

Meeting the Witches

Act 1, Scene 3:

11 MACBETH: So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

22 BANQUO: How far is 't called to Forres? What are these,
30 So withered, and so wild in their attire,
39 That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' Earth
51 And yet we are on 't? - Live you? Or are you aught
59 That man may question? You seem to understand
60 me
68 By each at once her choppy finger laying
76 Upon her skinny lips. You should be women,
84 And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
88 That you are so.



96 MACBETH: Speak if you can. What are you?

Quick Questions



1. **So foul and fair a day I have not seen.**

What does Macbeth mean when he says this?



2. Shakespeare uses words like 'withered' and

'wild' to describe the characters Banquo is looking at. What impression does this give the reader?



3. Can you think of an alternative way of saying 'forbid'?



4. Why does Banquo think that the characters he has met are not women?



Answers

1. **So foul and fair a day I have not seen.**

What does Macbeth mean when he says this?

Accept any reasonable answers that include the contrast between 'foul' and 'fair', such as: I think Macbeth's statement means he has never experienced such a bad yet also good day before.

2. Shakespeare uses words like 'withered' and 'wild' to describe the characters Banquo is looking at. What impression does this give the reader?

Using the words 'withered' and 'wild' gives the reader the impression that the characters look scruffy, unkempt and old.

3. Can you think of an alternative way of saying 'forbid'?

Accept any reasonable answers that mean the same as 'forbid', such as: do not allow

4. Why does Banquo think that the characters he has met are not women?

The characters are described as having beards. This makes Banquo think that they are not women.

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