

# RICHARD THE THIRD

By William Shakespeare

## CAST

	DUCHESS of York, Mother of Edward IV, Clarence, and Richard
Brothers	KING EDWARD IV RICHARD, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards KING RICHARD III CLARENCE, George, Duke of Clarence
	ELIZABETH, Queen, wife to Edward IV RIVERS, Earl Rivers, Brother to Queen
Queen's sons	DORSET, Marquis of Dorset LORD GREY,
Son's to Edward IV	EDWARD, Young Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward V, DUKE OF YORK, Young Richard
Clarence's children	BOY, Edward Plantagenet GIRL, Margaret Plantagenet
	LADY ANNE, Widow of Prince Edward, Prince of Wales afterwards married to Richard Duke of Gloucester
Gentlemen	TRESSEL attendant to Lady Anne BERKELEY attendant to Lady Anne
	MARGARET, Old Queen, widow of Henry VI RICHMOND, Henry, Earl of Richmond, afterwards Henry VII
Richmond's Aides	OXFORD, Earl of Oxford BLUNT, Sir James Blunt HERBERT, Sir Walter Herbert
Richard's Aides	BUCKINGHAM Duke of Buckingham NORFOLK Duke of Norfolk RATCLIFFE, Sir Richard Ratcliffe CATESBY, Sir William Catesby TYRREL, Sir James Tyrrel
	STANLEY, Lord Stanley, Earl of Derby. SURREY, Earl of Surrey, Son to Norfolk. LOVEL Lord Lovel VAUGHAN Sir Thomas Vaughan
	LORD HASTINGS, the Lord Chamberlain. BRAKENBURY, Sir Robert Brakenbury, Lieutenant of the Tower KEEPER of the Tower. LORD MAYOR of London.
	CARDINAL Bouchier, Archbishop of Canterbury. ARCHBISHOP of York, Thomas Rotherham ELY, Bishop of Ely John Morton TWO BISHOPS URSWICK, Sir Christopher Urswick, a Priest. PRIEST, John SHERIFF of Wiltshire. BRANDON Sir William Brandon PURSUIVAN, Hastings
	MESSANGER, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th MURDERER, 1st, 2nd CITIZEN, 1st 2nd, 3rd HALBERDIER and others GENTLEMAN and others

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

PAGE.  
SCRIVENER  
ALDERMEN

Ghosts of Richard's victims:

GHOST OF HENRY VI.  
GHOST OF PRINCE EDWARD, Son to Henry VI.  
RICHARD, Duke of York  
EDWARD, Prince of Wales,  
CLARENCE, George, Duke of Clarence  
RIVERS, Earl Rivers  
Lord GREY,  
VAUGHAN, Sir Thomas Vaughan  
LORD HASTINGS,  
LADY ANNE,  
BUCKINGHAM, Duke of Buckingham

Nobles, Drummers, Standard Bearers, Trumpeters, Halberdiers, Guards, Attendants, Soldiers.

Scene: England.

# ACT 1.

## Scene 1. London. A Street.

**Enter** RICHARD Duke of Gloucester.

Richard                    Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this son of York;  
And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house  
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.  
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,  
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments,  
Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,  
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.  
Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front,  
And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds  
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,  
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber  
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.  
But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,  
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;  
I, that am rudely stamped, and want love's majesty  
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;  
I, that am curtailed of this fair proportion,  
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,  
Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time  
Into this breathing world scarce half made up -  
And that so lamely and unfashionable  
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them -  
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,  
Have no delight to pass away the time,  
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun  
And descant on mine own deformity.  
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover  
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,  
I am determined to prove a villain,  
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.  
Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,  
By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams,  
To set my brother Clarence and the king  
In deadly hate, the one against the other;  
And if King Edward be as true and just  
As I am subtle, false, and treacherous,  
This day should Clarence closely be mew'd up  
About a prophecy which says that G  
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be.  
Dive, thoughts, down to my soul: here Clarence comes.

**Enter** CLARENCE guarded, and BRAKENBURY.

   Brother, good day. What means this armed guard  
That waits upon your grace?

Clarence                    His majesty,  
Tend'ring my person's safety, hath appointed  
This conduct to convey me to the Tower.

Richard                    Upon what cause?

Clarence                    Because my name is George.

Richard                    Alack, my lord, that fault is none of yours:  
He should for that commit your godfathers.  
O, belike his majesty hath some intent  
That you should be new-christened in the Tower.  
But what's the matter, Clarence, may I know?

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Clarence            Yea, Richard, when I know; for I protest  
 As yet I do not. But, as I can learn,  
 He hearkens after prophecies and dreams,  
 And from the cross-row plucks the letter G,  
 And says a wizard told him that by G  
 His issue disinherited should be.  
 And for my name of George begins with G,  
 It follows in his thought that I am he.  
 These, as I learn, and suchlike toys as these,  
 Have moved his highness to commit me now.

Richard            Why, this it is when men are ruled by women:  
 'Tis not the king that sends you to the Tower -  
 My Lady Grey his wife, Clarence, 'tis she  
 That tempers him to this extremity.  
 Was it not she and that good man of worship,  
 Anthony Woodville, her brother there,  
 That made him send Lord Hastings to the Tower,  
 From whence this present day he is delivered?  
 We are not safe, Clarence, we are not safe.

