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I, Banquo

Rebeca Wallin

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Play Review

Title: I, Banquo

Anthology: I, Shakespeare

Author: Tim Crouch

Reviewer: Rebeca Wallin

Publisher: Oberon Books

Publication Year: 2005

Number of Pages: 15

Production Requirements: Stage with white backdrop needed to be replaced after each performance, bucket of blood, various gory props, bleachable or disposable costume.

Estimated Run Time: 30 min

Number of Acts: 1

Number of Characters: 2

Cast Requirements: 1 Man, 1 guitarist

Time Period: 11th Century

Reading/Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent

Review

One of (currently) five in the "I, Shakespeare series" by Crouch which retell plays from the point of view of lesser characters, this one-man show retells the story of Macbeth through the all-seeing eyes of Banquo's spirit. Banquo narrates the story from a unique perspective, repeatedly pronouncing "It could have been me," leading the audience through his journey trying to make sense of Macbeth's actions. He compares those actions to what his own might have been in the same situation. Perfect for a Shakespeare enthusiast, a familiarity with the original work is preferable for a deeper understanding of this play.

In the author's note it is mentioned that this play is "an existential horror movie for 11-year olds." The heavy subject matter and use of blood and gore throughout perhaps speaks to an older audience. The play, originally performed by Crouch himself, relies heavily on his expertise and acting abilities. A strong, experienced actor would be required to replace the roll with any success. Teachers will appreciate the abundant discussion topics the play provides for post-show enrichment.