

MACBETH



William Shakespeare



**Elizabeth I, the Armada Portrait:
Note the Queen's hand on the
Globe**

When Henry VIII died in 1547, he was succeeded in the first instance by the ten-year-old Edward VI, the son whom Henry's third wife, Jane Seymour, had finally given him. When Edward died in 1553, Mary Tudor, sometimes known as "Bloody Mary", or, more properly, Mary I, who was the daughter of Henry and Catherine of Aragon, came to the throne, but she too died in 1558. Elizabeth, the only surviving child of Henry VIII, succeeded her half-sister.

Henry VIII



- **William Shakespeare** (c. 26 April 1564 – 23 April 1616) was an English playwright, poet, and actor, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's greatest dramatist.

- Shakespeare was born and raised in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire. At the age of 18, he married Anne Hathaway, with whom he had three children: Susanna and twins Hamnet and Judith. Sometime between 1585 and 1592, he began a successful career in London as an actor, writer, and part-owner of a playing company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later known as the King's Men. At age 49 (around 1613), he appears to have retired to Stratford, where he died three years later.



The Playhouses of Elizabethan England



A detail from Johannes De Witt's drawing of the Swan theater in 1596, showing two boys playing women greeted by a chamberlain.



The front scene of the new Globe.

The Structure of the Theatre

The old Medieval stage of "place-and-scaffolds," still in use in Scotland in the early sixteenth century, had fallen into disuse; the kind of temporary stage that was dominant in England about 1575 was the booth stage of the marketplace—a small rectangular stage mounted on trestles or barrels and "open" in the sense of being surrounded by spectators on three sides.

The stage proper of the booth stage generally measured from 15 to 25 ft. in width and from 10 to 15 ft. in depth; its height above the ground averaged a bout 5 ft. 6 in., with extremes ranging as low as 4 ft. and as high as 8 ft.; and it was backed by a cloth-covered booth, usually open at the top, which served as a tiring-house (short for "attiring house," where the actors dressed).



A PLAY IN A LONDON INN YARD, IN THE TIME OF QUEEN ELIZABETH.

SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS

• COMEDIES

All's Well That Ends Well

As You Like It

Comedy of Errors

Love's Labour's Lost

Measure for Measure

Merchant of Venice

Merry Wives of Windsor

Midsummer Night's Dream

Much Ado about Nothing

Taming of the Shrew

Tempest

Twelfth Night

Two Gentlemen of Verona

Winter's Tale

• HISTORIES

Henry IV, Part I

Henry IV, Part II

Henry V

Henry VI, Part I

Henry VI, Part II

Henry VI, Part III

Henry VIII

King John

Pericles

Richard II

Richard III

• TRAGEDIES

Antony and Cleopatra

Coriolanus

Cymbeline

Hamlet

Julius Caesar

King Lear

Macbeth

Othello

Romeo and Juliet

Timon of Athens

Titus Andronicus

Troilus and Cressida



MR. WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARES

COMEDIES,
HISTORIES, &
TRAGEDIES.

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LONDON
Printed by Isaac Iaggard, and Ed. Blount. 1623.

THE TRAGEDIE OF
MACBETH.

Actus Primus. Scena Prima.

Thunder, and Lightning. Enter three Witches.

WITCHES When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?
1. When the hurly-burly's done,
2. When the battles' day's begun,
3. When the blood-better'd horse
4. That well we waken'd have,
5. Where the day's done,
6. Upon the barren plain,
7. There to meet with Macbeth,
8. To know our power's great,
9. To know our power's great,
10. To know our power's great,
11. To know our power's great,
12. To know our power's great.

Scena Secunda.

Macbeth *Enter King, Banquo, Fleance, Lennox, and Attendants, attending a bloody Courten.*
King What bloody man is that? He can report
Assemble by his fall, the Roman
The sword of him.
Macb. This is the longest,
Who like a good and truly thought
Gentle my Country. He's a noble man,
As you shall see in him.
King *Enter Lennox.*
Ay, you see he comes, that's the longest,
And he's a good and truly thought
Gentle my Country. He's a noble man,
As you shall see in him.
King *Enter Lennox.*
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JAMES I AND HIS ANCESTRY:

SHAKESPEARE'S COMPANY, INDEBTED TO THE KING FOR KEEPING THEIR COMPANY FROM GOING AGROUND, DECIDED TO PERFORM *MACBETH* AS A CELEBRATION OF THE SCOTTISH MONARCH'S ACCESSION TO THE ENGLISH THRONE

In Holinshed's *Chronicles*, the 'Historie of Scotland' contains two accounts Shakespeare unquestionably appropriated, one of the reign and murder of King Duff, the other of Macbeth's rise and reign (Holinshed's source, in turn, seemed to be Hector Boece's *Scotorum historiae*; 1526, 1575). In Holinshed's account, Macbeth's career is influenced by his ambitious spouse: she "lay sore upon him to attempt" regicide "as she was verie ambitious, burning in unquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene". As mentioned earlier, Banquo is a fully-committed co-conspirator in Holinshed's report, and it goes on to elaborate on Macbeth's ten-year-reign as a good and responsible ruler, his trust in witches and wizards, the coming of Birnam Wood to Dunsinane, and includes many other events and even phrases that were transmuted into *Macbeth*. Shakespeare avoided involving Banquo in the regicide and decided to paint Macbeth as a tyrannous villain. The reasons for these significant changes are abundantly clear. James truly believed in the absolute power of the throne and the necessary reverence subjects of the King owed to him. James also maintained his hereditary connection to Banquo. Both these reasons restricted Shakespeare from favouring a character who kills a King as well as involving a predecessor of the current King in the conspiracy.



Banquo and his supposed descendants, including King James VI of Scotland.

- James was convinced that Satan, perpetually warring against God and His representatives on earth, was continually plotting against him. James thought he possessed special insight into Satan's wicked agents, the witches—he became convinced of their existence after an old woman apparently recounted to him with complete accuracy what he had said to his bride on their wedding night—and in 1597, while the King of Scotland, he published his *Daemonologie*, a learned exposition of their malign threat to his divine rule.



DÆMONOLOGIE,
IN FORME
OF A DIA-
LOGVE,

Diuided into three books:

WRITTEN BY THE HIGH
and mightie Prince, JAMES by the
grace of God King of England,
Scotland, France and Ireland,
Defender of the Faith, &c.



LONDON,
Printed by Arnold Hatfield for
Robert Wald-graue.

1603

MACBETH THROUGH ART



MACBETH: PRODUCTIONS AND POPULARITY

"THE SCOTTISH PLAY" AS IT WAS ADDRESSED BY SUPERSTITIOUS ACTORS RELUCTANT TO NAME A PLAY OF SUCH VIOLENCE AND DARKNESS, HAS REMAINED ONE OF SHAKESPEARE'S MOST POPULAR WORKS THROUGH THE CENTURIES AND HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY PERFORMED BOTH ON STAGE AND ON THE SCREEN





THANK YOU!