

The Murder of Duncan

King Duncan is asleep in the best guest room in the Macbeths' castle. **Two guards** stand outside the room, guarding the king as he sleeps.

In the room next door, **Donalbain** the king's son is sleeping. In another guest room nearby, the king's other son, **Malcolm** is asleep.

Ask: How do you think Macbeth will kill Duncan without anyone raising an alarm? After hearing ideas, continue the story.

Lady Macbeth brings two drinks to the guards. She smiles at them and offers them the drinks.

The two guards are very pleased the Lady of the castle is being so kind to them and they take the drinks. They drink. Suddenly they cannot keep their eyes open. They sink to the floor and fall fast asleep, snoring.

Ask: Why do you think the guards fall asleep? (Lady Macbeth has drugged their drinks)

The guards each have a dagger hanging from their belts. Lady Macbeth takes the two daggers. Then she carefully pushes open the door and looks at the king to check he is still asleep. He is. She lays the daggers near his bed. She then walks away from the king's room. She picks up a bell and rings it. Then she walks to her own room to wait for Macbeth.

Macbeth walks to the door of the king's bedroom. He sees the two guards fast asleep. He shakes them to make sure they are asleep. Then he pushes open the door and walks over to where the king is lying in his bed. He picks up the daggers and raises his hands high in the air with a dagger in each hand. Then he stabs the king twice in the chest.

King Duncan opens his eyes and sees Macbeth. He reaches out, but quickly falls back dead. Macbeth walks out of the room, past the guards, carrying a blood covered dagger in each hand. Donalbain and Malcolm are still asleep.

Lady Macbeth is very nervous as she waits for Macbeth. She paces up and down and rubs her hands. **Macbeth** walks in and says: 'I have done the deed'. She sighs with relief. Then she sees that he is carrying the daggers and she is angry. She says: 'Give me the daggers'.

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She takes the daggers from him. He is shocked at what he has done. He says: 'I am afraid to think what I have done'.

Lady Macbeth leaves him and walks back to the king's bedroom. She sees the sleeping guards and puts the blood covered daggers in their hands. She goes to the dead king and puts her hands on his wounds. She goes back to the guards and smears blood on their clothes and faces. Donalbain and Malcolm are still asleep.

Lady Macbeth then walks back to Macbeth and shows him her own hands covered in blood. She says: 'a little water clears us of this deed' (Let us wash our hands and no-one will know what we have done). They hear a knocking at the door. They go to wash their hands and change their clothes.

Donalbain and Malcolm hear the knocking and wake up.