

THE CURSE OF MACBETH

By Kristen Doherty

Inspired, as always, by Shakespeare.

CHARACTERS

JESSIE - Efficient. Takes on a directorial role.

POPPY - Kind conscientious girl. Secret Shakespeare fan.

DECLAN - Dedicated Drama student. Nice guy.

MONIQUE - Head Mean Girl. Infatuated with Declan.

CLAUDIA - Mean Girl. Looks up to Monique.

TIFF - Mean girl. A bit thick. A follower.

ARI - Uptight, bossy, thinks that's she's right all the time. Snobby.

MICHELLE – Sweet. Almost like a Disney princess. Obsessed with Romeo and Juliet.

ROXY - A bit of an eccentric artist. Costume designer. Sassy.

BAILEY - Has stage fright. Wants a tiny role... Tiny!

ELLIE - Has missed her bus and is waiting for the next one.

FRANKIE - A serious actor. Bound by contract.

MAXY - Choreographer with a temper. Needs Drama Club for credit.

LACHY - Basketball obsessed. A bit of a larrikin. Crushing hard on Michelle.

BRETT - Only at Drama club because his mum makes him.

KENNETH - Brett's try-hard (but super-smart) stepbrother. Tries to be cool as his bro...but fails dismally.

CHARLIE - Wants to be a tree.

MR BECK - PE teacher. Does not want to be there. Overdue for his Long Service Leave.

*Unlimited extra student roles could be added to the ensemble scenes. Happy to allow the merging or splitting of characters to accommodate numbers. Changes in terminology/words to suit location is permissible.

TEN MINUTE MACBETH

(Note: These roles can be swapped amongst characters. Bad Scottish accents in this scene are a must)

Narrator 1 - FRANKIE
Narrator 2 – ARI
Narrator 3 - ROXY
Witch 1 - BAILEY
Witch 2 - ELLIE
Witch 3 - MICHELLE
Macbeth - BRETT
Banquo/Ghost - LACHY

Lady Macbeth - KENNETH
King Duncan - DECLAN
Malcom - LACHY
Macduff – MAXY
Murderer 1 - CHARLIE
Murderer 2 - JESSIE
Fleance - POPPY
Apparition 1 - BAILEY

Apparition 2 - ELLIE
Apparition 3 - MICHELLE
Macduff Jr - POPPY
Lady Macduff – LACHY
Messenger- DECLAN
Ensemble/Army - ALL

SCENE 1

A rehearsal room. Very basic. A few drama blocks, a desk and some chairs are scattered around.

The Drama Club have gathered for their first rehearsal of the year. They enter, depending on their characters personality. Some excitedly, some reluctantly, some just to be seen.

MR BECK enters in PE gear, whistle around neck. He is laden down with a bunch of scripts. The students are shocked and dismayed to see him. They whisper among themselves.

BECK. Right, you guys. Mrs Mac is absent for the rest of the term, so you're stuck with me for Drama Club.

STUDENTS. *(Overlap)* No! / What!? / The rest of the term? /Are you serious?! Etc.

CLAUDIA. I cannot believe this! We cannot be stuck with 'The Beck!'

MONIQUE/TIFF. As if! Ewh.

ELLIE. I might just go...

LACHY. B-Ball instead then?

(LACHY, BRETT, and CHARLIE throw the ball to each other)

KENNETH. Chuck it to me! Chuck it to me.

(Everyone ignores him)

JESSIE. This is a disaster.

MICHELLE. *(Puts her hand up)* Mrs Mac isn't sick is she, Mr Beck?

BECK. Shingles, I believe.

JESSIE. Do you think you should be telling us private medical information?

BECK. *(Mocks)* Do you think you should be asking me stupid questions?

ARI. You're not even a drama teacher.

BECK. *(Laughs)* Noooo! Not even close.

FRANKIE. So, how are we going to put on a play? You can't direct us!

BECK. Suck it up princess! Right'o what crapola has she set for you to do then?

BAILEY. Um, Mr Beck, I don't think Mrs Mac would like you calling the work she set, crap.

BECK. Do I look like I care? Anyhoo... Here it is... Listen up! You are going to be presenting scenes from your old friend Mr Willy the Shakes...Spear (*Sarcastic*) Well that's going to be fun, isn't it?

ROXY. What? No! Not Shakespeare!

MICHELLE. Yes! Romeo and Juliet... Are we doing Romeo and Juliet? It's definitely Shakespeare's best play.

BRETT. Quick question...What's a Shakespeare?

KENNETH. Only like the most legendary writer that ever existed on the face of the earth. Am I right?

BRETT. Sometimes I wonder how we're related.

JESSIE. Shakespeare? Seriously!? This group cannot do Shakespeare.

CHARLIE. I hate Shakespeare!

BECK. I, for once, agree with you Sampson.

TIFF. So do I!

LACHY. It's so boring!

BECK. I know, right!

MICHELLE. Romeo and Juliet isn't boring. It's wonderful. I love Shakespeare.

LACHY. (*Changes tune*) Do you?

BAILEY. Well, I don't. It doesn't make any sense.

ELLIE. Yeah! I don't understand a word he's saying.

A FEW. Same!

MICHELLE. If we are doing Shakespeare, I want to be Juliet! Oh, please can I be Juliet?

(BECK blows his PE whistle in their faces. They shut up, shocked)

BECK. (*Roars*) Do you think I want to be here? Neg.a.tory! They don't pay me enough to deal with (*shudders*) drama kids! But as a teacher I have to fulfil my extra-curricular quota... And since football season hasn't started yet, I am stuck with you lot. And *we* are doing Shakespeare my friends. And by "we" I mean YOU! Now, take a script and make me some theatre magic.

(He hands them a stack of scripts and exits)

BAILEY. This sucks!

ROXY. I don't think I even want to do Drama Club if he is running it.

BAILEY. Neither!

POPPY. It's just so disappointing.

MONIQUE. Well, we won't be doing it, will we girls?

CLAUDIA/TIFF. Nuh, huh.

MONIQUE. Sorry! We are outie.

CLAUDIA/TIFF. O.U.T.I.E.

(The MEAN GIRLS get up to exit. There is unrest in the group, others get up to go)

LACHY. B-Ball it is then.

CHARLIE. Let's go, lads.

KENNETH. Yo! Wait up bro.

FRANKIE. Great! At this rate there won't even be a drama club.

JESSIE. Wait!... Guys... Please. You need to look at it this way... I don't think he's going to interfere too much do you?

CLAUDIA. Doubt it.

MONIQUE. Yeah... and?

JESSIE. Well, I see that as a win.

POPPY. Jessie's right. We can just direct ourselves.

STUDENTS. *(Overlap)* Direct ourselves / Yeah / I suppose / We could. Etc.

DECLAN. We couldn't do a worse job than The Beck would!

MONIQUE. *(Flirty)* Ha! That is so true Deccy.

DECLAN. So, I'm in.

MONIQUE. So are we. Aren't we girls?

TIFF/CLAUDIA. Sure are!

BRETT. Yeah, nah. The courts await.

MICHELLE. (*Rolls eyes*) Whatever. Typical.

(*The boys go to get up, LACHY noticing MICHELLE's reaction, stops them*)

LACHY. Actually... Yeah, nah, we'll just go after.

BRETT. What? Come on!

LACHY. We'll go after. Promise... and I'll buy pizzas.

CHARLIE. Pizza! Yes!

BRETT. (*To group*) We're staying too.

JESSIE. Great! Well, I'd be keen to direct some scenes.

ARI. I'll direct too.

BAILEY. So, what play are we going to do?

TIFF. Ooh! I know! Let's do a theatrical version of Mean Girls.

ROXY. It has to be Shakespeare.

TIFF. Boo!

BRETT. What? Why?

