MACBETH Sweet remembrancer!
Now good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both.
LENNOX May't please your highness, sit.
MACBETH Here had we now our country's honour roofed,
Were the graced person of our Banquo present,
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance.
ROSS His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company?
MACBETH The table's full.
LENNOX Here is a place reserved, sir.
MACBETH Where?
LENNOX Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?
MACBETH Which of you have done this?
LORDS What, my good lord?
MACBETH Thou canst not say I did it; never shake
Thy gory locks at me!
ROSS Gentlemen, rise, his highness is not well.
[Lady Macbeth joins the Lords]

52 SD] *This edn; not in* F

Vow-Breaker (1636), sig. 13v) and a character pretends to be his own ghost and enters, *his face mealed* (Francis Beaumont, *Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1613), sig. 13r). Henslowe (pp. 318, 321) inventories 'j [= 1] gostes sewt, and j gostes bodeyes [= bodice]' as well as 'j gostes crown'. On the Ghost's appearance, see also R. V. Holdsworth, '*Macbeth* and *The Puritan*', *N&Q* 235 (1990), 204–5. The co-presence of Death and (royal) festivity are frequent moral themes; skeleton-Death pours a king's wine in Hans Holbein the Younger's popular *The Dance of Death* (1538). See illustration 10, p. 52 above.

37 remembrancer one who reminds. The word was also the title of officials who collected debts owed to the crown. Macbeth speaks 'remembrancer' just as the Ghost enters as a reminder of another deed; compare the now-ironic 'remembrance' (3.2.30).

38 wait on attend, serve.

40 honour i.e. those professing and conferring honour, the nobility.

40 roofed i.e. beneath one roof, in one place.

41 graced favoured, endowed with special qualities.

42 may I I hope I may.

43 mischance accident. The false politeness recalls 1.6.

43–4 His absence . . . his promise Literally, Banquo's absence belies his promise to attend. There are two ironical meanings: Banquo's Ghost keeps his living vow ('promise'); Banquo's death ('absence') may be blamed upon 'his royalty of nature' (3.1.51), the qualities which boded so well for his future service to Scotland ('his promise'). On the second meaning, compare 'He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age . . . He hath indeed better bettered expectation' (*Ado* 1.1.13–16).

46 The table's full Macbeth finds no empty place.

48 moves troubles (*OED* Move *v* 9). Macbeth has now reacted to the Ghost.

49 Which . . . this Macbeth may assume a practical joke (someone is pretending to be Banquo), or he may ask who has made Banquo a ghost.

50–1 The silent Ghost cannot accuse Macbeth of murdering Banquo.

51 gory locks bloody hair.

52 SD See headnote.

LADY MACBETH Sit, worthy friends. My lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth. Pray you, keep seat.
The fit is momentary; upon a thought
He will again be well. If much you note him
You shall offend him and extend his passion.
Feed, and regard him not. [*To Macbeth*] Are you a man?
MACBETH Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil.
LADY MACBETH O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear;
This is the air-drawn dagger which you said
Led you to Duncan. ~~O, these flaws and starts,~~
~~Impostors to true fear, would well become~~
~~A woman's story at a winter's fire~~
~~Authorised by her grandam.~~ Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done
You look but on a stool.
MACBETH Prithee, see there! Behold, look, lo! How say you?
[*To Ghost*] Why, what care I? ~~If thou canst nod, speak too.~~

62 air-drawn dagger] F (Ayre-drawne-Dagger) 70 Why, what . . . I? . . . too.] *Capell;* Why what . . . I, . . . too. F

54 keep seat remain seated.

55 fit paroxysm, seizure (*OED* Fit *sb*² 3). Compare 3.2.23 and n.

55 upon a thought Proverbial: 'As swift as thought' (Dent T240).

57 passion fit (*OED* Passion *sb* 6c).

58 Are you a man For similar questions, see 1.7.35–47 and 3.1.90.

60 proper stuff complete (or 'utter') nonsense.

61 painting image, illusion. Compare 1.3.95, 2.2.57, 2.3.23.

62–3 Lady Macbeth ridicules Macbeth's vision before he killed Duncan (2.1.33–43).

62 air-drawn imaged in the air; moved through the air.

63 flaws bursts of passion (*OED* Flaw *sb*² 2, quoting this line as its second example), a figurative use from 'squall of wind' (*OED* Flaw *sb*² 1).

63 starts sudden involuntary movements.

