

INTRODUCTION TO THE STORY

Scotland is under attack by Scottish rebels supported by Ireland and an invading force from Norway.

Two Scottish generals, Macbeth and Banquo, have successfully defeated the attackers, and after the battle are met by three witches on a desolate moor. They claim to be able to predict the future and tell Macbeth that King Duncan of Scotland is going to reward him by giving him the title of Thane (a rank of Scottish nobility) of Cawdor. After that they predict he will become King of Scotland himself, and that Banquo's sons will also become Kings of Scotland.

The men don't believe these old hags until two messengers from the king arrive and tell Macbeth he is to be named Thane of Cawdor. But when they visit the king, he announces that his son, Malcolm, is next in line to the throne.

So how is Macbeth to become king?