JESSIE. We have to do what Mrs Mac wants. But! We can do it *how we* want.

ROXY. Shakespeare does have unlimited design opportunities....

POPPY. There is *so* much we could do with Shakespeare.

KENNETH. (*Caught up*) There sure is! Now I'm imagining the possibilities of what we could really do with the Bard's work... I'm thinking something reminiscent of Emma Rice's incredible bohemian styled masterpiece at the Globe in 2016.

(*Everyone is silent for a moment. Gobsmacked*)

BRETT. (*Shuts him down*) Please don't.

KENNETH. What?

BRETT. Just don't.

MICHELLE. Can I suggest Romeo and Juliet?

BAILEY. Shakespeare is pretty hard. Can't we do a musical instead?

ARI. (*Groans*) It just keeps getting worse and worse.

ELLIE. Yes, a musical! I love musicals. Matilda? Or Aladdin? I saw them both last year... What sort of budget do you have?

FRANKIE. (*Scoffs*) Budget? Here. Ha!

ROXY. I've always wanted to work on a musical. I have spectacular ideas for Mamma Mia costumes.

MONIQUE. Yes. Mamma Mia. I would be an amazing Sophie.

CLAUDIA/TIFF. (*Excited*) And we could be Sophie's friends. (*realise they're in sync*) Ohh, snap. Jinx! Double jinx!

FRANKIE. We can't do a musical, we don't have any musicians.

BRETT. Hey! I play the drums.

KENNETH. And I can play the piano, guitar, trumpet, accordion, banjo, fiddle, bass. I also dabble in the bassoon, berimbau, bongo, and the cello... Oh! I almost forgot; I play the drums too.

(*A few side-eyes. BRETT takes KENNETH aside*)

BRETT. Kenneth, don't ever admit that in public ever again.

KENNETH. Musical aptitude is nothing to be ashamed of, Brett... I'm also considering taking up the organ.

BRETT. Please mate... Just stop.

KENNETH. Bagpipes? ...Piccolo?

FRANKIE. Well, I reckon we should make short films. I've got Movie Maker on my iPhone.

BRETT. Yes! We can do a zombie horror short.

CHARLIE. Yes! (*Imitates zombie*) Brains! Brains!

ROXY. Oh! I've got a recipe for fake blood... It uses Milo.

CHARLIE. Yum, Milo.

MONIQUE. Ewh.

ARI. I'm getting a migraine.

JESSIE. We are getting nowhere here.

KENNETH. Guys, I hate to be a party pooper, but Mrs Mac did quite clearly say that we had to do Shakespeare...

(Everyone chucks something at KENNETH)

CHARLIE. Suck up.

BRETT. Shut up!

(POPPY gets up to defend KENNETH)

POPPY. Hey guys, give the work Mrs Mac set a chance. We have to do Shakespeare... For her.

DECLAN. Poppy is right. Let's do it for Mrs Mac!

MONIQUE. Oh Deccy. You are so sweet! And so right. For Mrs Mac. *(Announces)* We are doing Shakespeare guys! We'll do it because we are dedicated to drama. But just so it's known, I'm not happy. I still can't believe she's making us do Shakespeare.

CLAUDIA. I know! It's like Mrs Mac is obsessed with him.

MONIQUE. She is so weird. How can a playwright who died like 600 years ago be in any way relevant to us now?

TIFF. Gah! She is so annoying. Mean Girls would have been so much more relevant. I actually know girls exactly like that.

JESSIE. *(Rolls eyes)* So do I.

TIFF. Same. But Shakespeare... You know, he's just so old!

CLAUDIA. And so dead!

POPPY. *(Passionate)* Shakespeare is relevant. So relevant. The themes within his plays are timeless; love, death, ambition, revenge, power, fate. His words make people fall in love. He understands our hearts, how we humans feel... He makes me believe that true love is really possible.

(DECLAN is totally caught up in her words. MONIQUE has noticed)

MONIQUE. *(Irritated)* You already said 'love'. --

POPPY. It's like when you say his words, you can really feel it... Do you know what I mean?

(Hamlet) Doubt thou the stars are fire;
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.

DECLAN. Wow.

(MONIQUE looks from POPPY to DECLAN, furious)

MONIQUE. Hmm, seems Mrs Mac isn't the only 'weird one' obsessed with the old fart.

(Her cronies burst out laughing)

JESSIE. Ok, Mrs Mac has given us what looks like a pile of scenes from different Shakespearean plays. So, which one do you want to do?

MONIQUE. I don't know... What are his plays?

TIFF. Ohh! Ohh! Romeo and Juliet, um --

MICHELLE. Yes! Romeo and Juliet!

TIFF. That Dream play...Um... That's about it, isn't it? Oh, no wait ... Umm...What's his name? Hamlet?

POPPY. Shakespeare wrote 37 plays.... That they know of.

BRETT. 37? Jeeze!

POPPY. And 154 Sonnets.

BRETT. Impressive *(Beat)* What's a Sonnet?...

KENNETH. A sonnet, coming from the Italian word, sonetto, is a fourteen-line piece of poetry where each line is made up of ten syllables...

(Everyone looks at him in shock)

KENNETH. *(Laughs nervously)* Yeah... Pretty lame right.

BRETT. Yep! You read my mind. Lame.

MICHELLE. And out of all of those plays, Romeo and Juliet is still the world's most popular. Oh, can we please just do Romeo and Juliet!?

LACHY. I'm up for a bit of R and J.

ROXY. No! Everyone does Romeo and Juliet.

MICHELLE. So? That means it's good.

ROXY. That means it's overdone.

POPPY. Well, do you want to do a comedy like Measure for Measure, or As You Like It? The Tempest? Much Ado? Twelfth Night?

ARI. No, too obscure for this lot.

BAILEY. I've never heard of any of them.

POPPY. Or a history play? One of the Kings?

MONIQUE. Boring!

FRANKIE. We need to pick something with an emotional range.

POPPY. Well...A tragedy, like Hamlet or Othello, Lear or Macbeth?

KENNETH. Ah yes, Macbeth. The Scottish Play.

ELLIE. The Scottish play?

BRETT. (*Scottish accent*) See you, Jimmy!

ROXY. Shush! You're not supposed to say that name out loud in a theatre.

BRETT. What's wrong with Jimmy?

ROXY. No... The other one.

ELLIE. What? M—

ROXY. (*Silences her*) You can't say it!

ELLIE. Why not?

ROXY. It's cursed.

MICHELLE. What?

CHARLIE. Cursed?

ELLIE. Pft! Whatever!

ARI. Don't say you haven't heard of the curse?

ROXY. Seriously, the curse of Macbeth is legendary. Terrible things have happened to people who have said his name in a theatre. Accidents.... Even deaths... Apparently if you say it by mistake, you've got to spit and run around the theatre three times... or something like that.

CHARLIE. Cool.

MONIQUE. Ewh...

CLAUDIA. You are so weird!

TIFF. So weird!

DECLAN. No... I've heard about the curse as well.

MONIQUE. (*Immediately changes her tune*) Really?

DECLAN. Yeah! You're not ever supposed to say the 'M word'

MONIQUE. (*Flirty*) The 'M word'? Seriously?

POPPY. They're right. They say --

MONIQUE. Who says?

POPPY. I don't know... 'Theatrical folklore' says that back in the day, Shakespeare used incantations of real spells that he heard around the rural townships of London in his characters dialogue.

ELLIE. What? Like he used the real words for the Witches lines?

POPPY. Exactly! And Lady Macbeth's.

TIFF. (*Gasps*) You said it!

ELLIE. Surely, it's got to be ok to say it in rehearsals and performances, otherwise the play would never get put on... Would it?

MICHELLE. I'm definitely going to have nightmares tonight.

BAILEY/BRETT. Same!

