LADY MACBETH ~~Alack, I am afraid they have awaked,~~
~~And 'tis not done; th'attempt and not the deed~~
~~Confounds us. Hark!~~ I laid their daggers ready,
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't. My husband?
MACBETH I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?
LADY MACBETH I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?
MACBETH When?
LADY MACBETH Now.
MACBETH As I descended?
LADY MACBETH Ay.
MACBETH Hark, who lies i'th'second chamber?
LADY MACBETH Donaldbain.
MACBETH This is a sorry sight.
LADY MACBETH A foolish thought, to say a sorry sight.
MACBETH There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried,
'Murder!',
That they did wake each other; I stood, and heard them,

SIDE 5

10 attempt and . . . deed] *Globe* (*conj. Hunter*, *'New'*, II, *182–3*); attempt, and . . . deed, F 11 us. Hark!] *Globe;* vs: hearke: F 13 done't] F (don't) 22 Donaldbain] F (*Donalbaine*), *throughout act* 25 'Murder!',] *Hanmer* (*subst.*); Murther, F

9–10 Lady Macbeth's assumption that Macbeth has failed may reflect her own irresolution (12–13) or may indicate that she has mistaken Macbeth's voice for that of one of the grooms (see her question (13)).

10–11 th'attempt . . . Confounds us i.e. murder attempted but not accomplished defeats us. F's punctuation says that the attempt to kill Duncan, rather than the killing itself, will defeat the Macbeths' aims; Globe changed the punctuation to show that Lady Macbeth fears being known as having attempted regicide without accomplishing it.

11 Hark Listen, pay attention. Lady Macbeth interrupts herself, starting at some real or imaginary sound, perhaps of crickets (15), perhaps her husband's footsteps.

12–13 Had . . . done't Compare Lady Macbeth's assertion about infanticide (1.7.54–8 and n.). With other monarchical theorists, James VI and I stressed the identity of king and father (see e.g. *True Lawe*, pp. 62 and 74); Duncan's murder violates multiple bonds, many taboos.

13 My father . . . husband Spoken, the line makes father and husband, king and king-killer, one.

13 done't done it.

15 crickets Some editors treat this word as a possessive ('cricket's'), but the earlier 'owl scream' (rather than 'owl's scream') suggests that F's reading is correct.

16–19 Did . . . descended These exchanges are set out as they are in F, but editors have tried to create a single pentameter. See Textual Analysis, pp. 252–3 below.

23 This . . . sight Pope and later editors add an SD making this line refer to Macbeth's hands, or his hands and the daggers, but F's indefiniteness suggests how the murder has affected Macbeth's imagination; compare 62, where his hands 'pluck out' his eyes.

23 sorry painful, grievous; wretched, worthless.

24 Does Lady Macbeth refer to Macbeth's bloody hands, the bloody daggers, his hands and the daggers, or does she merely dismiss her husband's fear? Dessen ('Problems', pp. 155–6) suggests that she does not realise Macbeth has mistakenly returned with the daggers until 51 and links this 'not-seeing' with her earlier failure to recognise Macbeth (13), but it seems more likely she is taking her hurdles one at a time, first her husband's debilitating fear, then the problem of replacing incriminating evidence.

25 one . . . one Apparently Malcolm and Donaldbain, not the two grooms, but the uncertainty adds to the terror of the moment.

25 in's in his.

26 stood i.e. stood still, stood without moving.

But they did say their prayers and addressed them
Again to sleep.

LADY MACBETH There are two lodged together.

MACBETH One cried 'God bless us!' and 'Amen' the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands.
List'ning their fear, I could not say 'Amen'
When they did say 'God bless us.'

LADY MACBETH Consider it not so deeply.

MACBETH But wherefore could not I pronounce 'Amen'?
I had most need of blessing and 'Amen'
Stuck in my throat.

LADY MACBETH These deeds must not be thought
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.

MACBETH Methought I heard a voice cry, 'Sleep no more:
Macbeth does murder sleep', the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labour's bath,

29 'God . . . us!' . . . 'Amen'] *Hanmer (subst.);* God . . . vs . . . Amen F **31–2** 'Amen' . . . 'God . . . us.'] *Hanmer (subst.);* Amen . . . God . . . vs. F **34–5** 'Amen'? . . . 'Amen'] *Hanmer (subst.);* Amen? . . . Amen F **36** thought] F; thought on *Hanmer* **38–9** 'Sleep . . . sleep'] *Johnson;* sleep . . . sleepe F **40** knits] F; rips *Q1673*

27 addressed prepared (*OED* Address *v* 10). There may be a hint of 'directed spoken words' (*OED* Address *v* 8a), since Macbeth will soon himself 'address' Sleep (38–43).

28 lodged housed, bedded down.

30–1 Capell (*Notes*, pp. 11–12) argues that 'List'ning their fear' should end a sentence rather than begin one, but F's punctuation, a colon before 'Listning' and a comma after 'feare', tends against Capell, and his choice produces a weak following sentence, 'I could not say "Amen" / When they did say "God bless us".'

