

= Fleance =

Fleance (or Fléance) / ?fle??ns / is a figure in legendary Scottish history . He was depicted by 16th @-@ century historians as the son of Lord Banquo , Thane of Lochaber , and the ancestor of the kings of the House of Stuart . Fleance is best known as a character in William Shakespeare 's play Macbeth , in which the Three Witches prophesise that Banquo 's descendants shall be kings . Some screen adaptations of the story expand on Fleance 's role by showing his return to the kingdom after Macbeth 's death .

Shakespeare 's play is adapted from Holinshed 's Chronicles , a history of the British Isles written during the late sixteenth century . In Holinshed , Fleance escapes Macbeth and flees to Wales , where he fathers a son who later becomes the first hereditary steward to the King of Scotland .

In real life , ' Steward ' eventually became the name ' Stewart ' (later changed to French ' Stuart ') , and Walter Stewart married Princess Marjorie , daughter of Robert the Bruce . Their son , Robert II , began the Stewart / Stuart line of kings in Scotland . James VI and I , son of Mary , Queen of Scots , was the ninth Stewart / Stuart monarch (eighth king) of Scotland and the first of the six Stuart monarchs of England and Ireland .

James VI & I was the reigning monarch when William Shakespeare is believed to have written and first produced Macbeth , which may have been in the new king 's honour .

= = History = =

Fleance and his father Banquo are both fictional characters presented as historical fact by Hector Boece , whose Scotorum Historiae (1526 ? 27) was a source for Raphael Holinshed 's Chronicles , a history of the British Isles popular in Shakespeare 's time . In the Chronicles , Fleance ? in fear of Macbeth ? flees to Wales and marries Nesta verch Gruffydd , daughter of Gruffydd ap Llywelyn , the last native Prince of Wales . They have a son named Walter who makes his way back to Scotland and is appointed Royal Steward . According to legend , he fathered the Stuart monarchs of England and Scotland .

The Stuarts used their connection with Fleance and his marriage to the Welsh princess to claim a genealogical link with the legendary King Arthur . This , they hoped , would strengthen the legitimacy of their throne . In 1722 , however , Richard Hay , a Scottish historian , presented strong evidence that not only was James not a descendant of Fleance , but also that both Fleance and Banquo never even existed . Most modern scholars now agree that Fleance is not a real historical figure .

= = In Macbeth = =

Fleance appears in Shakespeare 's Macbeth . However , only his childhood is portrayed ; the rest of his story , as it is described in Holinshed 's Chronicles , does not appear in Shakespeare 's play . Scholars suggest that Shakespeare does not elaborate on Fleance 's life after his escape from Scotland in order to avoid unnecessary distraction from the story of Macbeth himself .

In Act 1 , Macbeth and Banquo meet the Three Witches who foretell that Macbeth will be king and that Banquo " shalt get kings , though thou be none " . Fleance also briefly appears in the first scene of Act 2 , when his father tells him of " cursed thoughts that nature / Gives way to in repose ! " . Macbeth , aware of the threat Banquo and his son pose to his new throne , plans to have them murdered . Before Banquo goes traveling , Macbeth asks " Goes Fleance with you ? " Macbeth sends three men to follow and kill them both , saying " Fleance [' s] absence is no less material to me / Than is his father 's . " Macbeth holds a banquet that night and reveals to his wife his fears of what might happen unless Fleance and Banquo are both killed . Banquo and Fleance are ambushed and while Banquo holds the assailants off he cries " Fly , good Fleance , fly , fly , fly ! / Thou mayst revenge . " When the murderers return to Macbeth and report their failure to kill Fleance , he says , " Then comes my fit again : I had else been perfect , / Whole as the marble , founded as the rock , / As broad and general as the casing air : / But now I am cabin 'd , cribb 'd , confined , bound in / To

saucy doubts and fears . " Macbeth later meets the Three Witches again and is shown a vision of a long line of kings descended from Banquo .

= = = Analysis = = =

In the first scene of Act 2 , Fleance meets his father , who asks him to take his sword and tells him he is reluctant to go to bed due to the " cursed thoughts that nature / gives way to in repose ! " On Macbeth 's approach , however , Banquo demands the sword be returned to him quickly . Scholars have interpreted this to mean that Banquo has been dreaming of murdering the king . Doing so would make the throne more available for Fleance , and would fulfill the Three Witches ' prophecy that his sons would become kings . Since Banquo 's good nature is revolted by these thoughts , he gives his sword and dagger to Fleance to be sure he does not act on them . Still , he is so nervous at Macbeth 's approach that he demands their return . Other scholars have responded that Banquo 's dreams have nothing to do with him killing the king , but that they have revealed to him Macbeth 's bloody nature . They argue that Banquo is merely setting aside his sword for the night , but when Macbeth approaches , Banquo , having had these dark dreams about Macbeth , takes back his sword as a precaution . In any case , this scene adds to the dark , uncertain , unsettling tone of the play . Fleance and his father are not even certain of what time it is throughout , as Fleance says when asked at the beginning of the scene " The moon is down ; I have not heard the clock . "

The two scenes in which murderers attack Banquo and Fleance , Lady Macduff and Macduff 's son , have been compared to Herod 's attempt to murder Christ and save the throne for himself by killing all new @-@ born children in Bethlehem . The conversation between Fleance and Banquo in their own murder scene is especially dark . Banquo 's first line from within " Give us a light there , ho ! " communicates the nighttime setting . The stage direction " Enter BANQUO , and FLEANCE , with a torch " , seems to foreshadow the fact that Fleance is a light for Scotland in the midst of the play 's black deeds .