LACHY. (*Scrolls through phone*) This is cool! Mr Google says, "Legend has it, that in revenge for Shakespeare's inclusion of a number of accurate spells within the play, a coven of witches cursed it for all eternity."

FRANKIE. The three 'Weird Sisters'

CLAUDIA. Three witches. Awesome! There's three of us, let's do their scene.

TIFF. Yes! That would be so epic.

MONIQUE. Oh... I was kinda hoping Deccy and I could do a scene together. (*To DECLAN*) You could be Macbeth and I could be Lady Macbeth.

MICHELLE. Hey that's not fair. If I can't be Juliet, I want to be Lady Macbeth.

MONIQUE. (*Manipulative*) Are you sure? Lady Macbeth chants real spells in her dialogue.

MICHELLE. Yeah.... That is pretty creepy actually.

MONIQUE. Did you know that she has been called the evillest female character ever written?

MICHELLE. No? Really?

MONIQUE. Yeah! She is brutal. She conjures up evil spirits and convinces Macbeth to murder the king, then she goes crazy and can't stop seeing the blood of her victims on her hands.

(MICHELLE looks increasingly uncomfortable)

BRETT. He murders the king? Cool!

CHARLIE. Better get that Milo ready.

MICHELLE. No. Actually, now that I think about it, I want nothing to do with that character. I'll just play a heap of smaller roles. That'd show my range as an actor better anyway.

MONIQUE. So true. (*Satisfied, she turns to DECLAN*) So? Deccy, you and me? Mr and Mrs Macbeth?

DECLAN. Yeah. Sure! Happy to do a scene.

(DECLAN flicks through the Macbeth script)

DECLAN. I'm looking at something challenging like Act 1, Scene VII, where Lady Macbeth convinces Macbeth to kill Duncan by insulting his masculinity, or Act II, Scene II, when Macbeth has killed the king and Lady Macbeth finishes the job for him.... So, if you don't mind learning lots of lines?

(MONIQUE grabs the script off him and flicks through it, disdainfully)

MONIQUE. Hmm. There is a lot. Soz. Mables not. (*She turns to her girls*) The Weird Sisters it is, girls.

(CLAUDIA and TIFF squeal and jump up and down in excitement)

TIFF. This is so cool. They're kinda like a Shakespearean 'Mean Girls,' almost...which is the play I really wanted to do.

CLAUDIA. It's not a play, honey. It's a movie.

TIFF. Oh... It's an awesome movie though...

CLAUDIA. It sure is.

MONIQUE. As long as we can be hot witches! Not like hook-nose, broomstick-riding, old, cat-lady hags.

CLAUDIA/TIFF. Uh, huh. Hot witches.

ROXY. Guys! This is going to be so cool. You are going to love my costume design ideas. I'm thinking of some sort of 'Post-Apocalyptic, Steam Punk' styling.

MONIQUE. (*Bratty*) I have no idea what you just said but, whatever! Come on 'sisters' lets go rehearse our scene.

MEAN GIRLS. When shall we three meet again? In thunder, lighting or in rain?

(The MEAN GIRLS laugh/cackle and exit)

SCENE 2

JESSIE. Ok... So, Michelle you definitely don't want to play Lady Mac?

MICHELLE. Not at all!

JESSIE. Poppy? Would you happy to do it?

POPPY. Umm... I'm not sure. It's just so... so... you know?

MICHELLE. Evil?

POPPY. No. Epic.

JESSIE. Well, Frankie, you do acting out of school. You'd kill this role.

FRANKIE. Sorry. It's in my contract with my agent that I can't take on a major role without his prior consent.

JESSIE. But this is just Drama club.

FRANKIE. I don't write the rules, Jessie. Besides, I have enough lines to learn for my National Theatre audition as it is. I have my priorities you know... Standards too. No offence.

JESSIE. (*Sighs*) None taken. Roxy? Lady Mac?

ROXY. Sorry! Doing costumes... I don't act.

JESSIE. You won't even consider...?

ROXY. There's no way.

JESSIE. But we could...

ROXY. Nope. Not happening. No way. No how.

JESSIE. Ok, moving on.... Maxy?

MAXY. Yeah, no. I'm just here to choreograph something. I need a piece for my final Dance assessment. Mrs Mac promised me I could do a number with the Drama Club production as credit; I can't believe she's let me down... Seriously, who gets shingles in this day and age?

BAILEY. She didn't get sick on purpose, Maxy.

MAXY. Whatever!

JESSIE. Well, I'm sure you can still choreograph something for Macbeth... Dancing witches maybe?

MAXY. Hmm... Dancing witches...

JESSIE. Bailey? Interested?

BAILEY. Yeah... Nah. I want a really small role. Tiny! With hardly any lines.

CHARLIE. Same... Can I play like a tree, or something?

KENNETH. In this play you actually can.

CHARLIE. What the? Actual? There are human trees?

KENNETH. Yep.

CHARLIE. Nice!

JESSIE. Ellie?

ELLIE. I'm just hanging out, til my bus gets here later...

JESSIE. Sorry, Poppy, seeing the others won't do Lady Mac, and we don't have anyone else... and you seem to get it more than any of us do... Please?

ALL. Please Poppy.

BRETT. If you don't do Lady Macbeth, Kenneth's going to have to.

KENNETH. Hey! I'd nail that role!

ARI. (*Begs*) Poppy... Can you see the depths to which we are stooping? Just take the role.

POPPY. (*Concedes*) Ok... If I have to.

DECLAN. You'll be great!

JESSIE. Ok, well I'll direct you guys.... And Ari, you direct the ensemble?

ARI. Wow. All the other roles? Ok. I'll need to work out the key scenes. (*Flicks through script*) There's a lot!

MAXY. I'll do some work on the chorey first then.

FRANKIE. Ok, great! Let's split up and meet back later to show The Beck what we've done.

ARI. Wish us luck... We're gonna need it.

BRETT. (*Shows off muscles*) You don't need luck when you've got this much talent.

CHARLIE. (*Guffaws*) Better get my magnifying glass.

ARI. Give me strength.

JESSIE. It will be amazing... Meet back in an hour.

(*JESSIE, POPPY and DECLAN exit*)

BRETT. Wait! Did you just say "*all* the other roles?" How many are there?

LACHY. Isn't there a hundred characters in Macbeth?

ELLIE. Yeah, and isn't it like two hours long?

MICHELLE. I've seen Romeo and Juliet done in an hour ... Just saying.

ARI. We don't need to do the whole play, just a few scenes to support the main characters.

BRETT. What's a scene?

ARI. ... Or, you know, we could just do the whole play.

A FEW. What?!

ARI. Like a series of vignettes of the whole play; the major plot points, but really fast, in like five or ten minutes.

CHARLIE. Ten Minute Macbeth.

KENNETH. Yes, Ten Minute Macbeth. I'm liking it.

BRETT. Vignette? Is that like a salad dressing?

BAILEY. Oh, dear lord.

LACHY. Vinaigrette? Is it lunch yet? I'm starving.

BRETT. Same... But I can't stand salad.

FRANKIE. Don't you know anything? Vignettes... Like a snippet of the scenes all pieced together.

BRETT. I am so confused...

ALL. Same!

MICHELLE. Great!... *(sighs)* I wish we'd done Romeo and Juliet.

SCENE 3

(JESSIE, DECLAN and POPPY are rehearsing in another space/room)

JESSIE. OK, Poppy, Declan, what scene do you guys want to start with?

DECLAN. Um... How about the first one. When Lady Mac welcomes Macbeth back from battle.

JESSIE. Ok, Act I Scene II. Here's your scripts. Ok, Macbeth stand by, enter Lady Macbeth.

POPPY. *(Lady Macbeth)* Great Glamis! Worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter.
Thy letters have transported me beyond,
This ignorant present, and I feel now
The future in the instant.

