**Classical and Biblical Allusions in *Macbeth***



**A1-S2: Expect they meant to bathe in reeking wounds / Or memorize another Golgotha, / I cannot tell** (39-41)

Golgotha in Jerusalem was the site of Christ’s crucifixion; a memorable scene of bloodshed and death.

**A1-S2: Till that Bellona’s bridegroom, lapp’d in proof, / Confronted him with self-comparisons** (54-55)

Bellona is the Roman goddess of war; Macbeth fights so valiantly that he is worthy to be her husband.

**A2-S1: Witchcraft celebrates / Pale Hecate’s off’rings** (51-52)

Hecate is the Greek goddess of witchcraft; Macbeth embraces the dark power of the night.

**A2-S1: With Tarquin’s ravishing strides, towards his design / Moves like a ghost** (55-56)

Tarquin raped Lucretia, the wife of a Roman consul, during the night; Shakespeare links Murder with the ‘stealthy’ rape.

**A2-S2: Will all great Neptune’s ocean wash this blood / Clean from my hand?** (63-64)

Neptune is the Roman god of the sea; Macbeth wonders if all the water in the ocean will be enough to wash the blood away.

**A2-S3: Approach the chamber and destroy your sight / With a new Gorgon** (68-69)

In Greek mythology, the Gorgon Medusa turned those who looked at her into stone; the Duncan’s body is an equally horrific sight.

**A3-S1: My genius is rebuk’d, as it is said / Mark Antony’s was by Caesar** (57-58)

Mark Antony was told that he would not defeat Caesar; Macbeth sees himself as Mark Antony and Banquo as Caesar.

**A4-S3: Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell** (22)

Lucifer, the ‘brightest’ angel, rebelled against God; Macbeth was a brave and noble (‘bright’) warrior, but rebelled against Duncan.

**A5-S8: Why should I play the Roman fool and die / On my own sword?** (1-2)

Roman soldiers were encouraged to commit suicide rather than surrender; Macbeth vows to continue fighting.

**A5-S8: Turn, hell-hound, turn** (1)

In Greek mythology, a three-headed dog called Cerberus guards the entrance to Hades; Macduff calls Macbeth a monster.