Clarence            By heaven, I think there is no man secure  
 But the queen's kindred, and night-walking heralds  
 That trudge betwixt the king and Mistress Shore.  
 Heard you not what an humble suppliant  
 Lord Hastings was to her for his delivery?

Richard            Humbly complaining to her deity  
 Got my Lord Chamberlain his liberty.  
 I'll tell you what, I think it is our way,  
 If we will keep in favour with the king,  
 To be her men, and wear her livery.  
 The jealous o'erworn widow and herself,  
 Since that our brother dubbed them gentlewomen,  
 Are mighty gossips in our monarchy.

Brakenbury        I beseech your graces both to pardon me.  
 His majesty hath straitly given in charge  
 That no man shall have private conference,  
 Of what degree soever, with his brother.

Richard            Even so; - and please your worship, Brakenbury,  
 You may partake of anything we say.  
 We speak no treason, man; we say the king  
 Is wise and virtuous, and his noble queen  
 Well struck in years, fair, and not jealous.  
 We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,  
 A cherry lip, a bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue;  
 And that the queen's kindred are made gentlefolks.  
 How say you, sir? Can you deny all this?

Brakenbury        With this, my lord, myself have nought to do.

Richard            Naught to do with Mistress Shore? I tell thee, fellow,  
 He that doth naught with her, excepting one,  
 Were best to do it secretly, alone.

Brakenbury        What one, my lord?

Richard            Her husband, knave. Wouldst thou betray me?

Brakenbury        I do beseech your grace to pardon me, and withal  
 Forbear your conference with the noble duke.

Clarence            We know thy charge, Brakenbury, and will obey.

Richard            We are the queen's abjects, and must obey.  
 Brother, farewell. I will unto the king;  
 And whatsoever you will employ me in,  
 - Were it to call King Edward's widow 'sister' -  
 I will perform it to enfranchise you.

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Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood  
Touches me deeper than you can imagine.

Clarence I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

Richard Well, your imprisonment shall not be long:  
I will deliver you, or else lie for you.  
Meantime, have patience.

Clarence I must, perforce. Farewell.

**Exeunt** CLARENCE, BRAKENBURY and GUARD.

Richard Go, tread the path that thou shalt ne'er return.  
Simple plain Clarence, I do love thee so  
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,  
If heaven will take the present at our hands.  
But who comes here? The new-delivered Hastings?

**Enter** LORD HASTINGS.

Lord Hastings Good time of day unto my gracious lord.

Richard As much unto my good Lord Chamberlain;  
Well are you welcome to the open air.  
How hath your lordship brooked imprisonment?

Lord Hastings With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must;  
But I shall live, my lord, to give them thanks  
That were the cause of my imprisonment.

Richard No doubt, no doubt; and so shall Clarence too;  
For they that were your enemies are his,  
And have prevailed as much on him as you.

Lord Hastings More pity that the eagles should be mewed  
While kites and buzzards prey at liberty.

Richard What news abroad?

Lord Hastings No news so bad abroad as this at home:  
The king is sickly, weak, and melancholy,  
And his physicians fear him mightily.

Richard Now, by Saint John, that news is bad indeed.  
O, he hath kept an evil diet long,  
And overmuch consumed his royal person.  
'Tis very grievous to be thought upon.  
Where is he? - in his bed?

Lord Hastings He is.

Richard Go you before, and I will follow you.

**Exit** LORD HASTINGS.

He cannot live, I hope, and must not die  
Till George be packed with posthorse up to heaven.  
I'll in, to urge his hatred more to Clarence,  
With lies well-steeled with weighty arguments;  
And if I fail not in my deep intent,  
Clarence hath not another day to live;  
Which done, God take King Edward to His mercy,  
And leave the world for me to bustle in.  
For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter -  
What though I killed her husband and her father?  
The readiest way to make the wench amend  
Is to become her husband and her father;  
The which will I - not all so much for love  
As for another secret close intent,  
By marrying her, which I must reach unto.  
But yet I run before my horse to market.  
Clarence still breathes, Edward still lives and reigns;

When they are gone, then must I count my gains.

**Exit**

## Scene 2. London. Another Street.

**Enter** the corpse of HENRY THE SIXTH, with HALBERDS to guard it, borne in an open coffin by GENTLEMEN; LADY ANNE being the mourner, attended by TRESSEL and BERKELEY.

Lady Anne           Set down, set down your honourable load,  
- If honour may be shrouded in a hearse -  
Whilst I awhile obsequiously lament  
Th' untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.  
[The GENTLEMEN set down the coffin.  
Poor key-cold figure of a holy king,  
Pale ashes of the House of Lancaster,  
Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood,  
Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost  
To hear the lamentations of poor Anne,  
Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughtered son,  
Stabbed by the selfsame hand that made these wounds.  
Lo, in these windows that let forth thy life  
I pour the helpless balm of my poor eyes.  
O, cursed be the hand that made these holes!  
Cursed the heart that had the heart to do it!  
Cursed the blood that let this blood from hence!  
More direful hap betide that hated wretch  
That makes us wretched by the death of thee  
Than I can wish to adders, spiders, toads,  
Or any creeping venom'd thing that lives.  
If ever he have child, abortive be it,  
Prodigious, and untimely brought to light,  
Whose ugly and unnatural aspect  
May fright the hopeful mother at the view,  
And that be heir to his unhappiness.  
If ever he have wife, let her be made  
More miserable by the death of him  
Than I am made by my young lord and thee.  
Come, now towards Chertsey with your holy load,  
Taken from Paul's to be interred there.  
[The GENTLEMEN take up the coffin and advance.