DECLAN. *(Macbeth)* My dearest love, Duncan comes here to-night.

POPPY. *(Lady Macbeth)* And when goes hence?

DECLAN. *(Macbeth)* Tomorrow, as he purposes.

POPPY. *(Lady Macbeth)* O, never shall sun that morrow see.
Your face, my thane, is as a book
Where men may read strange matters.

JESSIE. Ok stop. I think Lady Mac needs to be quite intimate and sweet here, so we see the contrast between that and what she becomes later. So, stroke his face when you say that line.

POPPY. *(shyly)* Really?

DECLAN. It's ok... I don't mind.

(POPPY nervously touches DECLAN's cheek. They fall in love at this moment)

POPPY. (*Lady Macbeth*) Your face, my thane, is as a book,
Where men may read strange matters.

(They stand, staring at each other for a while before JESSIE breaks the spell.)

JESSIE. (*Claps*). Bravo! That's amazing! You guys have such a great connection.

DECLAN. (*Softly*) We do, don't we.

(He smiles and grabs her hand as they stare into each other's eyes, unaware of the MEAN GIRLS watching them from the side)

SCENE 4

(The MEAN GIRLS storm into another space, (the theatre) led by MONIQUE who lets out a frustrated scream)

MONIQUE. OMG! I can't believe it!

CLAUDIA. Neither!

TIFF. Neither! Neither!

MONIQUE. Her! He wants her, when he could have me?

CLAUDIA. I know right.

TIFF. What an idiot!

MONIQUE. No! I'm the idiot for liking him in the first place. He's going to be sorry! He is going to love me... you'll see!

TIFF. What are you going to do Monique?

MONIQUE. (*Sinister*) I'm going to make the most of the opportunity that has been afforded to us.

TIFF. You say what now?

MONIQUE. "His words make people fall in love."

CLAUDIA. (*Clueing in*) You're going to use the curse, aren't you?

MONIQUE. Well, I'm sure going to try! Apparently, this curse is legendary. So, my sisters, let's try and use the witches' incantation to make a love spell.

CLAUDIA. Epic!

TIFF. This is going to be amazeballs.

MONIQUE. Tiff put the script there, where we can see it.

(TIFF obliges and runs back to join hands with the others, together they chant, building into a crescendo)

MEAN GIRLS. 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.

(Nothing happens)

CLAUDIA. This is stupid. Thrice to nine? This is not going to work.

MONIQUE. *(Determined)* He is going to love me. And if I say going to work, it's going to work! So say it like you mean it.

(They try again, with feeling)

MEAN GIRLS. 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.

(SFX. Suddenly the theatre is immersed in flashing lights. Thunder and lightning)

(They break apart. Scared, startled, confused)

TIFF. What was that!?

CLAUDIA. It worked!... It really worked!

TIFF. That is incredibubble!

MONIQUE. *(feeling powerful)* We have the power of 'The Three'.

TIFF. The what?

MONIQUE. The power of the three.
Three is the number of time.
Three is the number of the divine.
Past Present Future
Birth Life Death
Beginning Middle End

TIFF. That is so cool! How do you know that... rhyme?

MONIQUE. (*Shrugs*) Dunno... Saw it on Charmed re-runs, I think...

CLAUDIA. Nice one.

MONIQUE. Come on sisters, let's go get my boy back. When shall we three meet again,
In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

CLAUDIA. When the hurlyburly's done, When the battle's lost and won.

TIFF. That will be 'ere the set of sun.

(SFX - Thunder/lightning sound again)

CLAUDIA. (*gleeful*) Where the place?

TIFF. Upon the heath.

MONIQUE. There to meet with Dec-lan!

(They run toward the door, only to pause at the last minute, collect themselves, primp and preen and sashay offstage. BECK emerges from backstage)

BECK. How cool are those lights guys! And those sound effects! Made your scene look pretty epic, even if I say so myself... Pretty easy this Drama teaching gig, I recon. Don't know what Mrs Mac's been whinging about all these years.

(He notices they are no longer there)

BECK. (*Calls out*) Oi! You lot! Were those lights ok for your scene? The sound effects? Guys?... Be like that then! Your loss!

(He giggles gleefully and runs backstage and starts a light and sound Disco show of ridiculous proportions)

SCENE 6

Back in Rehearsal Room

(SFX – Epic battle scene music plays (i.e. 'O'Fortuna' by Carl Orff)

(The ensemble crawl dramatically over drama blocks, with MAXY leading the choreography. Everyone holds a bush. They are struggling to keep up. ARI not participating, sits in the corner sorting through the scripts)

MAXY. Five, six, seven, eight, now sashay, sashay, step, ball change, step ball, change, march, march, march, march. Eyes fixed to the front. Sway, sway, sway and disperse, disperse! Now flock, flock. Move it Lachy! Your arms are dead at your side. I said flock! You guys are useless. Useless! How am I ever going to get my extra credit?

FRANKIE. I don't know what you're expecting Maxy, but I don't think when Shakespeare wrote that Birnam Wood was on the move, this is what he had in mind.

MAXY. I need to choreograph a large ensemble piece for my dance assessment, and the Birnam Wood scene is the one with the most actors in it. It has a whole army. So, this is the scene we are using. So, let's go again.

(All groan and go back to their starting positions)

MAXY. From the top. Five, six, seven, eight.

LACHY. This is hard!

BAILEY. I'm struggling.

MICHELLE. I think I'm dying.

ELLIE. Um... I recon my bus is due.

MAXY. *(Fierce)* Do not move from your position!

ELLIE. *(Scared)* Ok... I'll catch the next one.

MAXY. Now on your own.

(Turns to watch them. To judge. The ensemble continue to struggle)

MAXY. Stop, stop, stop! Line up!

(Terrified, the group complies)

MAXY. Michelle, you are sloppy. Ellie, it's like you don't even want to be here--

ELLIE. Funny that...

MAXY. Shush! Commitment, Ellie. This is what you signed up for.

ELLIE. But I didn't actually sign up--

MAXY. Commitment! Frankie, not bad, I suppose. Bailey, you are weak! WEAK!

BAILEY. *(About to cry)* I'm sorry!

MAXY. Charlie. Good! Keep it up.

CHARLIE. Thanks... I've always wanted to play a tree.

MAXY. And Brett, I am impressed.

BRETT. Thank you, Me Lady. *(Bows)*

KENNETH. You should be thanking mum for the lessons.

BRETT. Quiet pleb!

MAXY. However, Lachlan you are treating this whole thing as a joke.

LACHY. (*Meekly*) But I'm trying really hard.

MAXY. Silence!

(*JESSIE, POPPY and DECLAN enter*)

JESSIE. How are you guys going? Our scene is done.

LACHY. (*Desperate*) Get out while you can!

MAXY. Lachlan get back into position! (*To JESSIE*) Well, if you are finished, you might as well join the ensemble. Get in line.

(*JESSIE, DECLAN and POPPY confused, don't move*)

MAXY. (*Roars*) I said, get in line!

(*The three scramble to obey*)

MAXY. Ari! What are you doing sitting over there? You need to be in this too.

ARI. I am trying to get these scenes sorted out. I do not need to participate in whatever that is that you are doing.

MAXY. But we need you to be in this...Everyone is playing multiple roles as it is.

BRETT. Except me... But I love to dance! (*He gives a little spin*)

ARI. My job as director is the most important in the theatre, so I shall happily refrain from your bush dance, thank you. And don't even bother trying to argue with me.

MAXY. Fine! I'll choose my battles. But I can't say I'm not disappointed... (*Turns to the others*) Yes! Disappointed with the lot of you... How hard is it to do a simple abstract chorey whilst making it look like the bush is an extension of your own physicality? It is supposed to look like you are one big forest moving together and you just look ridiculous.

