



RICHARD BERCUSON



Beware the **SUN'S** countenance upon thee

"Out!" shrieked Lady Macbeth. "Out, damned spot!"

She leaned over her husband's lumpy torso to apply the heel of her palm to his schnozz, rubbing with much displeasure. The Thane of Cawdor's back was to the window, his usual posture to ensure sounds from his body escaped outwardly.

'Twas yet another beauteous morn as the sun's luminescence set Dunsinane Castle alight. The air fairly scented of freshly baked haggis loaves and bovine dung. Indeed, it would be a fine day. Except for the spot.

Macbeth jolted. "My God, woman! What art thou doing to my proboscis!?"

"Tis a spot, milord."

"Aye, aye, tis a spot," he replied touching it himself as if to ensure it was still present. "'Twas the same spot as yesterday and a fortnight ago."

"But tis bigger," she groaned. "And jaggedier."

"What say you? Jaggedier?"

"Forsooth, I daresay, your spot is growing. Thou must see that doctor."

"You mean the inebriate sloth who hath treated the three witches for false teeth?"

"The witch doctor. He knows of these things. He says they are cancers."

To Milady's relief, it took little convincing. No man who had vanquished his enemies would be laid waste by a mere spot on his beak, however jagged. So Macbeth went to said doctor.

"Look at my nose, you haggard half-faced hedge-pig," Macbeth ordered.

"You have a spot," the witch doctor said after a mere glance. "Out, damned spot, say I!"

"Tis a familiar phrase, methinks."

"Would you like some false teeth?"

"No, and aye, I know I have a spot. Is it one of your cancers?" asked the Thane.

"Could be. I shall examine it..." And as he poked and rubbed Macbeth's spot, he cited strange words. "Didst His Lordship know that

the most common types of skin cancer are squamous cell cancer and basal cell cancer? Both are known as non-melanoma skin cancer and they can usually be treated successfully."

"What nonsense you speak!" Macbeth growled. "Squamous is a town in British Columbia, you ignorant gnat. And basal is what I sprinkle on Milady's salad."

"If you wish, Your Negligence. May I ask you to remove your top garment?"

"You wish to touch me? Is this not peculiar?"

"I wish to examine your body for skin defects. Did I ask if you'd like some false teeth? Only used once."

"I have no use for extra teeth. Find what you will then."

And so the witch doctor touched and measured the spots on His Lordship's expanse, paying particular attention to the neck, arms and hands. As he did so, he spoke of numbers. "There is a greater rate of increase in skin cancer among men than any other cancer: 41 per cent in the death rate since 1988." He sighed as his fingers did their investigation.

"I am not a number. I am a man. What harm can there be?"

"None if you are sensible. But since His Worship admits to his gender, being sensible is no longer a foregone conclusion."

"This is so much donkey piles. What have you discovered, aside from my veritably ripped form?"

"Spots. Of unusual size and temperament. I must remove them lest they become melanomas."

"Who is this fellow, Mel Anoma?"

"The spots, Your Thaneness. They can be deadly. But in the early stages, melanoma can be cured."

"I didst not know he was ill."

"Hast thou knowledge of the ABCDs of melanoma, Your Unpleasantness?"

continued on page 60

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HEALTH continued from page 8

"I doth not know how to spell ABCD."

"A is for asymmetry. Half of the mole is unlike the other. B is for border. It is irregular or poorly circumscribed."

"Your tongue, knave! I was NOT poorly circumscribed!"

"C is for colour. The shades may vary – brown or tan, black to red. D is for diameter. Larger than

6 mm, or the end of your writing instrument."

"Henceforth, dankish bugbear, what say you of mine?"

"I shall remove those that are suspicious with this broadsword. Grit yourself, Milord."

Macbeth closed his eyes as the witch doctor began his travails, wincing each time he heard the doctor cackle, "Double bubble, toil and trouble, and OUT DAMNED SPOT!"

It was then Macbeth swore he'd wear long sleeves and a brimmed hat when next he pillaged. ♂

The scribe Richard Bercuson doth clothe himself in proper attire whence the sun brings its brilliance. He has ceased pillaging.

ROCK 'n' ROLL

continued from page 21

actually make it to the big time, and be heard and seen outside the local dance