I am in blood
Stepped in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were a tedious as go o’er.

A cavern. In the middle, a boiling cauldron. Thunder. Enter the WITCHES.

THIRD WITCH
Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches’ mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravined salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digged i’the dark,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

WITCHES
Double, double toil and trouble:
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

SECOND WITCH
Cool it with a baboon’s blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

SECOND WITCH
By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.
Open, locks, whoever knocks!

MACBETH
How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!
What is’t you do?

WITCHES
A deed without a name.

MACBETH
I conjure you, by that which you profess –
Howe’er you come to know it – answer me.

FIRST WITCH
Speak.

SECOND WITCH
Demand.

THIRD WITCH
We’ll answer.

FIRST WITCH
Say, if thou’dst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters?
MACBETH
Call ‘em; let me see ‘em.

WITCHES
Come high or low;
Thyself and office deftly show!

MACBETH
Tell me, thou unknown power –

FIRST WITCH
He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech, but say thou nought.

FIRST APPARITION
Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth: beware Macduff;
Beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough.

MACBETH
Whate’er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks:
Thou hast harped my fear aright: but one word more –

FIRST WITCH
He will not be commanded. Here’s another,
More potent than the first.

SECOND APPARITION
Macbeth, Macbeth, Macbeth!

MACBETH
Had I three ears, I’d hear thee.

SECOND APPARITION
Be bloody, bold, and resolute: laugh to scorn
The power of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth.

MACBETH
Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?

What is this
That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby-brow the round
And top of sovereignty?

WITCHES
Listen, but speak not to’t.

THIRD APPARITION
Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill
Shall come against him.

Thunder. First Apparition appears: a head in armour

Disappears

Thunder. Second Apparition appears: A bloody child

Disappears

Thunder. Third Apparition: a child crowned, with a tree in his hand

Disappears
MACBETH
That will never be
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements, good!

FIRST WITCH
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights:
I’ll charm the air to give a sound,
While you perform your antic round:
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.

MACBETH
Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursed in the calendar!
Infected be the air whereon they ride,
And damned all those that trust them.

MESSENGER
Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.

MACBETH
Well, say, sir.

MESSENGER
As I did stand my watch upon the hill,
I looked toward Birnam and anon methought,
The wood began to move.

MACBETH
Liar and slave!

MESSENGER
Let me endure your wrath, if’t be not so.

MACBETH
‘Fear not, till Birnam wood
Do come to Dunsinane’ – and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane. Arm, arm, and out!
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
Ring the alarum-bell! – Blow, wind! Come, wrack!
At least we’ll die with harness on our back.

WITCHES
Double, double toil and trouble:
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Music. The witches dance and then vanish

Enter MESSENGER

The WITCHES bearing tree branches surround MACBETH

Exeunt