

quite something if you get to be the Thane of Cawdor. Similar to being a prefect.

**Norm/Macbeth**

Don't talk daft, you silly witch!  
Your brains must be out of order.  
You must have got your names mixed up—

I'm not the Thane of Cawdor.

**Elsie/Witch**

That's all you know, clever clogs,  
And I'll tell you another thing—  
I know you don't look up to much,  
But you're going to be the King.

**Norm/Banquo** What about me, then? Am I going to be the King?

**Elsie/Witch** It's hardly likely, is it, dear? Not looking like that. Face facts. No, you're not. However, I have to tell you that all your kiddies will be kings, though I can't for the life of me see how you're going to manage that. Still, there it is. Ta-ta, then!

*The Witch exits, cackling*

**Norm/Macbeth** What d'you make of that then, Banquo?

**Norm/Banquo** Search me.

**Norm/Macbeth** Any road up, it looks like I'm going to be King, and you're not. Lads down Dunsinane snooker club'll never believe it!

**Norm/Banquo** Well. She said all my kiddies is going to be kings. Nur nur na nur nur.

**Norm/Macbeth** (*hitting Banquo round the head*) Shurrup! Lot of nonsense. She's probably not a witch at all. She's probably from *Game for a Laugh*.

\* P+C

*Elsie enters as the Messenger. The Messenger, whether played by Norman or Elsie, wears a postman's hat and one of those glasses, false nose and moustache sets that you get from joke shops. She carries a postbag, and speaks in a very silly voice indeed—a sort of nasal sing-song with cleft palate*

**Elsie/Messenger**

Are you Macbeth?

**Norm/Macbeth**

That's right, I am.  
I've been looking everywhere!

**Elsie/Messenger**

I've brought a message from the King.  
It's registered—sign there!

*She proffers a clipboard and pencil. Macbeth signs*

The King's right pleased with what you did,  
Bashing them Norwegian peasants,

And just to show his gratitude

He's sent you a little present.

*She proffers a brown paper parcel. Macbeth accepts it*

There's some handkerchiefs, some ties and socks,  
And a five-pound postal order.

You can have till Wednesday morning off,  
And you're promoted—Thane of Cawdor.

*The Messenger exits*

P-letter!

*The Messenger exits*

**Norm/Macbeth** Bloody hell! It's true! I am the Thane of Cawdor! Wait till I tell the missis! (*He starts moving off-stage*)

**Norm/Banquo** What about my kiddies bein' kings, then? Are you going to tell her about that?

**Norm/Macbeth** No, Banquo, I'm not! She's not interested in your kids!

She's interested in me!

**Norm/Banquo** But that's what the Witch said.

**Norm/Macbeth** (*as they exit*) I know it was! Just stop going on about it, will yer?

*Macbeth and Banquo exit*

*Elsie enters as Lady Macbeth. She wears a housecoat not dissimilar from Elsie's own, except it's tartan. She is reading aloud from a postcard*

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** "Dear Mrs Macbeth, Weather is lovely here. Went swimming with Banquo yesterday. Won the battle with the Norwegians seven-nil. King was very pleased. Met a witch the other day and she said I was going to be Thane of Cawdor and then King. What do you think of that? She also said all Banquo's kids was going to be kings, and he hasn't stopped going on about it since. And do you know, sure enough, I have been promoted Thane of Cawdor! Makes you think, doesn't it? Mind you, I don't see how I'm going to be King, not without Duncan and his little son Malcolm dying suddenly, and that's not very likely. Bye for now. Wish you were here. Love, your Macbeth. P.S. Unless I killed them, I suppose, but that's not very nice, is it?" "Oooooh! Thane of Cawdor! That's nice. I suppose I'm the Thanesess then. But if he's going to be King, that means I'll be Queen Macbeth! That's more like it! We'll be able to move out of this dump, and live in a proper detached palace at Dunsinane. Actually, I think I'll change it to Duntromin. And we'll have a low-level avocado toilet suite and room dividers everywhere! Ooooh. I can hardly wait! All he's got to do is kill King Duncan and get Malcolm out of the way. Mind you, I bet he doesn't want to do it, big soft bugger! I can see I'm going to have to give him a good talking to when he gets home!

*Norman enters as a Messenger*

**Norm/Messenger** Aha! It is a messenger! What tidings do you bring? I've come from Scone, Your Ladyship, with a telegram from the King.

It says:

"Have promoted your husband T. of C.,

Which isn't peanuts, is it?

And so you can show your gratitude

We're coming on a visit.

We don't just want a cup of tea.

We want a proper boiled-ham spread—

And we'll likely want to stay the night,

So better air the bed.

We'll want a cannon salute as well.

Of twenty or thirty shots,  
And we like our eggs done sunny side up,  
Signed Duncan, King of Scots."

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Where's Macbeth, then? He should be here.  
It doesn't show much loyalty

**Norm/Messenger** Leaving his wife at home on her own,  
When we're going to be visited by royalty.  
He'll be here at once, Your Ladyship.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** He's caught the express train.  
Well, I hope he bought a first-class ticket  
Now he's been made a Thane.

*The Messenger exits*

*(Overacting wildly, striding about and gesticulating)*

The raven himself is hoarse

That croaks the entrance of Duncan

Under my battlements. Come, you spirits

That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,

And fill me from the crown to the toe, top-full

Of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood,

Stop up the access and passage to remorse;

That no compunctious visitings of nature

Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between

The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts—

**Norm (off)** Elsie! You can't say that! It's not nice!

**Elsie** I wish you'd stop interrupting, Norman, when I'm communing with

my public! Anyway, that's the way William wrote it.

**Norm (off)** I don't care! William might be a dirty-minded little devil, but

this is family entertainment! You're a respectably married woman! You

can't go round talking about your breasts in public!

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** *(sighing deeply)* ... Come to my woman's ... chest,

And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers,

Wherever in your sightless substances

You wait on nature's mischief! Come thick night

And pall thee in the dunnet smoke of hell,

That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,

Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark  
To cry, "Hold, hold!"

*Norman enters as Macbeth. He gives her a peck on the cheek*

Where have you been?

**Norm/Macbeth** Hallo, dear. I've been up at Scone getting my Thane of

Cawdor diploma. Aren't you proud?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** That's all very well, but the King of Scotland's coming

here tonight, and we haven't a thing in the house. You'll have to run

down the corner shop.