And still, as you are weary of this weight,  
Rest you, whiles I lament King Henry's corse.

**Enter** RICHARD.

Richard           Stay, you that bear the corse, and set it down.

Lady Anne       What black magician conjures up this fiend  
To stop devoted charitable deeds?

Richard       Villains, set down the corse, or by Saint Paul  
I'll make a corse of him that disobeys.

Halberdier      My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass.

Richard       Unmannered dog, stand thou when I command!  
Advance thy halberd higher than my breast,  
Or by Saint Paul I'll strike thee to my foot,  
And spurn upon thee, beggar, for thy boldness.  
[The GENTLEMEN set down the coffin.

Lady Anne       What, do you tremble? Are you all afraid?  
Alas, I blame you not, for you are mortal,

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And mortal eyes cannot endure the devil.  
Avaunt, thou dreadful minister of hell!  
Thou hadst but power over his mortal body -  
His soul thou canst not have; therefore, be gone.

- Richard Sweet saint, for charity be not so curst.
- Lady Anne Foul devil, for God's sake hence, and trouble us not;  
For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,  
Filled it with cursing cries and deep exclams.  
If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,  
Behold this pattern of thy butcheries.  
O gentlemen, see, see! - dead Henry's wounds  
Open their congealed mouths and bleed afresh.  
Blush, blush, thou lump of foul deformity,  
For 'tis thy presence that exhales this blood  
From cold and empty veins where no blood dwells.  
Thy deed inhuman and unnatural  
Provokes this deluge most unnatural.  
O God, which this blood mad'st, revenge his death!  
O earth, which this blood drink'st, revenge his death!  
Either heav'n with lightning strike the murd'rer dead,  
Or earth gape open wide and eat him quick,  
As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood  
Which his hell-governed arm hath butchered.
- Richard Lady, you know no rules of charity,  
Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.
- Lady Anne Villain, thou know'st nor law of God nor man.  
No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.
- Richard But I know none, and therefore am no beast.
- Lady Anne O wonderful, when devils tell the truth!
- Richard More wonderful, when angels are so angry.  
Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,  
Of these supposed crimes to give me leave  
By circumstance but to acquit myself.
- Lady Anne Vouchsafe, diffused infection of a man,  
Of these known evils but to give me leave  
By circumstance t' accuse thy cursed self.
- Richard Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have  
Some patient leisure to excuse myself.
- Lady Anne Foulter than heart can think thee, thou canst make  
No excuse current but to hang thyself.
- Richard By such despair I should accuse myself.
- Lady Anne And by despairing shalt thou stand excused  
For doing worthy vengeance on thyself  
That didst unworthy slaughter upon others.
- Richard Say that I slew them not?
- Lady Anne Then say they were not slain:  
But dead they are, and, devilish slave, by thee.
- Richard I did not kill your husband.
- Lady Anne Why, then he is alive.
- Richard Nay, he is dead, and slain by Edward's hands.
- Lady Anne In thy foul throat thou liest: Queen Margaret saw  
Thy murd'rous falchion smoking in his blood,  
The which thou once didst bend against her breast  
But that thy brothers beat aside the point.

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Richard I was provoked by her sland'rous tongue,  
That laid their guilt upon my guiltless shoulders.

Lady Anne Thou wast provoked by thy bloody mind,  
That never dream'st on aught but butcheries.  
Didst thou not kill this king?

Richard I grant ye, yea.

Lady Anne Dost grant me, hedgehog! Then God grant me too  
Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed.  
O he was gentle, mild, and virtuous.

Richard The better for the King of heaven that hath him.

Lady Anne He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come.

Richard Let him thank me that help to send him thither,  
For he was fitter for that place than earth.

Lady Anne And thou unfit for any place but hell.

Richard Yes, one place else, if you will hear me name it.

Lady Anne Some dungeon?

Richard Your bedchamber.

Lady Anne Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest.

Richard So will it, madam, till I lie with you.

Lady Anne I hope so.

Richard I know so. But, gentle Lady Anne,  
To leave this keen encounter of our wits  
And fall something into a slower method:  
Is not the causer of the timeless deaths  
Of these Plantagenets, Henry and Edward,  
As blameful as the executioner?

Lady Anne Thou wast the cause and most accursed effect.

Richard Your beauty was the cause of that effect:  
Your beauty, that did haunt me in my sleep  
To undertake the death of all the world  
So I might live one hour in your sweet bosom.

Lady Anne If I thought that, I tell thee, homicide,  
These nails should rend that beauty from my cheeks.

Richard These eyes could not endure that beauty's wrack;  
You should not blemish it if I stood by.  
As all the world is cheered by the sun,  
So I by that; it is my day, my life.

Lady Anne Black night o'ershade thy day, and death thy life!