30 As As if (Abbott 107); see 1.4.11 n.

30 hangman's hands An executioner's hands would be bloodied when he disembowelled the body of a traitor he had first hanged.

31 List'ning Hearing, listening to.

31 I could not say 'Amen' Macbeth cannot speak the formulaic word that would free him spiritually so that he could join in the grooms' prayers. Claudius, also a regicide, in *Ham.* 3.3.38–72 meditates on his need for contrition, strives to pray, but gives up despairingly: 'My words fly up, my thoughts remain below' (*Ham.* 3.3.97). Compare Vittoria's horrific dream: 'I trembled, and yet for all this terror / I could not pray' (Webster, *White Devil* 1.2.248–9).

34 wherefore why.

36 thought meditated, pondered. This line is the last citation under *OED* Think v^2 2a.

38–43 There is no way of telling how much of this passage (or of 44–6) is quoted speech, and an audience is unlikely to hear fine discriminations; altogether, 38–43 is 'a formal apostrophe to Sleep' (Brooke) in the manner of *The Rape of Lucrece* (e.g. 764 ff. on 'comfort-killing Night'). Clarendon compares Seneca, *Hercules Furens* 1065–81, an apostrophe to sleep that includes the phrases 'vanquisher of woes, rest of the soul, the better part of human life . . . peace after wanderings, haven of life, day's respite' (trans. F. J. Miller).

38 Methought It seemed to me.

40 ravelled frayed (synonymous with 'unravelled'); untwisted (see next n.).

40 sleeve Part of a garment covering the arm (*OED* Sleeve *sb* 1); filament of silk obtained by untwisting a thicker thread (*OED* Sleave *sb* 1, quoting this line as its first figurative use). An audience cannot hear the difference between 'sleave' and 'sleeve', and the play's clothing imagery prompts us to understand 'sleeve'.

41 death of each day's life i.e. sleep ends each day just as death ends life. Thus, sleep is to death as day is to life, and sleep is to day as death is to life.

41 bath therapeutic liquid. *OED* Bath *sb*^{1} 10

Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast.
LADY MACBETH What do you mean?
MACBETH Still it cried, 'Sleep no more' to all the house;
'Glamis hath murdered sleep', and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more: Macbeth shall sleep no more.
LADY MACBETH Who was it, that thus cried? Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brain-sickly of things. 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 I'll go no more.
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again, I dare not.
LADY MACBETH Infirm of purpose!
~~Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead~~
~~Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood~~
~~That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,~~

43 feast.] F (Feast.); feast, – *Cam.* (*after Theobald*) 'Glamis . . . sleep'] *Johnson; Glamis* . . . Sleepe F 44 'Sleep . . . more'] *Johnson;* Sleepe . . . more F 45

quotes this line as figurative, citing also Chaucer's 'bath of bliss'. Early modern English allows the pronunciation 'bait' (for 'bath') and hence a pun on 'bate', which can mean both 'strife, discord' and 'diminution' (*OED* Bate *sb*[1] 1 and *sb*[2] 2, respectively). This latter ironic possibility is attractive, but unavailable in modern English pronunciation.

42 second course main or principal dishes, hence something that comes after and satisfies more, as sleep does after exertion.

43 Capell (*Notes*, p. 12) compares Southwell's 'St Peters Complaint' (1595), lines 721 ff.: 'Sleepe, deathes allye: oblivion of teares: / Silence of passions: balme of angry sore: / Suspence of loves' (*Poems of Robert Southwell*, ed. James McDonald and Nancy Pollard Brown, 1967).

43 Chief nourisher Compare 'gentle sleep! / Nature's soft nurse' (*2H4* 3.1.5–6).

44–6 Sleep no more . . . sleep no more See 38–43 n. and 'I'll beat the drum / Till it cry sleep to death' (*Lear* 2.4.118–19).

48 unbend The word continues the metaphors of 1.3.35, 1.7.60 and 79.

50 filthy witness morally polluted token (*OED* Witness *sb* 7). Compare 1.1.13 n.

53 sleepy The word is literally accurate: the drugged grooms live, intended to be scapegoats for Duncan's murder.

57 as pictures i.e. because, dead, they do not move. See 1.3.95 and 2.3.70.

57–8 'tis . . . devil 'Bugbears to scare babes' is proverbial (Dent B703); a 'bugbear' (or 'bogey man') was an imaginary figure used to scare children into obedience. Steevens[2] notes Webster's echo: 'Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils' (*White Devil* 3.2.147).

58 painted pictured, represented graphically; perhaps also 'made up' (compare 'smear' (52), and 2.3.105, 3.4.12).

58 If he do bleed Literally, 'if Duncan's wounds are still fresh enough to be shedding liquid blood' (i.e. the blood has not coagulated). Early audiences might have recalled, however, the then-current superstition that a murdered body, such as Duncan's, bled afresh in the presence of the murderer (see *R3* 1.2.55–61); Lady Macbeth is not, technically, Duncan's murderer, but she is an accomplice and therefore equally guilty in contemporary criminal law. Here, therefore, she may be assuming and accepting her responsibility and her