

Scene 25 (V iii)

Some time later, inside Dunsinane castle

- (V ii 2) *Enter ...* Macbeth should enter alone. He is in a filthy temper, stomping around the castle, shouting at anyone who gets in his way. (The doctor does not appear till later in the scene (V ii 45); if any attendants are to be seen, they are keeping well away.)
- (V ii 14) *The devil damn thee black, ...* A young servant -- a "lily-livered boy" (V ii 20) -- takes a wrong turn and makes himself a target for Macbeth's wrath.
- (V ii 16) *There is ten thousand ...* It is notable, by the way, that the size of the English army is already accurately known in Dunsinane, even by this young servant.
- (V ii 24) *Seyton!* Macbeth starts shouting for one of his hired thugs, whose name, we discover, is Seyton. This is the first scene in which he has been identified explicitly; but perhaps we have seen him before. (It is possible, for instance, that Seyton is the Third Murderer in scene 16.) He reappears briefly in scene 27; we are not told what happens to him afterwards.
- (V ii 34) *Seyton!* Still shouting.
- (V ii 43) *... skir the country round, ...* An odd word, but the meaning is clear from the context. Macbeth wants the surrounding country stripped of everything that might be useful to the enemy.
- (V ii 44) *Give me mine armour.* Seyton should exit at this point. As he leaves, Macbeth shouts a reminder after him: don't forget that I want my armour right now.
- (V ii 45) *How does your patient, doctor?* As Seyton exits, another character comes nervously onto the stage, recognizable from his costume as a doctor. Macbeth immediately starts bullying him. (Folio made him enter at the beginning of the scene; but Macbeth would not ignore him for so long if he were present.)
- (V ii 46) *Not so sick, ...* As the doctor describes it, the queen is suffering from insomnia. Is there some reason why he does not tell Macbeth that she has been walking in her sleep?

(V ii 49) *Cure her of that.* "Cure" in F1, corrected to "Cure her" in F3. (But it hardly even counts as a correction, because there is little audible difference between "Cure" pronounced as two syllables and "Cure her".)

(V ii 59) *Come, put mine armour on ...* This is the moment when Macbeth's armour is brought onto the stage. At least one servant has to enter; I suspect that there may be two -- one to carry the armour and one to put it on. A sort of dance ensues. Macbeth is incapable of standing still. He stomps around that stage, and the servants pirouette around him, trying to approach when he is stationary, out of his way when he is moving.

(V ii 60) *Seyton, send out!* Another shouted reminder for Seyton (who is not on the stage at this point): don't forget to send out more horses. Then he talks to the doctor -- then to one of the servants -- then to the doctor again -- then to the servant again ...

(V ii 66) *What rhubarb, cynne, ...* In F1 the word is "cyme"; that was altered to "cæny" in F2, and that was altered to "senna" in F4. In Shakespeare's time, by people who knew about plants, senna was routinely called "sene" (Gerard 1597:1113-19, Gerard rev Johnson 1633:1297-1301, and numerous other instances cited by Wellesley (1865:19)); apparently "cyme" is a mistake for "cynne", someone's idea of a fancy spelling for "sene". (Whatever it is, the word only counts as one syllable.)

(V ii 70) *Bring it after me.* The putting on of the armour has gone wrong. They will have to start again. Macbeth stomps off in a rage, pursued by the unfortunate servants. Folio ends the scene with a foolish couplet for the doctor: let him rather exit silently, shaking his head.