Richard Curse not thyself, fair creature: thou art both.

Lady Anne I would I were, to be revenged on thee.

Richard It is a quarrel most unnatural  
To be revenged on him that loveth thee.

Lady Anne It is a quarrel just and reasonable  
To be revenged on him that killed my husband.

Richard He that bereft thee, lady, of thy husband  
Did it to help thee to a better husband.

Lady Anne His better doth not breathe upon the earth.

Richard He lives that loves thee better than he could.

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Lady Anne Name him.

Richard Plantagenet.

Lady Anne Why, that was he.

Richard The selfsame name, but one of better nature.

Lady Anne Where is he?

Richard Here.  
[Spits at him.

Why dost thou spit at me?

Lady Anne Would it were mortal poison for thy sake!

Richard Never came poison from so sweet a place.

Lady Anne Never hung poison on a fouler toad.  
Out of my sight: thou dost infect mine eyes.

Richard Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

Lady Anne Would they were basilisks, to strike thee dead.

Richard I would they were, that I might die at once;  
For now they kill me with a living death.  
Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,  
Shamed their aspects with store of childish drops;  
These eyes, which never shed remorseful tear -  
No, when my father York and Edward wept  
To hear the piteous moan that Rutland made  
When black-faced Clifford shook his sword at him;  
Nor when thy warlike father, like a child,  
Told the sad story of my father's death,  
And twenty times made pause to sob and weep,  
That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks  
Like trees bedashed with rain. In that sad time  
My manly eyes did scorn an humble tear;  
And what these sorrows could not thence exhale,  
Thy beauty hath, and made them blind with weeping.  
I never sued to friend nor enemy;  
My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing word;  
But now thy beauty is proposed my fee,  
My proud heart sues, and prompts my tongue to speak.  
[She looks scornfully at him.

Teach not thy lip such scorn; for it was made  
For kissing, lady, not for such contempt.  
If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,  
Lo, here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword,  
Which if thou please to hide in this true breast  
And let the soul forth that adareth thee,  
I lay it naked to the deadly stroke,  
And humbly beg the death upon my knee.  
[He lays his breast open.  
She offers at it with his sword.

Nay, do not pause, for I did kill King Henry -  
But 'twas thy beauty that provoked me.  
Nay, now dispatch; 'twas I that stabbed young Edward -  
But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.  
[She falls the sword.  
Take up the sword again, or take up me.

Lady Anne Arise, dissembler; though I wish thy death,  
I will not be thy executioner.

Richard Then bid me kill myself, and I will do it.

Lady Anne I have already.

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Richard                   That was in thy rage;  
                               Speak it again, and even with the word  
                               This hand, which for thy love did kill thy love,  
                               Shall for thy love kill a far truer love:  
                               To both their deaths shalt thou be accessory.

Lady Anne                I would I knew thy heart.

Richard                   'Tis figured in my tongue.

Lady Anne                I fear me both are false.

Richard                   Then never was man true.

Lady Anne                Well, well, put up your sword.

Richard                   Say then my peace is made.

Lady Anne                That shalt thou know hereafter.

Richard                   But shall I live in hope?

Lady Anne                All men, I hope, live so.

Richard                   Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

Lady Anne                To take is not to give.  
                               [She wears the ring.

Richard                   Look how my ring encompasseth thy finger;  
                               Even so thy breast encloseth my poor heart.  
                               Wear both of them, for both of them are thine;  
                               And if thy poor devoted servant may  
                               But beg one favour at thy gracious hand,  
                               Thou dost confirm his happiness for ever.

Lady Anne                What is it?

Richard                   That it may please you leave these sad designs  
                               To him that hath most cause to be a mourner,  
                               And presently repair to Crosby House,  
                               Where, after I have solemnly interred  
                               At Chertsey Monastery this noble king,  
                               And wet his grave with my repentant tears,  
                               I will with all expedient duty see you.  
                               For divers unknown reasons, I beseech you,  
                               Grant me this boon.

Lady Anne                With all my heart; and much it joys me too  
                               To see you are become so penitent.  
                               Tressel and Berkeley, go along with me.

Richard                   Bid me farewell.

Lady Anne                'Tis more than you deserve;  
                               But since you teach me how to flatter you,  
                               Imagine I have said farewell already.

**Exeunt** TRESSEL and BERKELEY with LADY ANNE.

Richard                   Sirs, take up the corse.

Gentleman               Towards Chertsey, noble lord?

Richard                   No, to Whitefriars; there attend my coming.

**Exeunt** all but RICHARD.

Was ever woman in this humour wooed?  
 Was ever woman in this humour won?  
 I'll have her, but I will not keep her long.  
 What, I that killed her husband and his father  
 To take her in her heart's extremest hate,  
 With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,  
 The bleeding witness of my hatred by,

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Having God, her conscience, and these bars against me,  
And I no friends to back my suit at all  
But the plain devil and dissembling looks,  
And yet to win her, all the world to nothing?  
Ha!  
Hath she forgot already that brave prince,  
Edward, her lord, whom I some three months since  
Stabbed in my angry mood at Tewkesbury?  
A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,  
Framed in the prodigality of nature,  
Young, valiant, wise, and, no doubt, right royal,  
The spacious world cannot again afford -  
And will she yet abase her eyes on me,  
That cropped the golden prime of this sweet prince,  
And made her widow to a woeful bed?  
On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety?  
On me, that halts and am misshapen thus?  
My dukedom to a beggarly denier  
I do mistake my person all this while!  
Upon my life, she finds - although I cannot -  
Myself to be a marv'lous proper man.  
I'll be at charges for a looking-glass,  
And entertain a score or two of tailors  
To study fashions to adorn my body.  
Since I am crept in favour with myself,  
I will maintain it with some little cost.  
But first I'll turn yon fellow in his grave,  
And then return lamenting to my love.  
Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass,  
That I may see my shadow as I pass.

