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# Ten Women's Monologues from Shakespeare

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Monologues from Shakespeare's  
most famous plays  
by Michael Wilson



Meriwether Publishing Ltd.

**Contemporary Drama Service**

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# Ten Women's Monologues from Shakespeare

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**Macbeth**  
**Act V, Scene I**  
**Lady Macbeth**

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This famous scene reflects Lady Macbeth's guilt, shame, fear, and, at this point, her loss of reason. Lady Macbeth is a complex woman whose major fault lies in her quest for power: She desperately longs to be the Queen of Scotland.

Earlier in the play, she convinces her husband Macbeth to kill King Duncan, who is asleep in a chamber in Macbeth's castle. Lady Macbeth drugs King Duncan's guards, allowing Macbeth to kill Duncan while he is asleep. Lady Macbeth claims that she would kill Duncan herself, but he reminds her of her own father. After the deed is done, she tells her husband that a little water will not only wash away the blood (the evidence), but will wash away their guilt as well.

When news of Duncan's death reaches the others, Lady Macbeth faints and Macbeth kills the two drugged guards in a fit of rage. These actions clear both of any suspicion of Duncan's murder.

Throughout the play Macbeth is plagued by guilt. Lady Macbeth constantly supports his actions and tries to keep him strong. However, at the end of the play, Lady Macbeth's plan to obtain the throne is unraveling, and her guilt has driven her to near insanity.

At this point, Lady Macbeth is sleepwalking, and she is clearly insane. Her Doctor and a Gentlewoman are in the room when Lady Macbeth enters. Remember, she is *sleepwalking*, and she confesses that she cannot wipe away the blood on her hands, proving that her guilt has overcome her.

1 **LADY MACBETH:** (*LADY MACBETH enters slowly up right, as*  
2 *in a trance, with a candle in her hand. After she has taken*  
3 *a few steps, she stops and looks at her other hand. She speaks*  
4 *with horror.*)  
5 **Yet here's a spot.**  
6 **Out, damned spot! out, I say! —**  
7 **One; two: why, then 'tis time to do't: —** (*Frightened*) **Hell**  
8 **is murky! —** (*To her husband, who's not there; firmly.*) **Fie,**  
9 **my lord, fie! a soldier, and**  
10 **afear'd? What need we fear who knows it,**  
11 **when none can call our power to account? —**  
12 (*Pause*) **Yet who would have thought the old man to**  
13 **have had so much blood in him?**  
14 (*Dazed, confused*) **The Thane of Fife had a wife;**  
15 **where is she now? —** (*Wiping her hands, desperately*)  
16 **What, will these hands**  
17 **ne'er be clean? —** (*To husband, who's not there*) **No more**  
18 **o' that, my lord, no**  
19 **more o' that: you mar all with this starting.**  
20 **Here's the smell of the blood still:**  
21 **all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten**  
22 **this little hand. Oh, oh, oh!**  
23 (*Firmly*) **— I tell you yet**  
24 **again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out**  
25 **on's grave.**  
26 **To bed, to bed; (As if she hears something) there's**  
27 **knocking**  
28 **at the gate: come, come, come, come, give**  
29 **me your hand: what's done cannot be undone:**  
30 **to bed, to bed, to bed!** (*She exits, repeating her last line.*)  
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