**Norm/Macbeth** *(crestfallen)* Yes, dear.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** And the spare bed's not been aired, and we haven't  
any red carpets. I haven't even put the cat in the adage. And then you  
don't bother to turn up till the last minute.

**Norm/Macbeth** Sorry, dear.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** And what's this about a witch saying you're going to  
be King?

**Norm/Macbeth** That's right.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Well, that means you'll have to kill Duncan tonight,  
then, after he's had his tea. I don't see how you're going to be King  
otherwise.

**Norm/Macbeth** *(panicked)* Do I have to, dear? I mean it's not very  
hospitable, is it? I thought maybe we could just, er, wait and see if he pops  
it. I've heard he's got a bad chest.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** *(sternly)* Macbeth!

**Norm/Macbeth** Oh ... well ... look, let's talk about it later. King'll be here  
any minute.

*Pause, then meaningfully ...*

*I said, King'll be here any minute!*

**Elsie** *(penny dropping)* Oh! Yes!

*Elsie exits in a tearing hurry, to re-enter, breathless, by the other door, as  
Duncan. She sings "Oh, you tak' the High Road and I'll tak' the Low Road  
and I'll be at Macbeth's hoose afore ye", from off-stage, to cover the  
costume change*

**Norm/Macbeth** *(kneeling)* Your Majesty!

**Elsie/Duncan** Evening Macbeth, nice castle you've got.

It's all right, you don't have to kneel.

I'm worn out with kingin'. Think I'll go straight to  
bed.

I shan't be wanting a meal.

I got the last bus from Balmoral.

I had to wait two hours at Fife.

It's enough to make you hang up your crown.

Oh, by the way, how's the wife?

She's very well, thank you, Your Highness.

She's upstairs making the bed.

Will you want some black pudding for breakfast,  
Or will you have porridge instead?

No thanks. I'll lie in in the morning—

I don't want to get up before eight.

Let's hope there's no murder plots, eh, Macbeth,

Or else I'll be lying in state!

Ha, ha!

*Duncan nudges Macbeth in the ribs, and exits*

**Norm/Macbeth** Ha ha. *(He turns to follow Duncan's exit with his eyes, then  
turns back to the audience with a manic murderous expression. He overacts*

*wildly during the next speech, grimacing and gesticulating madly. The gestures tend to be over-literal and pantomimic, e.g. when he says the word "jump" he jumps in the air, etc.)*

If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well  
It were done quickly: if the assassination  
Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,  
With his surcease, success; that but this blow  
Might be the be-all and end-all here,  
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,  
We'd jump the life to come. But in these cases  
We still have judgement 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 . . .

Norm Where does William get this stuff from?

*Elsie enters as Lady Macbeth*

Elsie/Lady Macbeth Well, have you done it yet?

Norm/Macbeth What?

Elsie/Lady Macbeth Have you done him in? Duncan? I've already started  
writin' the invitations to our Coronation do.

Norm/Macbeth No. I haven't, I don't think we should do it. It's too risky.  
His little lad Malcolm's going to be here soon, and Banquo, and that  
Maoduff.

Elsie/Lady Macbeth All the more reason for getting on with it, then, yer big  
girl's blouse! What's the matter with you?

Norm/Macbeth It's not right! After all, he's been nice enough to us, making  
me a Thane and all.

Elsie/Lady Macbeth (*exasperated*) Look, do you want to be King or don't  
you?

Norm/Macbeth Supposin' he wakes up?

Elsie/Lady Macbeth He won't wake up. I put Valium in his cocoa.

Norm/Macbeth (*groaning with reluctance*) Oh . . . I don't want to do it!  
(*Sudden inspiration*) Anyway, I can't do it. I've just remembered. I've got  
to take me library books back. (*He makes to exit*)

Elsie/Lady Macbeth Typical! Just typical! It were the same with that  
chicken last Christmas.

Norm/Macbeth (*stung*) Trust you to bring that up!

Elsie/Lady Macbeth "Don't let's be payin' butcher's prices for turkey," you  
said. "Daylight robbery," you said. "Let's be sensible and raise our own  
Christmas dinner."

Norm/Macbeth (*defensively*) Well, it seemed like good idea at the time.

Elsie/Lady Macbeth So you bought that scrawny horrible little chicken.  
Cost us a fortune to feed the little horror.

Norm/Macbeth Don't talk like that about our Timmy!

Elsie/Lady Macbeth And what happened! Come Christmas Eve you  
wouldn't kill it.

Norm/Macbeth Well. It were the way he looked at me. He were more like  
one of the family.

Elsie/Lady Macbeth Hangin' a stocking full of chicken feed on the hen run!  
And we had to have flippin' corned beef sandwiches for Christmas dinner!

Norm/Macbeth Well, you wouldn't kill him, either!

Elsie/Lady Macbeth It's not my job! Who wears the trousers in this house?

*Norman looks at his kill, looks at Elsie's stacks, looks at the audience*

That's not the point! Either you do Duncan in tonight, and sharpish, or  
I'm going home to Mother! And you can wipe that smirk off your face,  
because I'll be taking our Leeds Liquid Gold account book with me!

Norm/Macbeth All right! All right! I'll do it! I'll do it! (*He moves towards the  
kitchen exit*)

Is this the breadknife I see before me,

The handle towards my hand?

Or have me eyes gone funny?

It might be swollen glands.

Must I go forth and do the deed?

Must I do him to death?

(*Wheeling*) Couldn't I do it tomorrow?

Oh, hurry up, Macbeth!

Elsie/Lady Macbeth Oh, enormous bashing, crashing and shrieking from off stage.  
*Macbeth re-enters looking serious*

Norm/Macbeth I have done the deed! (*He produces a dead chicken from  
behind his back*)

Elsie/Lady Macbeth (*wailing*) Timmy! (*She faints*)

*Norman puts the chicken in the oven, and moves over to sit on the sofa. Elsie  
joins him*

Norm Now, you've probably been wondering why there's been no what you  
might call comic relief in this play. It's very serious stuff, you're thinking.  
Well, there's a reason for that, isn't there, Elsie?

Elsie It's his jokes.

