

### Macbeth: Horror Story

Darkly ominous, the sky glowered at the moon until it hid, shamefaced, behind a thick bank of cloud. The night grew cold. Edith's thin cloak could not keep out the chill, but it was at least some comfort; she tugged it around herself tightly as she hurried across the damp moors towards the relative safety of home.

According to her grandmother, the misty moorland held all manner of evil things. "Ghosties and goblins and wild wand'ring beasties," the old woman cautioned her granddaughter, "an' ye but a bit of a thing. Take care, ma wee girlie."

Edith was hurrying already, but, with her grandmother's words ringing in her ears, she somehow found the strength to go a bit faster. Bare feet slipping on the slimy heath, she stumbled along, panting.

Suddenly, a thin scream pierced the air. Flinging her cloak about her, Edith hurled herself to the ground and crawled under a gorse bush. Prickled painfully and chilled to the core, she peered cautiously out into the blackness. What had she heard? What was she hearing (for the sound had continued)? Presently, she identified the sound – was it...could it be...*laughter*? There was more than one voice in the wind. She thought perhaps as many as three, but it was so hard to tell: they were thin, inhuman, shrieking voices, rising above the wind. Edith struggled onto her hands and knees and crawled tentatively forward until she could see the women – oh! But were they women? Each was deformed, monstrous, foul. Hairy faces, like bearded men, topped twisted, alien bodies. But the voices could not be male. Round a small, green-flamed fire, they twirled and cavorted in a grotesque parody of dancing.

A clopping of hooves pierced Edith's concentration. In frozen horror, she saw two horses approaching the clearing where the demons (for she had decided they could not be human) pranced. Desperate to cry out a warning, but terrified at the idea of discovery, she simply watched the inevitable meeting.

Once all five figures had departed, Edith rubbed her stiff legs, then darted furtively out of her hiding place. Her whole body longing for home, she sprinted as fast as her cramped limbs would allow, through the moonless night. She could see it! Up ahead, a tiny glimmer of light betrayed the location of the tiny cottage that was her destination. Praying soundlessly, she hitched up her skirts and ran, heedless now of anyone watching, lulled into safety by the nearness of home.

Her carelessness, so close to home, cost her dearly. Had she been paying attention, she might have spotted the dark shape looming out of the air...