**Exit**

**Scene 3. London. A Room in the Palace.**

**Enter** QUEEN ELIZABETH, LORD RIVERS, LORD GREY, and MARQUIS DORSET.

Rivers                    Have patience, madam; there's no doubt his majesty  
                                 Will soon recover his accustomed health.

Grey                      In that you brook it ill, it makes him worse;  
                                 Therefore for God's sake entertain good comfort,  
                                 And cheer his grace with quick and merry eyes.

Elizabeth                If he were dead, what would betide on me?

Grey                      No other harm but loss of such a lord.

Elizabeth                The loss of such a lord includes all harms.

Grey                      The heavens have blessed you with a goodly son  
                                 To be your comforter when he is gone.

Elizabeth                Ah, he is young, and his minority  
                                 Is put unto the trust of Richard Gloucester,  
                                 A man that loves not me, nor none of you.

Rivers                    Is it concluded he shall be Protector?

Elizabeth                It is determined, not concluded yet;  
                                 But so it must be, if the king miscarry.

**Enter** BUCKINGHAM and LORD STANLEY Earl of Derby.

Grey                      Here come the lords of Buckingham and Derby.

Buckingham             Good time of day unto your royal grace.

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Stanley                    God make your majesty joyful, as you have been.

Elizabeth                The Countess Richmond, good my Lord of Derby,  
To your good prayer will scarcely say amen;  
Yet, Derby, notwithstanding she's your wife,  
And loves not me, be you, good lord, assured  
I hate not you for her proud arrogance.

Stanley                    I do beseech you, either not believe  
The envious slanders of her false accusers,  
Or, if she be accused on true report,  
Bear with her weakness, which I think proceeds  
From wayward sickness, and no grounded malice.

Elizabeth                Saw you the king today, my Lord of Derby?

Stanley                    But now the Duke of Buckingham and I  
Are come from visiting his majesty.

Elizabeth                What likelihood of his amendment, lords?

Buckingham             Madam, good hope; his grace speaks cheerfully.

Elizabeth                God grant him health. Did you confer with him?

Buckingham             Ay, madam; he desires to make atonement  
Between the Duke of Gloucester and your brothers,  
And between them and my Lord Chamberlain;  
And sent to warn them to his royal presence.

Elizabeth                Would all were well! - but that will never be.  
I fear our happiness is at the height.

**Enter RICHARD and LORD HASTINGS.**

Richard                   They do me wrong, and I will not endure it.  
Who is it that complains unto the king  
That I, forsooth, am stern and love them not?  
By holy Paul, they love his grace but lightly  
That fill his ears with such dissentious rumours.  
Because I cannot flatter and look fair,  
Smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive, and cog,  
Duck with French nods and apish courtesy,  
I must be held a rancorous enemy.  
Cannot a plain man live and think no harm  
But thus his simple truth must be abused  
With silken, sly, insinuating Jacks?

Grey                        To who in all this presence speaks your grace?

Richard                   To thee, that hast nor honesty nor grace.  
When have I injured thee? When done thee wrong?  
Or thee? Or thee? Or any of your faction?  
A plague upon you all! His royal grace,  
- Whom God preserve better than you would wish -  
Cannot be quiet scarce a breathing while  
But you must trouble him with lewd complaints.

Elizabeth                Brother of Gloucester, you mistake the matter.  
The king, on his own royal disposition,  
And not provoked by any suitor else,  
Aiming, belike, at your interior hatred,  
That in your outward action shows itself  
Against my children, brothers, and myself,  
Makes him to send that he may learn the ground  
Of your ill will, and thereby to remove it.

Richard                   I cannot tell; the world is grown so bad  
That wrens make prey where eagles dare not perch.  
Since every Jack became a gentleman  
There's many a gentle person made a Jack.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

