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Foundations of the Artist

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The Scottish Play

Have you ever been screamed at by a group of theatre kids, dressed as dead ancestors, Morticia and Gomez Addams, and forced to step outside, say MacBeth three times as you spit on the ground and spin in a circle? I have, my freshman year to be exact, and then I was locked out, in the Massachusetts winter may I add. Was it necessary? Did I need to be banished to the unpressurewashed concrete sidewalk to spit on it? Did I need to shiver and pound aimlessly on the door hoping someone would come and save me? Was any of this needed in order for our mediocre, livestreamed production of the Addams family to go well?

Perhaps it was, because even with the post Macbeth ritual, the platform me and my best friend were dancing on, broke beneath us mid final dress rehearsal. If I didn't say it, could it possibly be that the stage floor itself would have fallen out beneath our skinny, meatless freshman bodies? Well, it sure as hell wouldn't have been the first time someone died because of Macbeth. Well, after being locked out in the cold, I made it my own personal mission to find out why?

If you think a lot of people died in the play itself, then you will be appalled to find out how many innocents were killed in riots over Macbeth, actors who died before performances, and even Lawrence Olivier, who was nearly killed by a falling stage weight mid-performance. Perhaps the stigma behind this controversial name is a curse? It would make sense, with Wyrd sisters, who we more commonly reference as their much lamer stage name, the three witches.

Having witches in your play about society and the downfall of a king, may not have been a smart move, especially when not long before Shakespeare's birth, the hanging of witches in the United Kingdom begun, and continued over one hundred years after his death. Perhaps Willy Shakes wasn't all that smart after all, growing up in a society where witches were killed and the idea of anything but the church's word was crucified. Or, maybe it was a pretty sick publicity stunt. Or, perhaps, he was just too busy fucking around (literally, look it up the man was a whore and a freak, and Anne Hathaway was totally his beard) to care.