Fate vs. Free Will

Nicole Wassel, Danielle DiFeo, JT Monserrat, Alex Hirsh, Jake Bevan period 7
“All hail Macbeth that shalt be king thereafter.”

All this says is that one day Macbeth will be king nothing about how or when and as he leads the military in a time of war this is highly probable and general enough that it will easily stand
“Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none.” (third witch)

This is once again a general prediction would not be that big of a surprise with Banquo’s standing.
“New honors come upon him, like our strange garments, cleave not to their mold but with the aid of use.” (Banquo)

This quote foreshadows how deeply Macbeth is buying into the prophecy allowing his supposed fate to take full control of his actions even when they go against his integrity.
“If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me without my stir?” (Macbeth)

Macbeth wonders whether he will need to take action to secure his fate but isn't that against the definition of fate. Is this instead an example of a self fulfilling prophecy.
"So I lose none in seeking to augment it, but still keep my bosom franchised and allegiance clear, I shall be counseled."

Banquo doesn’t lose anything by not taking action. But, by not taking action he keeps his line safe.
“They were suborned. Malcolm and Donalbain, the King’s two sons, are stol’n away and fled, which puts upon them suspicion of the deed.”

Macduff suspects the two sons to have killed Duncan because they run away.
“Macbeth is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee. I have thee not, and yet I see thee still art thou not, fatal vision, sensible to feeling as to sight? or art thou but a dagger of the mind, a false creation, proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain? I see thee yet, in form as palpable as this which now I draw. Thou marshall’st me the way that I was going; and such an instrument I was to use.”

“The dagger made made me do it” is Macbeth’s defense. “Come, let me clutch thee” sounds like he doesn’t have a choice.
“To be thus is nothing, But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo stick deep, and in his royalty of nature Reigns that which would be feared”

-Macbeth is troubled by the fact that the witches prophesied that Banquo’s sons would be king and not his own. Macbeth believes that this was predetermined by fate, but that he can defy and defeat the prophecy through free-will by murdering Banquo and Fleance. He believes his power of free will will trump fate by cutting off Banquos bloodline completely.
“To make them kings-the seed of Banquo Kings! Rather than so so, come, Fate, into the list, And champion me to the utterance!”

The reader has discovered so far the Macbeth does not plan to just let things play out. He has taken matter into his own hands, and is set on stopping Banquo’s sons from becoming kings. But here Mabeth challenges fate as if it were a human opponent. Macbeth has no regard for the severity of his actions, believing himself to be invincible and overly consumed with the power he possesses.
Act IV

First Apparition: “Macbeth! Macbeth! Beware Macduff! Beware the Thane of Fife!”

Macbeth: “Whate’er thou art, for thy good caution, thanks. Thou hast harped my fear aright. But one word more-”

Even though Macbeth already knows that Macduff is out for revenge, but because the apparitions are telling him this, he believes it is his fate. Also, Macbeth chooses to ask the witches for more knowledge about what lies ahead for him.
Second Apparition: “Be bloody, bold, and resolute. Laugh to scorn the power of man, for none of woman born shall harm Macbeth.”

Macbeth: “Then live, Macduff; what need I fear of thee? But yet I’ll make assurance double sure And take a bond of fate. Thou shalt not live, That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies, And sleep in spite of thunder.”

Once again, Macbeth chooses to believe this because the apparition is telling him another piece of his “fate”. Macbeth is not afraid of Macduff and does not have any reason to kill him due to the second apparition.
Third Apparition: “Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are. Macbeth shall never vanquished be until Great Birnam Wood to Dunsinane Hill shall come against him.

Macbeth: “That will never be. Who can impress the forest, bid the tree unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements, good!

Macbeth believes that they are saying the forest will literally come to life, whereas ironically it is what comes from within the trees that camouflages itself with its surroundings.
“As I did stand my watch upon the hill, I looked toward Birnam, and anon methought the wood began to move.”

- Macbeth starts to realize that the prophecy is coming true and that since this is his fate, there is nothing he can do to stop it.
“And let the angel whom thou still hasts
served tell thee Macduff was from his mother’s womb untimely ripped.”

Macbeth has always suspected that he will be killed by something inhuman and his overconfidence leads him to not fear Macduff until this point.