- Elizabeth            Come, come; we know your meaning, brother Gloucester.  
You envy my advancement, and my friends'.  
God grant we never may have need of you!
- Richard              Meantime, God grants that I have need of you:  
Our brother is imprisoned by your means,  
Myself disgraced, and the nobility  
Held in contempt, while great promotions  
Are daily given to ennoble those  
That scarce some two days since were worth a noble.
- Elizabeth            By Him that raised me to this careful height  
From that contented hap which I enjoyed,  
I never did incense his majesty  
Against the Duke of Clarence, but have been  
An earnest advocate to plead for him.  
My lord, you do me shameful injury  
Falsely to draw me in these vile suspects.
- Richard              You may deny that you were not the mean  
Of my Lord Hastings' late imprisonment.
- Rivers                She may, my lord, for -
- Richard              She may, Lord Rivers? Why, who knows not so?  
She may do more, sir, than denying that:  
She may help you to many fair preferments,  
And then deny her aiding hand therein,  
And lay those honours on your high desert.  
What may she not? She may - ay, marry may she -
- Rivers                What, marry, may she?
- Richard              What marry may she? Marry with a king,  
A bachelor, and a handsome stripling too.  
Iwis your grandam had a worses match.
- Elizabeth            My lord of Gloucester, I have too long borne  
Your blunt upbraidings and your bitter scoffs.  
By heaven, I will acquaint his majesty  
Of those gross taunts that oft I have endured.  
I had rather be a country servant-maid  
Than a great queen, with this condition -  
To be so baited, scorned, and stormed at.
- Enter** old QUEEN MARGARET, behind.
- Small joy have I in being England's queen.
- Margaret            [Aside] And lessened be that small, God I beseech Him!  
Thy honour, state, and seat, is due to me.
- Richard              What, threat you me with telling of the king?  
Tell him, and spare not. Look what I have said  
I will avouch't in presence of the king;  
I dare adventure to be sent to th' Tower.  
'Tis time to speak; my pains are quite forgot.
- Margaret            [Aside] Out, devil! I do remember them too well:  
Thou killed'st my husband Henry in the Tower,  
And Edward, my poor son, at Tewkesbury.
- Richard              Ere you were queen, ay, or your husband king,  
I was a packhorse in his great affairs,  
A weeder-out of his proud adversaries,  
A liberal rewarder of his friends.  
To royalize his blood, I spent mine own.
- Margaret            [Aside] Ay, and much better blood than his or thine.
- Richard              In all which time you and your husband Grey  
Were factious for the House of Lancaster;

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And, Rivers, so were you. Was not your husband  
In Margaret's battle at Saint Albans slain?  
Let me put in your minds, if you forget,  
What you have been ere this, and what you are;  
Withal, what I have been, and what I am.

- Margaret [Aside] A murd'rous villain, and so still thou art.
- Richard Poor Clarence did forsake his father, Warwick,  
Ay, and forswore himself - which Jesu pardon -
- Margaret [Aside] Which God revenge!
- Richard To fight on Edward's party for the crown;  
And for his meed, poor lord, he is mewed up.  
I would to God my heart were flint like Edward's,  
Or Edward's soft and pitiful like mine.  
I am too childish-foolish for this world.
- Margaret [Aside] Hie thee to hell for shame, and leave this world,  
Thou cacodemon - there thy kingdom is.
- Rivers My lord of Gloucester, in those busy days  
Which here you urge to prove us enemies,  
We followed then our lord, our sovereign king;  
So should we you, if you should be our king.
- Richard If I should be? I had rather be a pedlar.  
Far be it from my heart, the thought thereof.
- Elizabeth As little joy, my lord, as you suppose  
You should enjoy, were you this country's king,  
As little joy you may suppose in me  
That I enjoy, being the queen thereof.
- Margaret [Aside] As little joy enjoys the queen thereof;  
For I am she, and altogether joyless.  
I can no longer hold me patient.  
[Advancing] Hear me, you wrangling pirates that fall out  
In sharing that which you have pilled from me -  
Which of you trembles not that looks on me?  
If not that I am queen you bow like subjects,  
Yet that by you deposed you quake like rebels.  
[To RICHARD] Ah, gentle villain, do not turn away.
- Richard Foul wrinkled witch, what mak'st thou in my sight?
- Margaret But repetition of what thou hast marred,  
That will I make before I let thee go.
- Richard Wert thou not banished on pain of death?
- Margaret I was, but I do find more pain in banishment  
Than death can yield me here by my abode.  
A husband and a son thou ow'st to me;  
[To ELIZABETH] And thou, a kingdom;  
[To All] all of you, allegiance.  
This sorrow that I have by right is yours,  
And all the pleasures you usurp are mine.
- Richard The curse my noble father laid on thee  
When thou didst crown his warlike brows with paper,  
And with thy scorns drew'st rivers from his eyes,  
And then to dry them gav'st the duke a clout  
Steeped in the faultless blood of pretty Rutland -  
His curses then, from bitterness of soul  
Denounced against thee, are all fall'n upon thee;  
And God, not we, hath plagued thy bloody deed.
- Elizabeth So just is God, to right the innocent.
- Lord Hastings O, 'twas the foulest deed to slay that babe,

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And the most merciless that e'er was heard of.

Rivers Tyrants themselves wept when it was reported.

Dorset No man but prophesied revenge for it.

Buckingham Northumberland, then present, wept to see it.