64 Impostors False imitations (because Macbeth has no true cause of fear); 'impostors when compared with true fear' (Mason, p. 145).

65–6 A woman's . . . grandam Shakespeare and others often associate the telling of a sad or frightening tale with women and winter; compare *R2* 5.1.40 ff.; *WT* 2.1.22 ff.; 'Now I remember those old womens words, / Who in my wealth [youth?] wud tell me winters tales, / And speake of spirits and ghosts' (Marlowe, *Jew of Malta* 2.1.24–6); Francisco's reaction to Isabella's ghost, 'So now 'tis ended, like an old wives' story' (Webster, *White Devil* 4.1.116); 'A winter('s) tale' (Dent W513.1).

66 Authorised Vouched for, confirmed. The word is stressed on the second syllable (Cercignani, p. 41).

66 grandam grandmother.

67 make such faces An implicit SD to the actor playing Macbeth.

67 When all's done Proverbial (Dent A211.1).

68 stool For Shakespeare's audience, chairs were rare and expensive, stools common, even in wealthy households (see *Tim.* 3.6.65); Lady Macbeth uses that social fact to express her contempt.

69 Behold, look, lo These synonyms urge the actor to gesture at the Ghost and its 'empty' place.

70 Why, what care I Presumably, Macbeth dares the Ghost to identify Banquo's murderer(s), but this phrase may be a question to Lady Macbeth (Halio) or the entire speech may be an aside (NS).

70 nod An implicit SD to the actor playing the Ghost, who must gesture significantly toward Macbeth (see 69 n.).

~~If charnel-houses and our graves must send~~
~~Those that we bury back, our monuments~~
~~Shall be the maws of kites.~~

[*Exit Ghost of Banquo*]

LADY MACBETH What, quite unmanned in folly?

MACBETH If I stand here, I saw him.

LADY MACBETH Fie, for shame.

MACBETH Blood hath been shed ere now, ~~i'th'olden time,~~
~~Ere humane statute purged the gentle weal;~~
~~Ay, and since too, murders have been performed~~
~~Too terrible for the ear.~~ The time has been
That when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end. But now they rise again
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns
And push us from our stools. This is more strange
Than such a murder is.

LADY MACBETH My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.

MACBETH I do forget –
Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends.
I have a strange infirmity which is nothing
To those that know me. ~~Come, love and health to all,~~

73 SD] F2–4 (*subst.*); *not in* F 73 What, . . . folly?] *Capell;* What? . . . folly. F 78 time has] *White;* times has F; times have F2–4

71 charnel-houses houses or vaults in which the bones of the dead are piled up (*OED* Charnel-house).

72–3 our . . . kites The unburied (or returned) dead will be consumed by carrion-eating birds ('kites') whose stomachs ('maws') will be the final resting-places ('monuments') of the dead.

73 unmanned made weak or timid (*OED* Unmanned *ppl a*[2], citing only one example, from 1694). Lady Macbeth returns to the tactic that worked before (1.7.39–54), but murder, which she represented as manly, now unmans her husband. See 99.

74 If I stand here Compare the proverbial 'As true as you stand there' (Dent S818).

76 humane statute compassionate law. For F's 'humane', see 1.5.15n.

76 gentle weal lawful (or 'non-violent') commonwealth. The line employs rhetorical prolepsis: the 'weal' is 'gentle' after it has been 'purged'.

80 And there an end Proverbially, 'And there's an end' (Dent E113.1).

81 twenty See 27.

81 mortal fatal.

81 crowns tops of (their) heads (as at 1.5.40), but 'crowns' recalls royal regalia, the 'golden round' (1.5.26): kingly crowns will adorn Banquo's children though his head wears 'twenty mortal murders' only.

82–3 This . . . is Responding to Lady Macbeth's scorn (73–4), Macbeth reviews the history of murder (75–80), and that review is meant to assert his manhood and bravery with its grim conclusion, 'And there an end.' The Ghost's uncanny appearance, however, is 'more strange', less explicable and therefore more terrifying, than murder because it overturns the rationalism of 75–80 and revives the doubts of 1.7.1–7; murder is not an 'end' and 'it' is not 'done' when ''tis done' (1.7.1).

83 Collier[2] added *Returning to her state* after 'My worthy lord'; Keightley marked the speech as an aside.

85 muse wonder, marvel. An implicit SD to the guests.

87 Come . . . all Macbeth proposes a toast to ease the tension.