Norm Now there you've hit it. His jokes. Now, there's supposed to be comic  
bits in *Macbeth*. I say there's supposed to be—if it weren't for our  
William's sense of humour. (*He picks up and opens the copy of "Mac-  
beth"*) Listen to this: this is supposed to be a joke . . . (*He reads*) "Faith,  
here's an equivocator that could swear in both the scales against either  
scale, who committed treason enough for God's sake, yet could not  
equivocate to Heaven. Oh, come in, equivocator." (*He looks helpless*)  
Well, I mean who'd laugh at that? But as I said to Elsie, that's our William  
all over. I said that to you, didn't I? That's William all over.

Elsie William?

Norm Shakespeare.

Elsie Arnold Shakespeare, you mean? Who has the scraggyard next to the  
off-licence?

Norm Not Arnold! (*He waves the book at her*) William. William!

**Elsie** Oh, yes.

**Norm** So we had to throw out all William's jokes. Honestly, they wouldn't have made anybody laugh. There's some worse than that! I did think of writing some funny bits in, but . . . well, to be honest with you, I'm more what you'd call a serious writer. So I'm afraid it's just going to have to carry on being a bit gloomy, like, right till the end. Still, it is a tragedy, after all, and culture's culture, isn't it? (To *Elsie*) Right, then. Let's get on with it!

*Elsie exits. There is the sound of door chimes*

**Norm/Macbeth**

(*striking a pose*) Who knocks upon my castle door?

I bet it's the police!

I wish I'd never done it now—

I'll get ten years, at least!

They haven't abolished hangin' yet—

I'll wind up on Death Row!

Come on then, put the bracelets on!

*He shuts his eyes and extends his wrists, as . . .*

*Elsie enters as Lady Macbeth, carrying Banquo and Flenace, his son, a smaller toy panda in a kill*

Oh, it's you, Banquo.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** My Lord, the right noble Banquo, destroyer of

**Norway**, general of the King's armies, well-beloved of his Majesty—

**Norm/Macbeth** Yes, yes, yes. What is it, Banquo?

**Elsie/Banquo**

I've come to see his Majesty.

I heard he was here tonight,

So I thought I'd come and stay for tea,

If that'll be all right.

Well, if you think you have to,

I daresay we can find a bun.

Will it be for two of you?

Who's the little furry one?

How's that prophecy coming along,

The one the Witch said to you—

About you going to be the King?

You don't believe it, do you?

She said my family's going to be kings . . .

Yes, I know about all that!

Get back to the point, will you,

Who's the little brat?

Well, I've heard another prophecy—

I've just been to a seance—

And they're going to name police cars after us.

Oh, this is my son Flenace.

**Norm/Macbeth** Hallo.

**Elsie/Banquo** Say hallo to Mr Macbeth, Flenace.

**Elsie/Flenace** Shan't!

*Elsie hits him with Banquo*

Hallo.

**Norm/Macbeth** Well, if you're stopping, I might as well show you to your cage . . . er . . . chamber. Come on, then. (*He takes Banquo and Flenace from Elsie*)

**Norm/Banquo** D'you think it's true, then, about my family being Royalty?

**Norm/Macbeth** (*despairing*) Oh, God!

*Macbeth exits, with Banquo and Flenace*

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Well! So far, so good. Assuming Duncan's out of the way, that just leaves Malcolm, his son, next in line—so he'll have to go, too. Shouldn't be too much trouble—he's only little. Still, I expect Macbeth'll be too soft to do it. He's got no ambition, he hasn't. No get up and go. If I left it up to him, he'd probably settle for a new allotment instead of being King of Scotland. Well, he'll have to change! I want them tiaras and ermine twin-sets! I want to be a Royal! I want me picture in *Woman's Owl*! And I'm not going to let a little bit of murderin' stand in my way!

*Norman enters as Malcolm, who is a twelve-year-old schoolboy. He wears a school blazer and cap over his kill, and talks in a breathless prep school voice, Terry Scott fashion*

**Norm/Malcolm** Hallo! I'm looking for my dad. Is my dad here? You seen my dad?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Ah. It's little Prince Malcolm, isn't it?

**Norm/Malcolm** S'right, I'm lookin' for my dad. He's supposed to be stayin' here. 'Ere, you Mrs Macbeth?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Yes, love, that's right. Do come and have a sit down.

*She pulls him over to the sofa. They sit*

**Norm/Malcolm** Want my dad! He owes me three weeks' pocket money, and I gotta pay off my marbles debts, else Fatty Smithson'll smash me up.

You gotta glass of water?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Of course, love. I'll get you one straight away. (*She goes to the kitchen, which is behind the sofa, and fills a glass from a large bottle of Domestos*) Here, drink it all up! You must be thirsty.

**Norm/Malcolm** No, I just want it to keep my tadpoles in. (*He takes "tadpoles" from his pocket and drops them in the glass*) Oh! Looks like they're dead! Wotta swindle! I gave three conkers for them, too. Where's my dad, then?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Oh, ah . . . he's asleep. Won't be able to see him till the morning. (*She starts to creep up behind him, hands outstretched, obviously intending to strangle him*)

**Norm/Malcolm** Oh cripes! That means no fag money today! What a rotten swizz!

*He turns round, just as Lady Macbeth's hands are about to close on his neck*

You haven't got a roll-up, have you?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** (whipping her hands behind her back) Aren't you a little bit young to smoke, dear? (She moves to the sideboard, and rolls up a stick of dynamite in a large cigarette paper, then dons the tin hat)

**Norm/Malcolm** Course not! I'm nearly twelve! Anyway, that's nothing. Binns Minor drinks three bottles of gin and Ribena a day, and he's only nine. Most of the third form are on crack. (He accepts the proffered "roll-up") Ta. Bit big, innit, for a roll-up?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Er... well, don't forget you're Royalty, dear. You wouldn't want an ordinary one like the common people smoke. (She holds out the flame of a cigarette lighter, shutting her eyes, and putting a finger in her ear) Light?

**Norm/Malcolm** No, ta. I think I'll save it and smoke it with Eddie Windsor in Two B after lights out.

He turns away to put the "roll-up" in his pocket. Lady Macbeth raises the tin hat to brain him with it. He turns round just in time

Cool! (He grabs the tin hat) Is that a real steel helmet? Can I wear it? (He puts it on) My dad won't let me have one. Are you sure he's asleep?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** I think so.

