

**Act 1, Scene 7 Macbeth's castle***(MACBETH.)*

MACBETH

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly.  
 If the assassination could catch with his surcease\* success,  
 that but this blow might be the be-all and the end-all here, we'd risk the life to come.  
 But in these cases we still\* have judgment here,  
 that we but teach bloody instructions, which being taught, return to plague the inventor.  
 This even-handed justice commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice\* to our own lips.  
 He's here in double trust:  
 first, as I am his kinsman and his subject, strong both against the deed;  
 then as his host, who should against his murderer shut the door, not bear the knife myself.  
 Besides, this Duncan hath been so clear in his great office,  
 that his virtues will plead like angels, trumpet tongued, against the deep damnation of his taking-off.

*(Enter LADY MACBETH.)*

How now. What news?

LADY MACBETH

He has almost supped. Why have you left the chamber?

MACBETH

Hath he asked for me?

LADY MACBETH

Know you not he has?

MACBETH

We will proceed no further in this business.

LADY MACBETH

Was the hope drunk wherein you dressed yourself? Hath it slept since?  
 And wakes it now, to look so green and pale at what it did so freely?  
 From this time such I account\* thy love.  
 Art thou afeard to be the same in thine own act and valor as thou art in desire?

MACBETH

Prithee, peace!

I dare do all that may become a man; who dares do more is none.

LADY MACBETH

What beast was it, then, that made you break this enterprise to me?  
 When you durst\* do it, then you were a man.  
 I have given suck, and know how tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:

*surcease* - death, *still* - always, *chalice* - cup, *account* - judge, *durst* - dared

I would, while it was smiling in my face, have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums, and dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you have done to this.

MACBETH

If we should fail?

LADY MACBETH

We fail.

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,\* and we'll not fail.

When Duncan is asleep (whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey soundly invite him) his two chamberlains will I with drugged wine so convince that memory shall be a fume.

When in swinish sleep their drenched natures lie as in a death,

what cannot you and I perform upon the unguarded Duncan;

what not put upon his spongy\* officers, who shall bear the guilt of our great quell?\*

MACBETH

Bring forth men-children only; for thy undaunted mettle\* should compose nothing but males.

Will it not be received, when we have marked with blood those sleepy two of his own chamber and used their very daggers, that they have done it?

LADY MACBETH

Who dares receive it other?

MACBETH

I am settled.

Away, and mock the time with fairest show;

false face must hide what the false heart doth know.

*(Exeunt.)*

*sticking place* - notch that holds the taut string on a crossbow, *spongy* - drunk,  
*quell* - killing, *undaunted mettle* - fearless spirit