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Ten Women's Monologues from Shakespeare

Monologues from Shakespeare's
most famous plays
by Michael Wilson



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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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1 **Merry Wives of Windsor**

2 **Act II, Scene I**

3 **Mrs. Page**

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5

6 This monologue is rather straightforward and a lot of fun to play.
7 It involves Sir John Falstaff, one of Shakespeare's most memorable
8 characters. Falstaff is a comical character, more like a buffoon, yet
9 he doesn't quite see himself as others do. He thinks he is
10 handsome, charming, and irresistible. In truth, he is fat, arrogant,
11 conceited, and very obnoxious. Regardless, he really thinks that he
12 is a lady's man and that no woman can resist him.

13

14 In a previous scene, Falstaff confesses that he is attracted to two
15 women in the town of Windsor, Mrs. Page and Mrs. Ford. He tries
16 to woo them both — despite the fact that both are married. He
17 has written identical letters to each woman, trying to convince
18 each that they should turn their love towards him.

19

20 Mrs. Page has just received Sir John's letter, and she is reading it
21 here for the first time.

22

23 **MRS. PAGE: What! have I 'scaped love-letters**
24 **in the holiday time of my beauty, and am I now**
25 **a subject for them? Let me see: (*Reads.*)**

26

27 **Ask me no reason why I love you; for though love**
28 **use reason for his precisian, he admits him not for**
29 **his counsellor. You are not young; no more am I:**
30 **go to then, there's sympathy: you are merry; so am**
31 **I. Ha! ha! then there's more sympathy; you love**
32 **sack, and so do I. Would you desire better sympathy?**
33 **Let it suffice thee, Mistress Page, at the**
34 **least, if the love of a soldier can suffice, that I love**
35 **thee. I will not say, pity me: 'tis not a soldier-like**

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