**Norm/Malcolm** Couldn't I wake him up?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** I doubt it.

**Norm/Malcolm** Oh, cheese! (He turns to the audience) I wish I was King instead of him.

Lady Macbeth produces a doll dressed as Malcolm, and a large hat pin

I will be, you know, when he's dead. Then I won't have to ask for pocket money any more.

She stabs the doll's leg. Malcolm grabs his leg

Ow!

Lady Macbeth smiles evilly

An' I can have Mars bars whenever I want.

She stabs the doll's bum. Malcolm grabs his bum

Ow!

Even broader smile

Coo, that's a point!

He turns to Lady Macbeth, who is just about to deliver the coup de grâce to the heart

You don't think he's died in his sleep, do you?

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** (whipping doll and pin behind her back) Of course not!

Ha ha. What a thing to say!

**Norm/Malcolm** Couldn't I just have a look?

Malcolm exits, followed at the double by the infuriated Lady Macbeth. There is a huge crash from off-stage

(Off) Did you see that? That great big battleaxe just missed me. It must have fallen off the wall. You should get that fixed.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** (off, containing hysteria) Yes... I'll get a man in in the morning.

Several loud pistol shots. A pause

**Norm/Malcolm** (off) Was that a motor bike back-firin'? Coo, look, there's holes in your plaster. You should get that fixed, too.

A howl of frustrated despair from Lady Macbeth

Norman enters as Macbeth

**Norm/Macbeth** Name police cars after 'em? Banguo cars? He's off his rocker! "Ere, Sarge, there's been a robbery down West Street. I've sent PC Hawkins in the Fleance." What is he talking about?

Elsie enters as Macduff. He has a large false beard, tweed jacket, deerstalker hat and pipe. He has a gruff, bluff and hearty voice

(Without enthusiasm) Oh, hallo Macduff.

**Elsie/Macduff** All hail, Macbeth! Is it true the King resideth here this night?

**Norm/Macbeth** Ay.

**Elsie/Macduff** And the noble Banguo, destroyer of Norway, general of the King's armies, well-beloved of his m—

**Norm/Macbeth** Yes, yes, he's here too.

**Elsie/Macduff** 'Tis said there is a prophecy that Banguo's line shall be invested with kingly puissance and power of—

**Norm/Macbeth** (exasperated) Yes! I had heard! What do you want?

**Elsie/Macduff** Is the King stirring, worthy Thane?

**Norm/Macbeth** Er, not yet.

He did command me to call timely on him.

I have almost slipped the hour.

I just want to take him his pools coupon, *Plotten*.  
And then I'll have a shower. *Scratch card*

Macduff exits

**Norm/Macbeth**

*no luck there, he'll never enjoy a win*  
Hal the only pools he'll get out there  
'll be when he wets his pants!  
Horace Batchelor couldn't help Duncan now—  
He's had his Treble Chapel!

A loud scream off. Macduff enters, wailing

*Duncan in.*

**Elsie/Macduff** The King of Scotland's dead! Someone's wrung his neck!

**Norm/Macbeth** (wildly overacted pretence of grief) What? Dead! Never! He can't be! God, this is awful! Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear! Oh, what a terrible thing to happen! Poor old Duncan! Oh, woe is me! What are things coming to? Duncan murdered! There's no law and order left! Bring back

the cat! Oh, God, oh God, oh God! . . . Who's going to be King now, then?

**Elsie/Macduff** But who can have done so foul a deed?

**Norm/Macbeth** Search me.

**Elsie (to the audience)** Now, I know what you're thinking. It's obvious to anybody who's done it. I mean, if William'd had Bergerac in his play, he'd have had that one solved before the adverts. Still, that's the way William wrote it, and you can't muck about with great works of literature, can you? But if you think it's a bit daft, I want you to know that it's not our fault.

**Elsie/Macduff** Approach then the chamber, and destroy your sight with a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak.

**Norm/Macbeth** Eh?

**Elsie/Macduff** Go and have a look at him.

**Norm/Macbeth** Oh.

*Macbeth exits*

**Elsie/Macduff**

I fear me Macbeth knows more than he says.

Metinks I smell a rat.

Duncan's foul murder cuts me to the heart—

What with me being loyal and that.

*Macduff exits*

*Norman enters as Malcolm*

**Norm/Malcolm** Cor! I was right! My dad has been done in! And he never gave me my pocket money. What a swizz! I think it was that Macbeth that done it. Yeah! And I bet he wants to do me in next. Well, just let him try, that's all! I'll zap him with my death-ray laser! *(He points defiantly, using his finger as a "gun", then looks at it doubtfully)* P'raps not. Maybe I'll just run away instead. To England. Yeah! *(He looks at his kilt)* I can wear proper trousers there, and I won't have to go back to smelly Gordon-stoun! All that canoeing and kingin' lessons. I hate it!

*Malcolm exits, after leaving a hastily scribbled note on the table*

*Elsie enters as Macduff, carrying Banquo. They sit on the sofa*

**Elsie/Macduff** Ay, Banquo, there has been bitter work done this night! Duncan foully slain, in circumstances most mysterious, and none do know who did the deed. Hast heard aught that may point us to the murderer? What's that thou sayest? *(Putting an ear to Banquo's mouth)* Yes, I had heard about your descendants being kings, but I don't see what—

*Norman enters as Macbeth, carrying a large knife*

**Norm/Macbeth** Well, you're right. He's dead. Pity, that. Haven't seen Malcolm anywhere, have you? I want to break his neck . . . break the terrible news to him. Hallo, what's this? *(He picks up the note from the table and reads)* "Dear All. Have gone to England. Yar boo sucks. Malcolm." Well. There we are, then. That's it, then.

**Elsie/Macduff** What's what then?

**Norm/Macbeth** There's your killer! Little Malcolm's done his dad in, nasty little devil, no doubt because he wants to be King—and now he's run away to England 'cos he can't live with his guilt.

**Norm (to the audience)** Well, yes, I know it's pretty feeble, everybody, but it's not my fault if William Shakespeare knows bugger-all about writing thrillers, is it? You know, I sometimes wonder how he ever got the job as World's Greatest Playwright. Frankly, I'm surprised he got as far as the interview.

**Norm/Macbeth** Well. It's obvious Malcolm's not fit to be King. So who is, then? Eh? What d'you think? *(It is clear who Macbeth thinks it should be)*

**Elsie/Macduff** In sooth, one of Duncan's trusty lieutenants, proven in battle, must now take the throne—

*Macbeth is nodding and smiling in agreement*

—the which signifies either Banquo—

*Macbeth grabs him by the throat and threatens him with the knife*

—or you. *(kneeling)* My Liege!

