

TEN MINUTE MACBETH

By Kristen Doherty

With apologies to William Shakespeare.

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(Staging suggestions - Make it fast and funny. Bad Scottish accents and lots of physical comedy is a must, and make the sword fights epic!)

CHARACTERS

NARRATOR 1	MESSENGER	MURDERER 2
NARRATOR 2	LADY MACBETH	FLEANCE
WITCH 1	KING DUNCAN	APPARITION 1
WITCH 2	MALCOM	APPARITION 2
WITCH 3	MACDUFF	APPARITION 3
MACBETH	ENSEMBLE/ARMY	MACDUFF JR
BANQUO/GHOST	SOLDIERS	LADY MACDUFF
	MURDERER 1	

(SFX: Bagpipe music)

(Enter two Narrators)

NARRATOR 1: Ladies and gentlemen, presenting for your viewing entertainment ‘Ten Minute Macbeth’. Ready timekeeper? And go!

NARRATORS: Act I.

NARRATOR 2: *(dramatically)* A desert place. Thunder and lightning. Enter three Witches.

(Enter Witches)

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

(SFX – A Drum)

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

NARRATOR 1: 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.

(Macbeth and Banquo see the Witches)

BANQUO: What are these?

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

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!

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(Macbeth and Banquo gasp)

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.

NARRATOR 2: Then the witches vanish. Like a bubble popping. Pop!

(Bursts a balloon. Witches exit)

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

BANQUO: They also said that you will be king first.

MACBETH: This could be awkward.

BANQUO: Yah.

NARRATOR 1: 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 2: Macbeth writes a quick note to his wife, and sends it off with the messenger.

(All exit. Enter Lady Macbeth, with a letter)

LADY MACBETH: Hmm...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. Hmm...

NARRATOR 1: And Lady Macbeth, willing to stop at nothing to make the prophecy come true, calls up spirits to take away any shred of femininity and make her evil enough to kill a king.

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

NARRATORS: Enter Macbeth and together they plot to kill the king.

(Enter Macbeth)

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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!

(Macbeth looks alarmed, Lady Macbeth slaps him)

LADY MACBETH: 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)

LADY MACBETH/MACBETH: Welcome.

DUNCAN/MALCOM/MACDUFF: Thanks for having us!

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

(He goes to sleep on a nearby bed (drama block))

(Exit 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.

(Exit Lady Macbeth)

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)

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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.

NARRATOR 2: 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: *(she 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 2: 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!

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(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 1: 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 2: And in Malcom's absence, Macbeth is crowned King

MACBETH: Nice!

(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 then 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 1: And Fleance flees! The Murderers approach Macbeth to tell him that Fleance got away.

(Fleance runs dramatically off stage, screaming. His murderers give up the chase)

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Enter Macbeth)

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.

(Exit Murders. Enter Lady Macbeth and party guests with chairs)

(Banquo's Ghost sits in empty/Macbeth's chair)

NARRATOR 2: 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. Macbeth squeals in fear)

MACBETH: 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 1: 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.

(They all look simultaneously at Macbeth)

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

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NARRATOR 2: 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 can double up))

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.

MACBETH. What? What does that mean?

APPARITION 3. Til Birnam Wood is on the move!

(Exit Witches and 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.

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

(Murderers enter. Macbeth whispers in Murderer's ear)

(Enter Lady Macduff and Macduff Jr, innocent and unaware play patty cake. The Murders approach them)

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!

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