When Macbeth returns to the witches later in the play , they show him an apparition of the murdered Banquo , along with eight kings of his family , descending through Fleance . King James , on the throne when Macbeth was written , was the ninth Stuart king . This scene thus suggests strong support for James ' right to the throne by lineage , and for audiences of Shakespeare 's day , was a tangible fulfillment of the witches ' prophecy . The apparition is also deeply unsettling to Macbeth , who not only wants the throne for himself , but also desires to father a line of kings .

Theater expert Marvin Rosenberg theorizes that Macbeth has a son , and interprets the play as commenting on the rivalries between pairs of father and son : Banquo and Fleance , Macduff and his son , Macbeth and his . He argues that the tension that exists between Fleance and Macbeth is made stronger if Macbeth has a child : his motive is not just selfish striving , but also fatherly ambition for his own son . But this interpretation is flawed because in IV : iii , as soon as Macduff hears that Macbeth has murdered his whole family , he says : " He has no children . " Some productions of Macbeth imply that the Macbeths have lost a child , or show this tenderness by having the title character attempt to pat Fleance on the head , when Fleance withdraws to his father 's side .

= = = Theatre and screen versions = = =

Theatre and screen versions of Macbeth have sometimes elaborated on Fleance 's role .

In Orson Welles 's film version of Macbeth (1948) , Fleance is briefly seen again at the very end of the movie . He does not speak in this scene , but he has returned to Scotland with the army of Malcolm and Macduff , and is shown along with those hailing Malcolm as the new king after the killing of Macbeth .

The BBC Shakespeare version of Macbeth shows Fleance in the final scene , implying his future role in bringing Banquo 's line to the throne .

In Joe Macbeth (1955) , the first film to transpose Macbeth into a gang and Mafia @-@ like setting , Fleance is replaced by a character named Lenny . Lenny 's father , Banky , is killed , but Lenny

escapes , and gathers a group of angry mobsters to overthrow Macbeth , who has , through a series of murders , made himself the kingpin gangster in the area . Lenny is successful in killing Macbeth in the end , but only after Macbeth has murdered most of his family . In another gangster adaptation , *Men of Respect* (1991) , Fleance is replaced by a character named Phil , who similarly helps overthrow Mike (Macbeth) after his father , Bankie (Banquo) , is murdered . Phil is inducted into the gang at the end of the film , when Mal (Malcolm) has taken over , suggesting that the violent gang culture will continue through generations . This sentiment echoes into the final scenes of Penny Woolcock 's *Macbeth on the Estate* . Macduff shoots Macbeth and takes a ring (representing his high status) off Macbeth 's finger . Entering a bar , he flips it to Malcolm , saying , " Hail , king . " Malcolm puts it on with some show and elbows his way to the front of the bar . One of the characters he elbows is Fleance (a skinhead) , who makes a mock gun out of his fingers and " shoots " at the back of the darker @-@ skinned Malcolm 's skull . Again this makes it clear that the violence will not end with the new generation .

In *Throne of Blood* , a Japanese adaptation of the play , Fleance is replaced by Yoshiteru , a character played by Akira Kibu . The Macbeth and Banquo characters , Washizu and Miki , are told by an old woman spinning wool in a hut that while Washizu will rule the Forest Castle one day , Miki 's son Yoshiteru will eventually inherit it for himself . Washizu takes the throne and at one point is about to make Yoshiteru his heir , but changes his mind when his wife tells him she is pregnant . Washizu instead arranges to have Yoshiteru and his father killed , but Yoshiteru escapes . Another adaptation filmed in India , *Maqbool* (2003) , replaces Fleance with a character named Guddu . *Maqbool* (Macbeth) attempts to have Guddu murdered in order to strengthen power within the organized crime circle . Guddu , however , survives and marries the daughter of the former crime lord .

In *Macbeth* , Eugène Ionesco 's 1972 stage adaptation , Fleance is merged with the Malcolm character . Macol (Malcolm) , who is thought to be King Duncan 's son , is revealed to be Banquo 's (Banquo 's) . Duncan , wanting a male heir , adopted Macol . Macol fills the role of Malcolm in taking the kingdom from Macbeth (Macbeth) at the end of the play .

In the 2006 modern dress film adaptation , set among gangsters in Melbourne , Fleance (Craig Stott) is depicted as a teenage boy , looking slightly older than in the original play . He also appears a bit more often , mainly in the scenes of Act V , where he sneaks on board a truck full of timber and witnesses the death of Macbeth before killing the maid and being directed home by Macduff .

= = = Influence = = =

Fleance 's line " The moon is down , I have not heard the clock " was the inspiration for the title of John Steinbeck 's 1942 short novel *The Moon is Down* . Fleance 's line foreshadows the evil encompassing the kingdom . The book was published just as the United States entered World War II and signaled the threat of the Axis powers by outlining the events in a European town occupied by foreign powers . Steinbeck 's book became a Broadway play and a film .

In 2008 , Pegasus Books published *The Tragedy of Macbeth Part II : The Seed of Banquo* , a play by American author and playwright Noah Lukeman that endeavored to pick up where the original *Macbeth* left off , and to resolve its many loose ends , particularly the prophesied ascension of the seed of Banquo . Written in blank verse , the play was published to critical acclaim . Another book published in 2009 by Penguin Books , *Banquo 's Son* , is the first in a trilogy that follows on from the Shakespearean story . The novels are written by New Zealand author and English teacher , T.K. Roxborough .