LACHY. Funny that...

MAXY. (*Raging*) Anyone else have anything to say?

(*Silence. Everyone is too scared to speak*)

MAXY. No? Good. Fine. From the top then. Five six seven eight.

(Everyone groans and begin the dance again. It is dreadful. They bump into each other, CHARLIE treads on BAILEY's toe. BAILEY sits on the floor cradling their foot. The others continue around them)

MAXY. Ignore her, dance around, dance around.

CHARLIE. Oh, sorry Bailey... That was your toe.

BAILEY. *(In pain)* Yep.

MAXY. Don't stop!

(ROXY walks into the middle of the dance, distracted and inspired by their book of designs. Everyone stops dancing, relieved, exhausted)

ELLIE. Thank God.

MAXY. Roxy!

ROXY. So! I was just thinking, maybe if we used a non-figurative design to represent the bushes, like a hairpiece in twisted willow or something metaphorical other than "real bushes" to represent the "real bushes" ... You know?

LACHY. Hey! It took me ages to rip these ones out of the garden... I got prickles.

BAILEY. Suffering for your art.

ROXY. Or we could incorporate lasers. LED lighting?

BRETT. Ohh, lasers.

ROXY. Using actual bushes is just so restrictive.

CHARLIE. I agree. I am really allergic too... My eyes won't stop watering.

ELLIE. Seriously, I'm the thame. I actually think my tongue is tharting to twell up... and my thwoat feeths a bit tight.

MAXY. You're all just full of excuses, aren't you!? Let's go again! Up on your feet... All of you... Up! Up!

(They all begrudgingly co-operate)

MAXY. Ok! From the flock. Five, six, seven, eight.

(It all goes well for a few moments before BRETT trips over)

MAXY. You cannot be serious!

BRETT. I keep tripping on my bush.

LACHY. Well swap with me... My bush is tiny.

BRETT. You can say that again.

LACHY. Shut it, you.

(LACHY whacks BRETT with his bush)

CHARLIE. Hey, don't hurt the trees.

(BRETT retaliates. CHARLIE joins in. It is chaos)

MAXY. I give up! You are making a mockery out of Shakespeare!

MICHELLE. There are no bushes in Romeo and Juliet... Just saying.

LACHY. *(Drapes his arm over MICHELLE's shoulder)* She's got a point. I say, R and J all the way.

MICHELLE. *(She pushes him away)* You're not helping!

ARI. I'm sorry, Maxy! That's it. You are wasting all of our time. We are not here to dance; we are here to act.

DECLAN. They're right... We are supposed to be rehearsing Macbeth. Are we here to do Drama Club, or aren't we?

STUDENTS. *(overlap)* Yes, act! / Can we just do our scene? / Act, not dance. Etc.

CHARLIE. I seriously want to play a tree.

ELLIE. *(shrugs)* I've missed my bus now anyway... So, I'm in.

MAXY. *(Begrudging)* Fine! We'll work what we've got into our vignette.

BRETT. Lunch? Finally! Great! I'm starving.

SCENE 6

The Theatre - The stage is empty.

(LFX- Epic Light and music show begins.

(BECK giggles from behind the controllers. Enter JESSIE, looking for BECK)

JESSIE. *(Over the din)* Mr Beck! Mr Beck! Mr Beck! Mr Becckkkk!!

(Suddenly the hullabaloo ends)

BECK. What is it, Johnson?

JESSIE. Can we bring all the groups back into the theatre now? We need to meet to see where we are at...

BECK. Oooh! Oooh! Would you like some awesome background music?

(He runs over to the sound desk and puts another daggy 70s song on)

JESSIE. Oh my God! *(Yells again)* Mr Beck! Mr Beck! Mr Beecckkk!

(The music stops again)

BECK. You are such a party pooper Johnson!

JESSIE. Well, I am sorry to ruin your “party” Mr Beck, but some of us come to Drama club because we actually want to do a play.... So, can we just do our play?

BECK. *(Sighs heavily)* Whatever, Trevor. *(Storms offstage)* Wake me up when it’s all over.

JESSIE. Thank you! *(Yells out)* Guys! We need to meet back on the stage now!

(Everyone enters. They chatter in their groups)

LACHY. Hey Michelle, Michelle... Watch this!

(LACHY does a tricky basketball trick, that ends badly and he falls flat on his face. Everyone laughs. MICHELLE bursts into tears)

MICHELLE. Why couldn’t we have just done Romeo and Juliet? I am stressing big time.

LACHY. Oh, don’t stress... It’ll be alright.

MICHELLE. What would you know? All you care about is that basketball.

(She storms off)

LACHY. *(Sadly)* It is my lady, O, it is my love.
O, that she knew she were.

(DECLAN and POPPY enter hand in hand. At that same time MONIQUE, CLAUDIA and TIFF enter from the other side, they mean business. The rest of the actors see that something is going on and grow immediately silent. Backed by her cronies, MONIQUE comes face to face with DECLAN and POPPY, stares them down, believing she has some sort of power over them. POPPY nervously drops DECLAN’s hand and ducks behind JESSIE. DECLAN looks disappointed. MONIQUE looks gleeful, she grabs DECLAN’s arm and drags him to the corner)

MONIQUE. So Deccy... Are you feeling any different?

DECLAN. I sure am.

MONIQUE. (*Gleeful*) Excellent! Can you describe, how you feel?

DECLAN. (*Dreamy*) It's hard to describe.... Butterflies, I guess. Excitement... It's a bit overwhelming really.... For the first time I feel... I feel...

MONIQUE. You feel? You feel what?

DECLAN. Love!

MONIQUE. Oh, Deccy, I'm so glad!

DECLAN. Me too. It's amazing!

MONIQUE. Thank you. I try.

(DECLAN sees POPPY standing alone)

DECLAN. Hold that thought!

(He stands and heads towards POPPY. MONIQUE is joined by CLAUDIA and TIFF)

MONIQUE. Wait until I tell you what he said to me.

(They squeal and put their heads together to whisper. Meanwhile, DECLAN is sidestepped by LACHY)

LACHY. Hey mate... Can I tell you something? It's bugging me.

(DECLAN is torn between his want to go and see POPPY and helping his friend)

DECLAN. Yeah... sure man, what's up?

LACHY. I think I'm in love.

DECLAN. You? You're in love?

LACHY. Yeah... It's amazing... and it sucks, all at the same time.

DECLAN. I know exactly what you mean!... Um, I'm just checking... Who are you in love with?

LACHY. Michelle.

DECLAN. (*Relieved*) Oh, brilliant! That's ok... I mean, that's great!

LACHY. She's just so smart and beautiful and... smart... I mean she likes things like Shakespeare! That blows my mind. But how can a guy like me, get a girl like her to notice him?

DECLAN. You've already answered your own question, Lachy.

LACHY. I have?

DECLAN. Sure... Shakespeare.

LACHY. Shakespeare?

DECLAN. Yeah! She loves Shakespeare... Or at least she loves Romeo and Juliet...

LACHY. Yeah! She does.

DECLAN. "His words make people fall in love"

LACHY. I think I'm picking up what you're putting down.

(Meanwhile)

JESSIE. You're not going to let her scare you off, are you?

POPPY. I don't know what you're talking about.

JESSIE. Oh, don't give me that. That was not acting. You like him, don't you?

POPPY. No!...Maybe.... Yes. Argh... Yes, I do.

JESSIE. *(Victorious)* I knew it!

POPPY. But Monique likes him too.

JESSIE. No kidding.

POPPY. So how am I supposed to compete with her?

JESSIE. You don't have to! Turn around.

(JESSIE turns POPPY around to see DECLAN who is standing right behind her, a huge smile on his face. They step towards each other, only for MICHELLE to rush through the middle of them pursued by LACHY)

LACHY. Michelle... Are you ready to do our vinaigrette?

