

Macbeth rode ahead of the King's party, and arrived at Glamis just after sunrise. When his wife greeted him he noticed a hard, determined look in her eyes. "The King sleeps here tonight," he said. "Is his room ready?"

"All is ready...for Duncan's last night on Earth!" said Lady Macbeth.

"What do you mean?" Macbeth asked.

Lady Macbeth

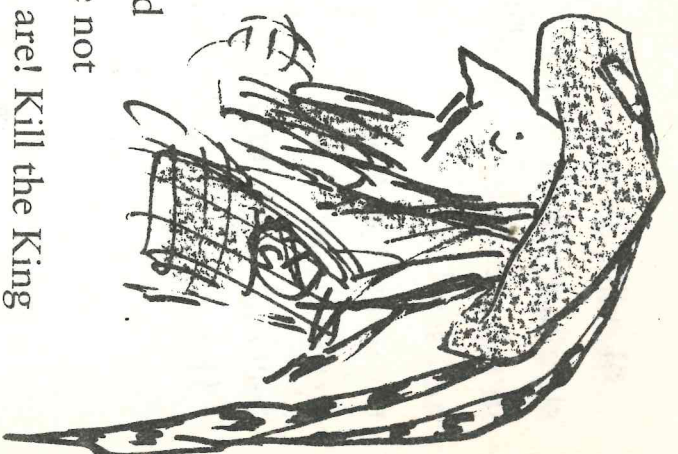
moved closer, and spoke in a low voice. "I guessed the thoughts that lay behind your letter," she said.

"Duncan is old and

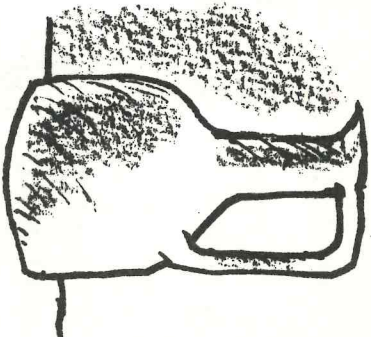
weak. His sons are not

fit to rule, but you are! Kill the King while he sleeps, and let Malcolm and Donalbain bear the blame!"

Macbeth was astonished – first the witches, and now his wife had seen his innermost thoughts. Some strange force seemed to have taken control of his life, and he fought against it. "I will never commit murder and treason!" he declared.



"I will put a sleeping-potion in a jug of wine and send it to the guards at the King's door," Lady Macbeth said quickly.

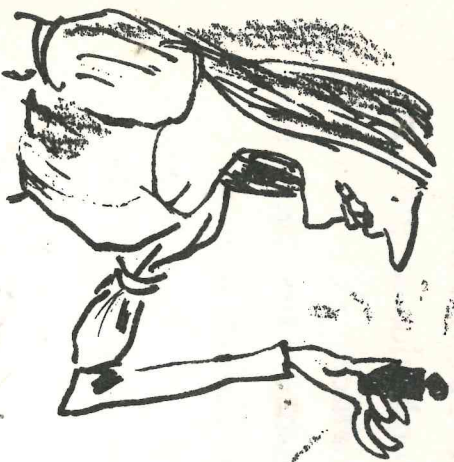


"They will sleep like babes. It will be easy for you to slip into Duncan's room."

"No! I cannot!"

Macbeth groaned.

Lady Macbeth's face twisted into a sneer. "This is your real chance to be King," she said. "Are you too cowardly to take it?"



"I am no coward!" snapped Macbeth. "Then prove it!" Lady Macbeth hissed. "Kill the old man and take the throne!"



Once more, the strange force moved through Macbeth, flowing into him from his wife until he was unable to resist. 'All hail, Macbeth, who shall be King!' he thought, and he could almost feel the crown upon his head.

* * *