**Norm/Macbeth (realization of what this signifies slowly registering on his face; leaping in the air)** Made it! Yippeeeeee! I'm the King! Ha-haaa! I've done it, I've done it, I've done it! King! I'll be rich! I'll be famous! Lots of fancy clothes and women! Ooooooh. I can kill anybody I don't like! Power at last! I'm the King! I'm the King! *(Singing)* Here we go, here we go!

*Macbeth exits, dancing*

**Elsie/Macduff**

I'm not quite sure he's the man for the job.

I hope I did the right thing.

He doesn't seem quite mature enough

To make a really satisfactory King.

It may not be safe around here now—

I'd be better off in Fife.

I'll not hang around to see him crowned—

I'm off home to the wife.

*Macduff exits*

*Norman enters as Macbeth, now wearing the crown and royal robe*

**Norm/Macbeth** Well, then, now I'm the King, I think we ought to have a bit of a knees-up to celebrate, like. A proper do, with crates of brown ale and lots of potted meat sandwiches. I must get the missis on to it. Where is she? *(Calling)* Come on, everybody, we're having a banquet!

*No response*

Everybody? Macduff? I said WE'RE HAVING A BANQUET! e

**Norm/Banquo (who is still on the sofa, remember?)** Did you call? e

**Norm/Macbeth** Banquet, I said! Banquet! Not Banquo!

**Norm/Banquo** Well, you've done very well, haven't you? You're the King now.

**Norm/Macbeth** Ay. And you'd better not forget it.

**Norm/Banquo** Just like the Witch said.

**Norm/Macbeth** Just like the Witch said.

**Norm/Banquo** So if she was right about you, maybe she was right about me. When do you think my lot are going to start being kings, then?

**Norm/Macbeth** (*grabbing him by the throat in a fury*) Look, Banquo, why don't you take Fleance and go and play Blind Man's Buff on the cliff-top for a bit. I'm busy! (*He hurls Banquo off stage*) Banquo! Banquo? I'm sick to death of hearing about bloody Banquo! "What a nice chap Banquo is!" "Hasn't he done well!" "All Banquo's kids is going to be kings." Smug little black and white bastard! I hate 'im! He's not even bloody human! He's just a stuffed bloody panda! Banquo! I'll show bloody Banquo! (*He blows a police whistle which he is wearing round his neck*)

*Elsie enters as the Murderer. The Murderer wears a black mask and a black and red striped jumper. He talks in a very deep, very slow, very stupid, sub-Arthur Millard sort of voice*

**Elsie/Murderer** Yus, King?

**Norm/Macbeth** (*slowly and with heavy emphasis, as if to a small child*) Now, you know who Banquo is, don't you?

**Elsie/Murderer** Yus, King. He's the little fat one with the fur.

**Norm/Macbeth** That's right. Well, Banquo's been very naughty. He's said bad things about Kingy-wingy.

**Elsie/Murderer** Oh, bad Banquo.

**Norm/Macbeth** And Kingy-wingy is very cross with naughty Banquo, and Banquo's son, Fleance. He is very upset by what they've said about him.

**Elsie/Murderer** Oh, bad Fleance. Bad, bad Banquo.

**Norm/Macbeth** And Kingy wants bad Fleance and bad Banquo punished for all the bad things they've said. So that they won't be naughty again. Ever! Now, do you understand what you've got to do?

**Elsie/Murderer** Yus, King. I fix 'em good! Bad, bad boys.

*The Murderer exits shaking his head at the wickedness of the Banquo family*

**Norm/Macbeth**

I hope all this killing's going to work out right.

I hope I did the sensible thing.

They won't be able to arrest me, will they,

Now that I'm the King?

If they could, I'd be buggered and no mistake!

Trial'd be a sensation!

Killin' Duncan and Banquo and Fleance, too—

It'd be more than just probation!

*Elsie enters as Lady Macbeth*

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** How now, My Lord! Why do you keep alone, Of sorriest fancies your companions making? Using those thoughts which should indeed have died

With them they think on? Things without all remedy Should be without regard. What's done is done.

**Norm/Macbeth** Stop harpin' on, will you, woman! I'm perfectly all right!

Look, you'd best be getting in the kitchen—we're throwin' a party tonight.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Ooooooh, are we? Who's coming?

**Norm/Macbeth** Oh... everybody.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Well, I'd best get started, then. It's just typical of you not to tell me till the last minute. I suppose them Banquos'll be wantin' special food, an' all. What sort of stuff do they eat?

**Norm/Macbeth** Oh, I shouldn't worry about them. They'll not be coming.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Why not?

**Norm/Macbeth** (*shouting*) Never mind why not! They're not coming, that's all!

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** All right, no need to go on. Ooooooh! A party!

**Norm/Macbeth** That's right. A royal banquet.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** In honour of you and me bein' King and Queen. Isn't it excitin'? It's sort of like a second honeymoon. D'you remember on our honeymoon what you did that night under the pier at St Andrews?

**Norm/Macbeth** (*apprehensively*) Mmmm.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** I bet you couldn't do that again, could you? Naughty boy!

*She leads him out by the arm, coquettishly. Giggles off*

*Norman enters, carrying Banquo and Fleance. He sits them on the sofa, and "operates" them from concealment behind it*

**Norm/Banquo** Lovely day, Fleance.

**Norm/Fleance** Yes, Dad.

**Norm/Banquo** Mind you, it'll be rain tonight, I shouldn't wonder.

**Norm/Fleance** Yes, Dad.

**Norm/Banquo** Er... Fleance. Now that you're growing up, there's a few things I think I ought to tell you.

**Norm/Fleance** Yes, Dad?

**Norm/Banquo** A few facts... er... about... er... life.

**Norm/Fleance** Yes, Dad? **Norm/Banquo** Well, let me see. Well first of all, there's birds, Fleance, and then there's... er... bees...

**Norm/Fleance** Yes, Dad.

**Norm/Banquo** And... there's pandas.

**Norm/Fleance** Yes, Dad.

**Norm/Banquo** (*irritably*) Stop saying, "Yes, Dad," all the time, will you!

**Norm/Fleance** Yes, Dad.

*Banquo hits him. Fleance squeals*

**Norm/Banquo** And pandas have to have little pandas... like you, son... and how that's done is... er... I'm not going too fast for you, am I? **Norm/Fleance** No, Dad. But if you want to talk about screwing, I wish you'd hurry up.