MICHELLE. For goodness sake, Lachy, I really don't want to do it. This isn't the Shakespeare that I love. Mac -- The M-word play is just so dark, I'm not surprised it's cursed. The characters are either murderers or witches or victims or horrible, evil people. I wish... I just wish we could've done Romeo and Juliet.

LACHY. We can...

(LACHY grabs the copy of Romeo and Juliet from MICHELLE's hand and turns to the page that is bursting with post it notes. MICHELLE is shocked, then smitten)

LACHY. *(Romeo)* Did my heart love till now? Forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.

MICHELLE. Oh Lachy...

(He leaps up onto a chair. Everyone cheers)

LACHY *(Romeo)* But, soft! What light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun.
Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief.

MICHELLE. *(Juliet)* O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

LACHY. *(Romeo)* It is my lady, O, it is my love!
O, that she knew she were.

MICHELLE. I do now...

(Everyone applauds/cheers. A smiling Michelle helps Lachy down from his chair. The spell is broken by MONIQUE who claps slowly)

MONIQUE. *(Sarcastic)* Well... Isn't that sweet? A declaration of love... Deccy. Don't you also have something to say? In front of everybody... Just like they did... In *my* moment!

DECLAN. Sorry?

MONIQUE. It's your turn now. If Lachy can do it, you certainly can.

DECLAN. Um... I'm not exactly sure what you're--

CLAUDIA. Idiot! He declared his love for her!

MICHELLE. Wait, what? Did you?

LACHY. Maybe....

MICHELLE. Oh...

(MICHELLE steps closer to LACHY. He puts his basketball down and holds her hand)

DECLAN. Declared his love for her?... You want me to? *(It dawns on him)* Oh! Ok....

(He turns and takes a deep breath. MONIQUE readies herself. TIFF and CLAUDIA primp her. She turns and looks at DECLAN expectantly. POPPY sad, thinks the worst, but DECLAN turns to her)

DECLAN. *(Valentine)* What light is light, if Poppy be not seen?
What joy is joy, if Poppy be not by?
Unless it be to think that she is by.
And feed upon the shadow of perfection.

(MONIQUE is horrified. POPPY steps forward)

POPPY. Two Gentlemen of Verona, I believe... But Valentine's love was Sylvia, not Poppy.

DECLAN. Yes... But my love is Poppy.

POPPY. You're my love too.

(She hugs him and JESSIE hugs them both, so excited)

JESSIE. I told you! I told you!

ELLIE. It's true! His words make people fall in love.

(All "Awh". Except the MEAN GIRLS. MONIQUE, infuriated, drags her cronies aside)

MONIQUE. What is happening! He obviously still likes Poppy! Why didn't it work?!

CLAUDIA. I thought for sure it would!

TIFF. But we made it happen... We did! The curse. It was real. We all saw it, felt it, didn't we?

CLAUDIA. Maybe we need to be in the same room as the victim... I mean the same room as the "object of the spells affection" for it to work.

TIFF. Duh! That makes perfect sense.

MONIQUE. Fine... We'll just have to recast the spell.

SCENE 7

k

(BECK enters, interrupting them)

BECK. Right'o, you lot. Gather round. Gather round. Not too close. You theatre-types stink of glitter. Can't stand it, gets up my nose, dangerous nasty stuff. So! You were given a task and now it's time for you to deliver. So, what do we have then?

JESSIE. Three groups Mr Beck. We chose Macbeth as our focus. First, Declan and Poppy have been working really hard on some dramatic key scenes between Lady Macbeth and Macbeth. Their intensity and conviction to their roles is incredible.

BECK. Boring! Next.

(DECLAN and POPPY look a bit stunned)

JESSIE. Oh um. Ok. Monique, Claudia and Tiff have prepared a witch scene.

TIFF. Spell. We have prepared a witch spell.

MONIQUE. *(Covering up)* Shush now, Tiff... We don't want to give away any surprises. Look, TBH, Mr Beck, we've been working pretty hard, and have really put our hearts into this task and we believe that our scene is pretty impacting.

CLAUDIA. *(Smirks)* It sure is.

MONIQUE. So, we'd like to be the grand finale. Let the other group go first with their *(dismissive)* little scene.

BECK. *(Yawns)* You are starting to bore me.... Next!

JESSIE. Right... Ahh, this group... Which has pretty much everyone else in it, has prepared a...

ARI. We have prepared a series of vignettes depicting the entire two hours of Macbeth.

BECK. *(Intrigued)* Ohhh.

MICHELLE. Don't say the M word...

JESSIE. ...Or "the Scottish Play", in less than ten minutes.

BECK. Perfect! Dinner and the theatre. Where would you like me?

JESSIE. Umm... Just here.

(JESSIE pulls out a chair for BECK to sit in)

BECK. Easy on the cucumber Johnson... It gives me gas. *(burbs)* Ok, entertain me, clowns.

ROXY. Ladies and gentlemen, presenting, for your viewing entertainment, Macbeth in Ten Minutes.

SCENE 8

(The ensemble gathers to dramatically act out narration, it is fast, shabby, and haphazardly put together, but it is glorious)

NARRATOR 1: (*Dramatically*) Act I Scene I. A desert place, thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

(WITCHES enter)

WITCHES: Fair is foul, and foul is fair: Hover through the fog and filthy air.

BRETT: My moment! Drum solo.

(BRETT beats a drum with relish)

WITCHES: A drum, a drum! Macbeth doth come.

NARRATOR 2: Macbeth and Banquo enter weary from a bloody but victorious battle.

(Enter MACBETH and BANQUO)

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

BANQUO: (*Sees the WITCHES*) What are these?

MACBETH: Speak, if you can: what are yee?

WITCH 1: All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, thane of Glamis.

WITCH 2: All hail, Macbeth, hail to thee, thane of Cawdor.

WITCH 3: All hail, Macbeth, thou shalt be king hereafter.

(MACBETH and BANQUO look at each other)

MACBETH/BANQUO: (*Gasp*) King!?

WITCH 1: All hail Banquo. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

WITCH 2: Not so happy, yet much happier.

WITCH 3: Banquo. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none.

MACBETH/BANQUO: (*Gasp*) Father of Kings!?

NARRATOR 3: Then the witches vanish. Like a bubble popping. Pop!

(WITCHES exit)

MACBETH: Did you hear what they said? Your children will be kings.

BANQUO: They also said that ye will be king.

MACBETH: This could be awkward.

BANQUO: Yah.

NARRATOR 2: Then a messenger arrives to tell Macbeth that ‘bam!’ he’s a thane.

(MESSENGER enters.)

MESSENGER: You’re a thane.

MACBETH/BANQUO: Whaaat?

MACBETH: So, the prophecy is coming true? I’d better let the Mrs know.

NARRATOR 1: Macbeth writes a quick note and sends it off with the messengers.

(All exit. LADY MACBETH enters reading a letter)

LADY MACBETH: Hmmm... It seems that my husband shall soon be king which means that I shall be queen... but to be the king he has to kill the king... Kill the king to make me queen. Hmmm.

NARRATOR 3: And Lady Macbeth, willing to stop at nothing to make the prophecy come true, calls up spirits to make her evil.

LADY MACBETH: Come ye spirits that tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here and fill me from the crown to the toe top-full of direst cruelty!

NARRATOR 1: Enter Macbeth, and together they plot to kill the king.

(Enter MACBETH)

LADY MACBETH: Great Glamis, worthy Cawdor. Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter.

MACBETH: My dearest love, Duncan comes here to-night.

LADY MACBETH: And when goes hence?

MACBETH: To-morrow, as he purposes.

LADY MACBETH: O’ never shall sun that morrow see. *(Slaps him)* Snap out of it! Your face, my thane, is as a book where men may read strange matters.

