***Macbeth***

***Notes on Act 4, scene 3***

1. Lines 26-27: “Though all things foul...still look so”. All things that are evil want to appear nice, but only real goodness looks like goodness - *reversal theme!* (“foul” refers back to Act 1, scene one).
2. Malcolm understands what is going on. **Line 25** refers to “The brightest angel”, who still fell in the end - a biblical reference. The brightest angel was Satan, who was once God’s favorite, but betrayed God and was doomed to rule Hell. Macbeth was a favorite of Duncan, but like the devil, betrayed his King. Now, Macbeth rules Scotland, which has become a sort of hell on Earth. In saying this, Malcolm compares Macbeth to the Devil.
3. Macduff says that “the tyranny” (36-42) of Macbeth’s rule will continue unless goodness interferes. He wants Malcolm to take back the throne and overthrow Macbeth.
4. Malcolm fears Macduff may be working for Macbeth, and has been sent to kill him. Macduff: “I would not be the villain” you believe me to be. He goes on to emphasize his honesty.
5. Malcolm decides to test Macduff’s loyalty and trustworthiness. He claims that he will be a worse king than even Macbeth, and that his own evil and lust will be far worse. He wants to see if Macduff really wants what is best for Scotland. When he is satisfied, he reveals the truth and takes back all the bad things he said. He outlines his plan for overthrowing Macbeth.
6. Malcolm is shown to be a very wise and virtuous character. He understands that evil has been masquerading as good, and so puts Macduff to the test. When the truth is revealed, we see that Malcolm is indeed a worthy king who wants only the best for his people.
7. (155-177): The entrance of the doctor starts a discussion about the English King, Edward. He is an important ***character foil*** for Macbeth. His good points help emphasize Macbeth’s bad points:

*Edward’s touch gives life to his people; Macbeth’s touch brings death*

*Edward prays a lot; Macbeth can’t even say “amen”*



*Edward has a “heavenly gift”, and can “solicit heaven” in telling the future.*

*Macbeth gets his future predictions from hell (the witches)*

*It is said that Edward’s offspring will inherit all his special gifts. Macbeth will not pass on anything, since he will not father a line of Kings.*

*Edward’s throne is covered in “blessings”, while Macbeth’s seems cursed. Remember, A true king is chosen and favored by God. This seems to be the case with Edward, while the opposite is true for Macbeth. Shakespeare emphasizes here what a king* ***should*** *be like.*

1. Ross arrives with news of the murders. Macduff’s shock soon gives way to anger, and all resolve to get revenge and free Scotland.
2. (279) Malcolm claims that even the darkest of nights must eventually give way to the dawn. He uses this imagery to refer to Macbeth’s rule as a time of darkness. The liberation of Scotland will represent the dawn (light) that banishes evil.