Margaret  
 What, were you snarling all before I came,  
 Ready to catch each other by the throat,  
 And turn you all your hatred now on me?  
 Did York's dread curse prevail so much with heaven  
 That Henry's death, my lovely Edward's death,  
 Their kingdom's loss, my woeful banishment,  
 Should all but answer for that peevish brat?  
 Can curses pierce the clouds and enter heaven?  
 Why then, give way, dull clouds, to my quick curses -  
 Though not by war, by surfeit die your king,  
 As ours by murder, to make him a king.  
 Edward thy son, that now is Prince of Wales,  
 For Edward our son, that was Prince of Wales,  
 Die in his youth by like untimely violence.  
 Thyself a queen, for me that was a queen,  
 Outlive thy glory like my wretched self.  
 Long mayst thou live to wail thy children's death,  
 And see another, as I see thee now,  
 Decked in thy rights, as thou art stalled in mine.  
 Long die thy happy days before thy death,  
 And after many lengthened hours of grief,  
 Die neither mother, wife, nor England's queen.  
 Rivers and Dorset, you were standers-by,  
 And so wast thou, Lord Hastings, when my son  
 Was stabbed with bloody daggers. God, I pray Him,  
 That none of you may live his natural age,  
 But by some unlooked accident cut off.

Richard Have done thy charm, thou hateful withered hag.

Margaret  
 And leave out thee? Stay, dog, for thou shalt hear me.  
 If heaven have any grievous plague in store  
 Exceeding those that I can wish upon thee,  
 O let them keep it till thy sins be ripe,  
 And then hurl down their indignation  
 On thee, the troubler of the poor world's peace.  
 The worm of conscience still begnaw thy soul.  
 Thy friends suspect for traitors while thou liv'st,  
 And take deep traitors for thy dearest friends.  
 No sleep close up that deadly eye of thine,  
 Unless it be while some tormenting dream  
 Affrights thee with a hell of ugly devils.  
 Thou elvish-marked, abortive, rooting hog,  
 Thou that wast sealed in thy nativity  
 The slave of nature and the son of hell,  
 Thou slander of thy heavy mother's womb,  
 Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins,  
 Thou rag of honour, thou detested -

Richard Margaret.

Margaret Richard.

Richard Ha?

Margaret I call thee not.

Richard I cry thee mercy then, for I did think  
 That thou hadst called me all these bitter names.

Margaret Why so I did, but looked for no reply.  
 O, let me make the period to my curse.

Richard 'Tis done by me, and ends in `Margaret'.

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Elizabeth Thus have you breathed your curse against yourself.

Margaret Poor painted queen, vain flourish of my fortune,  
Why strew'st thou sugar on that bottled spider  
Whose deadly web ensnareth thee about?  
Fool, fool, thou whet'st a knife to kill thyself.  
The day will come that thou shalt wish for me  
To help thee curse this poisonous bunch-backed toad.

Lord Hastings False-boding woman, end thy frantic curse,  
Lest to thy harm thou move our patience.

Margaret Foul shame upon you; you have all moved mine.

Rivers Were you well served you would be taught your duty.

Margaret To serve me well you all should do me duty,  
Teach me to be your queen, and you my subjects.  
O, serve me well, and teach yourselves that duty.

Dorset Dispute not with her; she is lunatic.

Margaret Peace, Master Marquis, you are malapert:  
Your fire-new stamp of honour is scarce current.  
O, that your young nobility could judge  
What 'twere to lose it and be miserable.  
They that stand high have many blasts to shake them;  
And if they fall, they dash themselves to pieces.

Richard Good counsel, marry! Learn it, learn it, Marquis.

Dorset It touches you, my lord, as much as me.

Richard Ay, and much more; but I was born so high:  
Our aery buildeth in the cedar's top,  
And dallies with the wind, and scorns the sun.

Margaret And turns the sun to shade, alas, alas!  
Witness my son, now in the shade of death,  
Whose bright outshining beams thy cloudy wrath  
Hath in eternal darkness folded up.  
Your aery buildeth in our aery's nest -  
O God that seest it, do not suffer it:  
As it is won with blood, lost be it so.

Buckingham Peace, peace, for shame, if not for charity.

Margaret Urge neither charity nor shame to me.  
Uncharitably with me have you dealt,  
And shamefully my hopes by you are butchered.  
My charity is outrage, life my shame;  
And in that shame still live my sorrows' rage.

Buckingham Have done, have done!

Margaret O princely Buckingham, I'll kiss thy hand  
In sign of league and amity with thee.  
Now fair befall thee and thy noble house:  
Thy garments are not spotted with our blood,  
Nor thou within the compass of my curse.

Buckingham Nor no one here; for curses never pass  
The lips of those that breathe them in the air.

Margaret I will not think but they ascend the sky,  
And there awake God's gentle sleeping peace.  
O Buckingham, take heed of yonder dog:  
Look when he fawns, he bites; and when he bites,  
His venom tooth will rankle to the death.  
Have not to do with him, beware of him;  
Sin, death, and hell have set their marks on him,  
And all their ministers attend on him.

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Richard                   What doth she say, my lord of Buckingham?  
Buckingham               Nothing that I respect, my gracious lord.  
Margaret                   What, dost thou scorn me for my gentle counsel,  
                                  And soothe the devil that I warn thee from?  
                                  O, but remember this another day,  
                                  - When he shall split thy very heart with sorrow -  
                                  And say "Poor Margaret was a prophetess".  
                                  Live each of you the subjects to his hate,  
                                  And he to yours, and all of you to God's.