Norm/Banquo What?

*Elsie enters as the Murderer*

Elsie/Murderer 'Ullio. You've been bad boys. You've been so bad I can hardly bear to think about how bad you've been. I'm going to have to kill you for being so bad.

Norm/Banquo Varlet! Cariff cur! What treachery means this? Who hath bribed thee to essay this deed of vileness? Whoreson slave, it shall be thy last deed upon this earth! For thou com'st against Banquo himself, thrice valiant warrior of the armies of Scotland! Stand thy ground, cur, and be slain!

Elsie/Murderer Get stuffed, Chi-Chi! *(He shoots him)*

Norm/Banquo Oh treachery! Fly, good Fience, fly, fly, fly!

*Norman throws Fience "flying" off stage, and exits*

Elsie/Murderer *(to the "dead" Banquo)* You shouldn't ought to have been so bad. *(He carries him to the door, and throws him out)*

*Norman enters as Macbeth*

Norm/Macbeth Well? Did you get him? Banquo? The big one? Did you?

Elsie/Murderer Yus, King. Did I do good?

Norm/Macbeth Yes, yes, good boy, good boy! Did you get the little one, too?

Elsie/Murderer Yes. Er... no. He got away. I couldn't catch him. You're not going to be cross with me, are you?

Norm/Macbeth Bollocks! Got away! But how! *(He narrows his eyes)* He didn't escape in a police car, did he?

Elsie/Murderer What?

Norm/Macbeth Oh, nothing.

Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect--

Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,

As broad and general as the casing air--

But now I am cabin'd, cribbed, confined, bound in

To saucy doubts and fears...

Norm Oh, I'm worn out with all this blank verse! *(He collapses on the sofa)* I think it must be time for the interval, isn't it, Elsie? I'm dying for a cup of tea. Doin' all this Shakespearin' fair makes me throat dry.

Elsie Shakespearin'? Scrap-dealin' you mean? I didn't know you had been.

Norm *(shouting)* Not scrap-dealin'! Not Arnold bloody Shakespear! How many times? William! William Shakespear! As writes plays! Arnold deals the bloody scrap, William writes the plays!

Elsie *(huffily)* Sorry I spoke, I'm sure.

Norm *(calming down with difficulty)* Anyway, we're having a bit of a break now, everybody. No doubt you'll be wantin' to ponder a bit on all these insights into the Human Condition that a play of this depth gives you. Course you will. It's very tirin' watching great drama. Sorry we haven't enough tea and biscuits for everybody, but I'm sure you can make your own arrangements. See you in about twenty minutes.

2 serve  
tea + biscuits

*Norman and Elsie exit, arguing*

CURTAIN

\* \* \*

*During the interval, Norman and Elsie re-set the stage for Act II, tidying up, setting the dining-table for the "banquet", stirring pans on the cooker, etc., ad-libbing with each other and any of the audience still remaining*

\* \* \*



**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** There's nobody here. Look!

**Norm/Macbeth** There is! There is! *(He looks)* Oh... there isn't.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** I think you're a little bit on edge, dear.

**Norm/Macbeth** Ay. It's kindin'. It's getting on me nerves. All this murderin' and everything—and then you can't even be sure they're going to stay dead when you've killed 'em! It's drivin' me up the wall. It were that bleedin' Witch as started it. I've a good mind to go round and see her tomorrow, give her a piece of my mind.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** But you don't know where she lives. Don't get yourself so worked up. *overstage*

**Norm/Macbeth** It'll be in Yellow Pages. I'll find her. Then there's Macduff. What's he up to? Not turnin' up for Royal banquet, leavin' trumped-up excuses. I don't like it. 'E's up to no good, the jumped-up little...

**Plotin'!** I bet that's what he's doin'! Conspirin'! But what? What? I tell you, it's starting to prey on me mind. *(He narrows his eyes)* You're even starting to look like bloody Macduff! Aaaagh!

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** Calm down, calm down! You'll get ulcers if you carry on like this. It's a nice cup of Horlicks and beddy-byes for you, my lad.

**Norm/Macbeth** Strange things I have in head that will to hand, which must be acted ere they may be scanned.

**Elsie/Lady Macbeth** You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

*Lady Macbeth exits*

**Norm/Macbeth**

Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self abuse  
Is the initiate fear that wants hard use.  
We are yet but young in deed.

*He makes to exit, pauses and turns in the doorway.*

**Norm** "Strange and self abuse!" Do they let schoolkids read this stuff?

Honestly, that William!

*Norm exits*

*Elsie enters as the Witch*

**Elsie/Witch** Ha haaa! Yes, it's me again, everybody, the flying sorceress!

*(Cackle)*

Macbeth's coming round in a minute or two

To have his fortune read.

He doesn't know what the 'ell to do

Since he cut off Duncan's head.

He can't see that he's buggered things up.

And he's going to come a cropper—

So I'll give him some cryptic prophecies

And mess his mind up proper! *(Cackle)*

**Elsie** Now there's supposed to be a Witches' song here, according to William. Typical William, of course, doesn't say what song it's supposed to be. Never mind, though, 'cos I've chosen one suitable. Here we go.

*She strikes a pose, then breaks into a tap-dance routine, while singing "That Old Black Magic". This is a full-scale show-stopper, and Elsie gives it the*

*works: pseudo-Shirley Bassey vocal trills, plenty of wiggling and grand gestures, etc. She makes up to a gentleman in the audience, sitting on his knee and kissing him. Big finish. Riotous applause. Elsie kissing her hands to the audience* **THWEN ROSEN + FAUCIEN ON TO STAGE.**

*Norman enters as Macbeth*

**Norm/Macbeth** How now, you secret, black and midnight hag!

**Elsie/Witch** Hallo, Macbeth. It's taken you long enough to get here. Bus break down, did it? *(Cackle)*

**Norm/Macbeth** Very amusin'. You would have to have an ex-directory hair. It's taken me all day tryin' to find this place in the Witchfinder A to Z.

Worn out, I am.