NARRATOR 2: The Macbeth’s welcome King Duncan, his son Malcom and Lord Macduff into their home.

(DUNCAN, MALCOM and MACDUFF enter)

DUNCAN/MALCOM/MACDUFF: Thanks for having us!

DUNCAN: *(yawns)* I might have a nap.

(Exit DUNCAN, MALCOM and MACDUFF)

MACBETH: Awh, King Duncan is such a nice guy. I don't think I want to kill him anymore.

LADY MACBETH: *(Slaps him)* Snap out of it! You call yourself a man?

MACBETH: But what if we fail?

LADY MACBETH: Screw your courage to the sticking place and we'll not fail. We'll blame the guards, get them drunk and smear their faces with blood.

MACBETH: *(Big sigh)* Ok.

NARRATORS: Act II.

NARRATOR 1: On his way into Duncan's bedroom Macbeth sees a floating dagger.

(NARRATOR dangles a dagger on a fishing line in front of MACBETH)

MACBETH: Is this a dagger which I see before me?

NARRATOR 2: You'd think this would be a warning sign for Macbeth, but nooo.

(SFX – Bell tolls - Dong, Dong, Dong)

MACBETH: 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.

BECK. Stop! Stop! Two things... Firstly, I am still waiting on my salad with no cucumber and a vinaigrette dressing. It is impossible to get good help around here. And secondly, I'm sorry... But there is no way that this *thing* is going to be "Macbeth in Ten Minutes." I'm already clocking two and half on the speedo and you aren't even past Act One. I suggest you speed it up and deliver me the promised ten minutes. *(To the actors)* Ready? *(Holds stopwatch up)* ...And GO!

(NARRATORS speed up the dialogue)

NARRATOR 3: Macbeth kills the king, dead in his bed.

(MACBETH sneaks up to a sleeping KING DUNCAN)

MACBETH: Stab!

DUNCAN: Eekk!

(DUNCAN dies dramatically. MACBETH flees)

NARRATOR 1: Meanwhile back at their bedroom, Lady Macbeth is starting to get twitchy.

(LADY MACBETH re-enters and twitches. MACBETH enters, bloody hands clasping the murder weapons)

NARRATOR 2: Macbeth re-enters the chamber, blood from Duncan's murder, still on his hands.

MACBETH: This is a sorry sight.

LADY MACBETH: *(slaps him)* Snap out of it! Go get some water and wash this filthy witness from your hand. Why did you bring these daggers from the place? They must lie there: go carry them; and smear the sleepy grooms with blood.

MACBETH: Nup. Can't do it. Won't do it.

LADY MACBETH: You're useless! If you want something done...

(LADY MACBETH grabs the daggers, exits, then re-enters, also with blood on her hands)

LADY MACBETH: My hands of your colour but I shame to wear a heart so white.

NARRATOR 3: Macduff finds Duncan's body.

(Enter MACDUFF and MALCOM, followed by Ensemble)

MACDUFF: O horror, horror, horror! The King is dead.

MALCOM: Oh no! My Dad!

(Ensemble all enter, panic, run around, point fingers of blame.)

NARRATOR 1: There is panic, chaos. Blame is thrown around.

ENSEMBLE: You killed the king! No, you killed the king! *(etc)*

(LADY MACBETH faints)

NARRATOR 2: In fake shock, Lady Macbeth faints and Duncan's son, Malcolm; knowing he might be blamed, flees, taking Macduff with him.

MALCOM: I'm outie.

(Exit MALCOM and MACDUFF)

NARRATOR 3: And in Malcom's absence, Macbeth is crowned King

MACBETH: Nice!

(The Ensemble bow. MACBETH and LADY MACBETH high 5. All exit except MACBETH)

NARRATORS: Act III

NARRATOR 1: Drunk on power, Macbeth decides that his best friend, Banquo, is now a threat.

MACBETH: You know, those witches did say that Banquo's kids would be king. But how can they be king if I'm the king? ... Unless they plan to kill the king (*Gasps*) Which is me! So, I must kill Banquo and his son Fleance, so Fleance will never be king. O, full of scorpions is my mind.

NARRATOR 2: So, Macbeth orders his murderers to kill Banquo and Fleance.

(MURDERERS enter. MACBETH whispers in one's ear and exits. BANQUO and FLEANCE enter, skipping, carefree, innocent))

FLEANCE: La, la, la.

MURDERER 2: Oi! Banquo. Fleance. You're dead.

(FLEANCE squeals. BANQUO is stabbed by the MURDERERS)

BANQUO: O, treachery! Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!

NARRATOR 3: And Fleance flees! The Murderers approach Macbeth to tell him that Fleance got away.

(FLEANCE screams and runs dramatically off stage. The MURDERERS give up the chase (eventually) and approach MACBETH meekly)

MACBETH: Do you mind! I'm just about to go into a dinner party, to celebrate me being king and all.

MURDERER 1: But my liege, it didn't go exactly to plan.

MURDERER 2: Fleance flew.

MACBETH: Drat.

BECK. Faster! Faster!

(All action/dialogue is now super-fast. Exit MURDERS. Enter LADY MACBETH, with some ensemble as dinner guests. BANQUO'S GHOST sits in Macbeth's chair)

NARRATOR 3: So, Macbeth enters his dinner party, and to his horror sees the ghost of the freshly dead Banquo, sitting in his chair.

(BANQUO'S GHOST moans and shakes his locks horribly)

MACBETH: *(Points)* Never shake thy gory locks at me!

(More horrible shaking by BANQUO'S GHOST.)

MACBETH: *(Horried)* Eeek!

NARRATOR 1: Lady Macbeth tries to cover for him.

LADY MACBETH: *(Innocently)* His highness is not well.

(LADY MACBETH takes MACBETH aside and slaps him)

LADY MACBETH: Snap out of it! You look but on a stool.

(All exit except MACBETH)

NARRATORS: Act IV

(Enter WITCHES)

NARRATOR 2: Looking for reassurance Macbeth visits the three witches.

WITCHES: Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes.

MACBETH: How now you secret, midnight hags. What is it you do?

NARRATOR 3: Macbeth demands the witches summon apparitions to show him the prophecy.

WITCH 1: Show!

WITCH 2: Show!

WITCH 3: Show!

NARRATOR 1: Then suddenly from the cauldron, horrific images appear.

(Enter APPARITIONS or WITCHES become APPARITIONS)

APPARITION 1: Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff; Beware the thane of Fife.

MACBETH: Macduff's a threat, huh?

APPARITION 2: Macbeth! Macbeth! Be bloody, bold and resolute, for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth.

MACBETH: All men are born of women. Ha! Sucked in Macduff, you'll never get me.

APPARITION 3: Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be, until great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill shall come against him.

(Exit WITCHES/APPARITIONS)

MACBETH: Well, that's never gonna happen either, is it? *(scoffs)* A forest can't move. It looks like I have nothing to worry about.

BECK. *(Calls out)* Pause!

(All actors freeze)

BECK. Where is my salad? Anyone? Anyone? Nope... Didn't think so... And why has this play not finished yet? This is a tragedy. Literally! Get to the final part where everyone dies already! Resume and fast forward.

(Action resumes and is fast, fast forward)

NARRATOR 2: Knowing that Macduff is a threat, Macbeth orders his murderers to kill the whole family.

(MURDERERS enter. MACBETH whispers in MURDERERS' ear. Enter LADY MACDUFF and MACDUFF JR, innocent and unaware. The MURDERERS approach)

MURDERER 1: Oi! Lady Macduff. Where is your husband?

MURDERER 2: He's a traitor.

MACDUFF JR: *(feisty)* Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain! Don't talk about my dad like that!

MURDERER 1: What? You egg!

(MURDERER 1 stabs MACDUFF JR)

MURDERER 1: Stab!

