

## **Macbeth Notes - Act 4**

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### **Scene 1**

At the start of Act 4, we see the three witches brewing some kind of potion in a cauldron. This is a part of Hecate's plan to trick Macbeth as they cannot kill him. Hecate enters and praises the witches effort.

The second witch informs the other two witches that "something wicked this way comes". This is ironic as Macbeth is just about to enter. It is also ironic as the witches are the literal representation of hell and therefore there is nothing more evil however they suggest Macbeth is.

Macbeth has come to the witches to try and give himself more security but he does not realise that the witches are only giving him an illusion of security. Macbeth going to the witches instead of Lady Macbeth also shows a huge step apart in their relationship as he has traded the security she provided him with for the security of these devious witches who are trying to fool him - which in itself is ironic.

As the witches start to show Macbeth the "security" he is demanding, an "armed head" appears and tells Macbeth to "beware Macduff / beware the thane of Fife. Dismiss me. Enough", telling him not to trust Macbeth. This is an illusion as Macbeth already does not trust Macduff and is not helpful to him although he doesn't realise this.

The second apparition is a bloody child. The image informs Macbeth that "none of woman born / shall harm Macbeth". This gives Macbeth a sense of security as he believes that no one can now kill or hurt him as everyone is born from a woman. We later learn that this is not the case, but for now, the witches trick Macbeth into thinking he is almost immortal.

"I'll make assurance double sure" - Macbeth is planning on killing Macduff anyway just for that extra bit of security, showing the audience how invested he is with the idea of security.