**Elsie/Witch** Well, anything I can do for you, now you're here? As if I didn't know! *(Cackle)*

**Norm/Macbeth** It's about them prophecies that you did—you know, about me bein' King and everything? Well, they seem to have worked out all right, and I want some more, OK?

**Elsie/Witch** Well, you've come to the right place. Grizelda Crone, clairvoy-ant extraordinaire! Palms read, future foreseen, questions answered—small, large, and—

**Norm/Macbeth** Don't say it!

**Elsie/Witch** —medium! *(Cackle, cackle, cackle)*

*Macbeth groans in pain at this appalling joke*

I presume you'll be wantin' to commune directly with the Great Spirits on the etheric plane, won't you? So that'll be twelve pounds seventy-five plus VAT, including any spells and potions. Now let's see, where's my *Reader's Digest Witch's Handy Book of Spells?* *(She gets it from the shelf)* Now, what exactly was it you wanted to know?

**Norm/Macbeth** *(airily)* Oh, you know, usual sort of stuff. Who to beware of, how to stay King forever and that. Derby winner'd be useful, too, if you could manage it.

**Elsie/Witch** Horses isn't my line, love. You want a veterinary witch for that. Now, let's see, it'll be under Prophecies, Royal, General Purposes... Ah! Here we are! I thought so. We'll be needing a potion. I'll just get the oven warmed up.

**Norm/Macbeth** Just a minute. Aren't you supposed to have a cauldron and a fire, and stuff?

**Elsie/Witch** Oh no, dear. Ever so messy, that sort of thing. Them cauldrons are a bugger to wash up. I'll do it in me Pyrex casserole. Now then. *(She gets out the casserole, and the ingredients for the potion, which are all in appropriately labelled packets and bottles)*

\* { Powdered batswing, a teaspoonful,  
An ounce of lizard paste,  
Some dehydrated loadstools,  
And viper's dung, to taste.

*She tastes it. Mmmm!*

**Elsie/Lady Macduff** Gone off to England, has he? Fancy that. Daft bugger, he's probably sucking up to that Prince Malcolm. What's the point of that, I ask you? It's Macbeth he should be buttering up. It's Macbeth who's King, after all. He'll not get promotion that way. He's probably only done it to get out of painting the loft. Said he was going to do it this weekend before my mother came to stay. Men! And here I am, a poor helpless woman left alone to fend for herself, with only her little son to look after her. And where is he? Why isn't he looking after his old mother in her time of need? Jimmy! Jimmy!

*She goes off, and comes straight back on with a life-size stuffed dummy, dressed as a schoolboy. She sits it in a chair*

Now then Jimmy, look lively! Straighten your tie, will you, you look a right mess! I don't know what's the matter with you. Have you been smoking that funny haggis again? Now shut up, will you, and listen! Your father's gone away to England, so you're the man of the house now; so, first thing I want that lawn mowed, then there's that shelf in the kitchen needs fixing—the garage needs a coat of paint as well—what? Stop interrupting, will you! *(She hits him)* Where was I? You've broken my train of thought, aggravating little devil! *(She hits him)* Honestly, I don't know what I've done wrong to deserve a son like you. Me and your dad have worked our fingers to the bone—well, we've worked the servants' fingers to the bone, anyway—to give you a nice castle to live in, and what do we get? And that's enough of your lip! Cheeky young devil! *(She hits him)* Now then, as temporary head of the household, it's time you started showing a bit of responsibility. *And sit up straight!* *(She sits him up and hits him)* And you haven't combed your hair, have you? *(She hits him)* Honestly, you're a disgrace, you are. To think that the noble name of Macduff has got to be carried on by you after your dear father passes on! It makes me weep, it really does! And shut up, will you! *(She hits him)* Honestly, I can't get a word in edgeways with all your backchat! Ungrateful little bugger! *(She knocks a teacup off the table)* Now look what you've made me do! That's coming out of your pocket money, my lad! *(She hits him)* Making me smash up the priceless Macduff family porcelain, you vandal! *(She knocks him out of the chair)* You nasty little brat! *(She smashes his head on the floor)* Take that! *(She kicks him)* And that! *(She kicks him, takes him by the leg and whips him round her head, smashes him to the floor, jumps up and down on him)* And just you wait till your father gets home!

*Norman enters as the Murderer*

**Norm/Murderer** 'Ujlo.

**Elsie/Lady Macduff** Who the hell are you? What'd you mean by barging in here without so much as a by-your-leave? Why didn't you use the tradesmen's entrance? Well?

**Norm/Murderer** Er... sorry.

**Elsie/Lady Macduff** Well, what do you want?

**Norm/Murderer** I come ter kill you.

**Elsie/Lady Macduff** *(screaming)* Aaaagh! Oh, what's to become of us? Jimmy! Do something! See him off! Defend your poor old mother that loves you! Don't lie there like a dummy! *(To the Murderer)* Whatever do you want to do such a terrible thing to us for?

**Norm/Murderer** It's 'cos you bin bad. *(He produces a gun)*  
**Elsie/Lady Macduff** *(screaming)* Aaaaagh! But you can't! You can't! You can't, just shoot a poor defenceless mother and her dotting son like that, in cold blood! You can't!

**Norm/Murderer** *(puzzled)* Oh....

*Pause, then he empties the gun at them. Lady Macduff keels over, screaming, and "dies". The Murderer looks down at them, then up, knowingly, at the audience*

I knew she was wrong about that!

*The Murderer exits*

*Elsie gets to her feet*

**Elsie** Now, don't get excited everybody! You see, I'm not really dead. It's still me, Elsie Grimethorpe! I just thought I'd remind you that it's only a play, being as how it's getting so violent. I bet you were getting carried away, weren't you? It's very dramatic, isn't it? Course it is! But just remember it's only me and Norman, 'cos we wouldn't like anybody that's of a nervous disposition havin' a Cadillac arrest or anything, would we, Norman?

**Norm** *(off)* What?

**Elsie** I'm just sayin' about how we don't want anyone havin' a heart attack, what with the vividly re-created scenes of violence and brutality what we are presentin'.

**Norm** *(off)* Oh ay.

**Elsie** I'm very sorry about the violence and brutality, by the way, everybody, but I'm afraid it's that sort of play—and we all know who to blame for that, don't we? Yes! Well, you have been warned. Next scene: England, at the court of King Edward.