MACDUFF JR: Eek! Oh, he has kill'd me, mother: Run away, I pray you!

(MACDUFF JR dies tragically)

LADY MACDUFF: Eek! Murder!

NARRATOR 3: And Lady Macduff is chased off by the murderers, who of course, murder her as well.

(Exit LADY MACBETH and MURDERERS)

LADY MACDUFF: (*O/S, scream*) Eeek!

(Enter MACDUFF and MALCOM)

NARRATOR 1: Meanwhile Macduff and Malcom decide band together to defeat Macbeth.

MALCOM: I hate Macbeth, and I love Scotland.

MACDUFF: Hey! I hate Macbeth' and love Scotland too.

(They high 5. Enter MESSENGER)

NARRATOR 2: Their good mood is broken by a messenger who comes to tell Macduff that his whole family has been murdered.

MESSENGER: Yeah, soz. Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes savagely slaughtered.

MALCOM: That's way harsh dude.

MACDUFF: I know right.

NARRATOR 3: Macduff decides that revenge is the best medicine to cure his grief.

MACDUFF: Bring it, Macbeth!

(All exit. Enter LADY MACBETH)

NARRATORS: Act V.

NARRATOR 1: Lady Macbeth is haunted by her dreams and starts sleep walking. The guilt has sent her crazy and she believes that she still has blood on her hands from the murders.

(LADY MACBETH tries to rub the blood from her hands)

LADY MACBETH: Here's a spot. Out, damned spot! out, I say! (*twitchy*) What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed!

(LADY MACBETH leaps to her death)

NARRATOR 2: Noooo! Lady Macbeth falls to her death.

NARRATOR 3: R.I.P, Lady Mac.

NARRATOR 1: Meanwhile, Malcom's Army prepares to fight Macbeth.

(Enter MALCOM and Army/Ensemble with bushes)

MALCOM: Right men! Ready with your disguises?

ARMY: Yes sir!

CHARLIE: This is the moment I've been waiting for. Tree time!

(The Army kneels and hold their bushes up to hide faces. Enter MACBETH and MESSENGER)

NARRATOR 1: Back at the castle, Macbeth is told that his wife has died.

MESSENGER: The Queen has died.

MACBETH: Nooo! Out, out, brief candle! Life is but a walking shadow, a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing...Never mind, nothing can harm me until Birnam Wood begins to move, and that's never gonna happen, is it?

MESSENGER: Oh, and by the way - Birnam Wood has begun to move.

MACBETH: Drat!

(Exit MESSENGER)

NARRATOR 2: But Macbeth still believes he is invincible and goes to the battlefield to fight.

MACBETH: Doesn't matter! I can only be killed by someone who was not of woman born... and duh! That's impossible! Everyone was born of a woman. That's how babies are made. Innit?!

(The Army enters. MACBETH enters with a sword and he engages in an epic sword fight, killing all. He questions each SOLDIER first. e.g.)

MACBETH: Did you have a mum?

SOLDIER: Why, yes...

MACBETH: You're dead then. Stab!

(The next SOLDIER steps up, they fight)

SOLDIER 2: Suffer Macbeth.

MACBETH: You? Mum? Yup? Stab! Dead!

(And so on, with each, until all SOLDIERS are dead)

NARRATOR 3: But now, the moment we are all waiting for.

(SFX: Epic music)

NARRATORS: Enter Macduff!

(MACDUFF enters, ready for a fight)

MACDUFF: Turn hellhound, turn.

MACBETH: *(scoffs)* Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests; I bear a charmed life, which must not yield, to one of woman born.

(They fight with swords)

MACDUFF: I tell thee Macbeth, that I, Macduff, was from his mother's womb untimely rrrripped!

MACBETH: *(Gasps)* Noooooo!!

(They exit sword fighting)

NARRATOR 2: Yes. The witch's prophecy was true! In the biggest plot twist since 'The Sixth Sense'; Macduff was in fact born of caesarean section, so he was the one destined to defeat Macbeth. Tricky Shakespeare, tricky.

(Re-enter MACDUFF with MACBETH'S head. He dropkicks it into the audience)

MACDUFF: See you, Jimmy!

NARRATOR 1: Macduff proclaims Malcolm the King of Scotland.

(MALCOM runs on and is crowned by MACDUFF)

NARRATORS: And they all lived happily ever after....

NARRATOR 3: Except everyone who died.

NARRATORS: The end.

SCENE 9

(There is a stunned silence)

BECK. I don't get it... *(beat)* I'm starving! Where's my dinner that was supposed to accompany my theatre? False advertising! I'm going to order a pizza... Anyone want anything?

CHARLIE. Pizza! Yes! I've been waiting all day.

STUDENTS. Oh my gosh/Yes please/Thank you Mr Beck/You're the best/Pizza?/That is so generous/I am so hungry/Yes please/I'm a veggo/Can I have pepperoni. Etc.

BECK. *(scoffs)* As if! I had ya for a second didn't I. Teacher wages here!

(Everyone groans, disappointed)

CHARLIE. This has been the most disappointing day of my life... Except for the tree thing... That was pretty awesome.

BECK. Anyhoo. Let's give that last lot a round of applause... I suppose they deserve it.

(A riotous applause. The ensemble happily bow and congratulate each other. BECK quietly makes his exit)

KENNETH. I told you I'd nail that role!

BRETT. You sure did! I'm proud of you, bro.

KENNETH. Did you just call me bro? Bro?

BRETT. Come here, bro.

(BRETT hugs KENNETH. Everyone awhs)

BRETT. And you know what? The piccolo is pretty cool... I might just take up lessons with you.

KENNETH. *(Excited)* Yas!! Mum will be so proud.... How about the bassoon as well?

BRETT. Now you're going too far.

(MONIQUE slow claps to break the mood)

MONIQUE. Ok. It's our turn. Sisters?

(The MEAN GIRLS take centre stage. The others scramble to their seats to watch. BECK quietly exits)

(SFX - A low droning noise is heard. LFX - Lights start to fade)

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

(MONIQUE is drunk with power)

MONIQUE. Deccy... Are you ready for this?

DECLAN. Umm...

MEAN GIRLS. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:

Hover through the fog and filthy air.

BAILEY. What are they doing?

ELLIE. I'm so confused.

(LFX - A thunderbolt strikes)

(The group look around, surprised)

MEAN GIRLS. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf
Of the ravined salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digged i' th' dark,

(SFX/LFX - All of a sudden, an epic thunder and lightning show starts)

(Everyone is shocked. The MEAN GIRLS continue gleefully)

MEAN GIRLS. Slivered in the moon's eclipse,
Nose of Turk and Tartar's lips.

BRETT. What's happening?

MEAN GIRLS. For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

(MONIQUE turns, victorious, to DECLAN)

MONIQUE. Now! Declan. You are mine, and there's nothing you can do about it! *(laughs evilly)*

(SFX/LFX - Suddenly the music and lights change 'Disco Inferno' or similar 70s Disco hit starts beating through the sound system. Disco ball and flashing colours fill the theatre)

MONIQUE. What is happening?!

TIFF. We must have broke something!

JESSIE. Mr Beck! Mr Beck! Turn it off! Turn it off!

(BECK emerges from the lighting control desk and dances his way centre stage)

BECK. Whoop! Whoop! Whoop! Whoop! Class is over! Time to disco. Whoop! Whoop!

(The students laugh, jump to their feet, and start dancing)

(The MEAN GIRLS who are shocked, humiliated and angry. MONIQUE screams in frustration and storm off. CLAUDIA follows MONIQUE, trying to reassure her. TIFF lingers for a moment to disco with the others, CLAUDIA returns and drags her off. Everyone else dances to the flashing lights of the song. They are all laughing. It's been a great lesson)

(LFX – Lights fade down)