**Macbeth - *Notes on Act 3, scenes 1 and 2***

**Scene 1**

* (2-3) Banquo suspects that Macbeth acted “...most foully” He fears to speak because 1) Macbeth’s growing power and 2) The witches prophecies about Banquo may yet come true.
* (20) “For ever knit”: *dual meaning*. Banquo is forever tied (or “knit”) to Macbeth because he is now Macbeth’s subject, but also because they both shared the strange encounter with the witches.
* (33-36) Macbeth claims Malcolm and Donalbain are hiding and spreading rumours.
* (52-75) Macbeth feels threatened by Banquo because he thinks Banquo is the better person, but also because Banquo’s future, as told by the witches, clashes with his own.
* Macbeth convinces the murderers that Banquo is their enemy, and promises to look upon them with favour if they kill him. He also insults their manhood and tries to blame Banquo for their miserable lives.

**Scene 2**

* (6-9) Lady Macbeth expresses her displeasure. She feels uneasy and unhappy, but keeps it to herself.
* Macbeth does not share his feelings with his wife. *This signals a shift in their relationship: they don’t seem as close as they once were.*
* In an attempt to help him get over his bad mood, she tells him, “What’s done is done.” *This is ironic, since she doesn’t take her own advice.*
* (15) The “snake” is a metaphor for all that threatens to expose them, things that keep them from enjoying their new position. Macbeth goes on to say that he would rather see the whole universe (chain of being) unravel than be unsuccessful. *His greed and ambition seem endless.*
* (20) Macbeth is having trouble sleeping. *This was foreshadowed earlier: “Macbeth shall sleep no more”.*
* (21-24) He thinks it would be better to be dead like Duncan than suffer.
* (30) Another example of the **reversal** theme again as Lady Macbeth says “...sleek o’er your rugged looks”. She wants her husband to appear opposite to what he really feels,
* (32-33) She wants him to praise Banquo at the upcoming feast. *This is all part of hiding the truth.* His wife, though, is not yet aware of all her husband has planned - a sign that they are growing apart. ***More irony - the reversal theme again.***
* (44-48) Talk of supernatural: Creates a supernatural atmosphere.
* (50) Macbeth *patronizes* his wife, as if she is inferior. Their roles are reversing. She is no longer the dominant one. This is also further evidence of mistrust.
* (51) Another appeal to darkness/night, which represents evil and hell.
* (60) “Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill”: Macbeth admits that evil must follow evil if he is to grow stronger. His ambition continues to grow.