*Elsie exits with the dummy*

*Norman enters as Malcolm. He is wearing short trousers*

**Norm/Malcolm** Cor! It's great wearin' proper trousers! They got pockets in what you can put things in. And you can put your hands in your pockets, too. Mind you, soon as you do, all them smelly courtiers start tellin' you to take your hands out of your pockets in front of the King! Honest, it's nearly as bad as school, sometimes, is court! I keep tellin' 'em I'm a king too, or at least I would be if it wasn't for smelly horrible Macbeth, but they never take any notice, rotten pigs! Not that their measly old King Edward's anything to write home about. He's bats as a coot, he is! I tell you what—I smashed a window in the palace toilets this morning, playing Herward the Wake, and one of them courtiers was going to smash me up for it, so I said, "I never done it!" and King Edward said, "That's right, he never, 'cos I done it!" And then he said he wrote "The Venerable Bede is a

boring old fart" on the palace wall—and he never, 'cos I done it! And then he said he done the Great Train Robbery, and sunk the *Titanic*, and all sorts of other stuff as well. And all them poncy courtiers just smiled and said, "Yes, Sire." Seems like he's always doing it. Confesses to everything. I'm surprised he ever gets any kingin' done at all. He's just all the time confessin'! Catch me doing that when I'm the King!

*Elsie enters as Macduff*

**Elsie/Macduff** My Liege!

**Norm/Malcolm** Cool! It's Macduff! I thought you was in Scotland, courtin' at Macbeth's. What you doin' here?

**Elsie/Macduff** My Liege, I am come to beg you to return to Scotland. Your country is in sore need of you.

**Norm/Malcolm** What? Go back? And have to go to that rotten smelly school again? And get bashed up by big horrible Macbeth, as like as not. Not likely! I like it here.

**Elsie/Macduff** But, Sire, you are the rightful heir to the throne. Scotland groans beneath the tyrannical heel of Macbeth. The whole economy's going to rack and ruin because of his mad schemes! He's got some sort of bee in his bonnet about trees—he had the Forestry Commission executed and put out a reward for every tree anyone cut down. There are posters up all over the kingdom saying, "Use More Wood, especially Birnam Wood!" What can it mean? He's even trying to force people to wear wooden kilts! He's also keeping a twenty-four-hour watch on maternity hospitals, to make sure that only women have babies! Why? It's bankrupting the treasury! He's had to devalue the groat! Sire, you must return, if only out of concern for your subjects.

**Norm/Malcolm** I knew school would come into it somewhere! Well, I don't want any rotten subjects! I hate subjects! I've decided to not ever do any subjects ever again, so there!

**Elsie/Macduff** Sire, you misunderstand. You must return to Scotland to take your rightful place as King.

**Norm/Malcolm** King?

**Elsie/Macduff** King.

**Norm/Malcolm** An' rule, an' make laws and that?

**Elsie/Macduff** Of course.

**Norm/Malcolm** Cor! Great! I'll make Scotland a really smashing country. I will! I'll close all the schools, and make parents illegal. Yeah! And cover the whole country with Scalextric! And nobody over fourteen's going to have the vote!

**Elsie/Macduff** Sire, no-one has a vote anyway. Scotland is a monarchy.

**Norm/Malcolm** Well, nobody's going to have the vote, then, *specifically* anybody over fourteen! And I'll have an Olympic BMX team, and make Smarties free, and abolish soppy girls! Well... except for playing Doctors and Nurses with. Fantastic! I can hardly wait!

**Elsie/Macduff** (*aside*) I wonder if I'm doing the right thing.

**Norm/Malcolm** 'Ere, but what about Macbeth, though? What we going to do about him?

**Elsie/Macduff** I thought perhaps King Edward might help you out. Perhaps you could have a quiet word with him, you know, King to King.

**Norm/Malcolm** Yeah. Good idea!

*He runs off, calling, "King Edward! Ted! Teddy!"*

**Elsie/Macduff**

The noble Malcolm, Prince of Scots  
Shall save our country now  
\*From Macbeth's dark and evil plots,  
Though I really don't see how.

*Norm enters as the Messenger*

**Norm/Messenger** You Mr. Macduff?

**Elsie/Macduff** That's right.

**Norm/Messenger** I gotta message for you from Scotland.

**Elsie/Macduff** It's not one of those singing telegrams, is it?

**Norm/Messenger** Course not.

**Elsie/Macduff** Does it rhyme?

**Norm/Messenger** No.

**Elsie/Macduff** Thank God for that! What does it say?

**Norm/Messenger** It's from Macbeth. It says, "Have murdered your wife—"

**Elsie/Macduff** I knew he couldn't be all bad.

**Norm/Messenger** —and family. Also dug up your allotment and turned your castle into bigun Highland holiday flatlets. Hoping this finds you as it

leaves me, yours Macbeth (King). PS. Ha ha!"

**Elsie/Macduff** The swine! He's gone too far this time! My prize shallots, gone! I'll make him pay for this! (*He goes to the door and calls*) Malcolm!

Sire!

*Pause. He calls again, more emphatically. He looks pointedly at Norman. The penny drops*

*Norman looks aghast and rushes off, tearing off his Messenger costume. He re-enters immediately, scrambling into his Malcolm costume*

**Norm/Malcolm** ... And maybe we could have marbles instead of money.

And nationalize jelly babies. Cor! I got lots of ideas!

**Elsie/Macduff** Well? Did you parley with the King, my Liege?

**Norm/Malcolm** What? Oh, yeah.

**Elsie/Macduff** And?

**Norm/Malcolm** Well, after he'd confessed to murderin' Christ and sinkin' Atlantis, and one or two other things, he said he'd be glad to lend me a few thousand soldiers to go and smash up Macbeth. He said it was part of his community policing policy, or something...

**Elsie/Macduff** Onwards, then! And death to Macbeth!

**Norm/Malcolm** Yeah! We'll smash him to bits with supersonic planes and tanks and atomic warheads and Cruise missiles and laser beams—

**Elsie/Macduff** Hardly likely, Sire; this is only the eleventh century. We've barely invented the bow and arrow yet.

*Macduff exits*

**Norm/Malcolm** (*crestfallen*) Oh. (*Then, perking up, he sings*) Da dah da diddley dah da daaah! (*To the tune of the "Robin Hood" theme of the 1960s. He exits, pretending he's shooting a bow and arrow, and saying loudly*) Twangge! Twangge!