**Exit**

Buckingham               My hair doth stand on end to hear her curses.  
Rivers                     And so doth mine. I muse why she's at liberty.  
Richard                    I cannot blame her. By God's holy Mother,  
                                  She hath had too much wrong; and I repent  
                                  My part thereof that I have done to her.  
Elizabeth                 I never did her any, to my knowledge.  
Richard                    Yet you have all the vantage of her wrong.  
                                  I was too hot to do somebody good,  
                                  That is too cold in thinking of it now.  
                                  Marry, as for Clarence, he is well repaid:  
                                  He is franked up to fattening for his pains -  
                                  God pardon them that are the cause thereof.  
Rivers                     A virtuous and a Christianlike conclusion,  
                                  To pray for them that have done scathe to us.  
Richard                    So do I ever - [Aside] being well advised;  
                                  For had I cursed now, I had cursed myself.

**Enter CATESBY.**

Catesby                   Madam, his majesty doth call for you;  
                                  And for your grace; and you, my gracious lords.  
Elizabeth                 Catesby, I come. Lords, will you go with me?  
Rivers                     We wait upon your grace.

**Exeunt** all but RICHARD.

Richard                   I do the wrong, and first begin to brawl.  
                                  The secret mischiefs that I set abroad  
                                  I lay unto the grievous charge of others.  
                                  Clarence, who I indeed have cast in darkness,  
                                  I do bewep to many simple gulls,  
                                  - Namely, to Derby, Hastings, Buckingham -  
                                  And tell them 'tis the queen and her allies  
                                  That stir the king against the duke my brother.  
                                  Now they believe it, and withal whet me  
                                  To be revenged on Rivers, Dorset, Grey.  
                                  But then I sigh, and with a piece of Scripture  
                                  Tell them that God bids us do good for evil;  
                                  And thus I clothe my naked villainy  
                                  With odd old ends stol'n forth of Holy Writ,  
                                  And seem a saint when most I play the devil.

**Enter** two MURDERERS.

                                  But soft, here come my executioners.  
                                  How now, my hardy, stout, resolved mates!  
                                  Are you now going to dispatch this thing?  
1st Murderer             We are, my lord, and come to have the warrant,  
                                  That we may be admitted where he is.

Richard Well thought upon; I have it here about me.  
 [Giving the warrant.  
 When you have done, repair to Crosby Place.  
 But, sirs, be sudden in the execution,  
 Withal obdurate; do not hear him plead;  
 For Clarence is well-spoken, and perhaps  
 May move your hearts to pity if you mark him.

2nd Murderer Tut, tut, my lord, we will not stand to prate:  
 Talkers are no good doers. Be assured  
 We go to use our hands, and not our tongues.

Richard Your eyes drop millstones when fools' eyes fall tears.  
 I like you, lads. About your business straight.  
 Go, go, dispatch.

1st & 2nd Murderers We will, my noble lord.

**Exeunt**

### Scene 4. London. A Room in the Tower.

**Enter** CLARENCE and KEEPER.

Keeper Why looks your grace so heavily today?

Clarence O, I have passed a miserable night,  
 So full of fearful dreams, of ugly sights,  
 That, as I am a Christian faithful man,  
 I would not spend another such a night  
 Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days,  
 So full of dismal terror was the time.

Keeper What was your dream, my lord? I pray you tell me.

Clarence Methoughts that I had broken from the Tower,  
 And was embarked to cross to Burgundy,  
 And in my company my brother Gloucester,  
 Who from my cabin tempted me to walk  
 Upon the hatches. Thence we looked toward England,  
 And cited up a thousand heavy times  
 During the wars of York and Lancaster  
 That had befall'n us. As we paced along  
 Upon the giddy footing of the hatches,  
 Methought that Gloucester stumbled, and in falling  
 Struck me, that thought to stay him, overboard  
 Into the tumbling billows of the main.  
 O Lord, methought what pain it was to drown,  
 What dreadful noise of waters in my ears,  
 What sights of ugly death within my eyes.  
 Methoughts I saw a thousand fearful wrecks,  
 Ten thousand men that fishes gnawed upon,  
 Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,  
 Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,  
 All scattered in the bottom of the sea.  
 Some lay in dead men's skulls, and in the holes  
 Where eyes did once inhabit there were crept,  
 As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems  
 That wooed the slimy bottom of the deep,  
 And mocked the dead bones that lay scattered by.

Keeper Had you such leisure in the time of death  
 To gaze upon these secrets of the deep?

Clarence Methought I had; and often did I strive

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To yield the ghost; but still the envious flood  
Stopped-in my soul, and would not let it forth  
To find the empty, vast, and wand'ring air,  
But smothered it within my panting bulk,  
Who almost burst to belch it in the sea.

Keeper                    Awaked you not in this sore agony?

Clarence                No, no; my dream was lengthened after life.  
O, then began the tempest to my soul!  
I passed, methought, the melancholy flood,  
With that sour ferryman which poets write of,  
Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.  
The first that there did greet my stranger-soul  
Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick,  
Who spake aloud "What scourge for perjury  
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?"  
And so he vanished. Then came wand'ring by  
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair  
Dabbled in blood, and he shrieked out aloud  
"Clarence is come. False, fleeting, perjured Clarence,  
That stabbed me in the field by Tewkesbury.  
Seize on him, Furies; take him unto torment."  
With that, methoughts, a legion of foul fiends  
Environed me, and howled in mine ears  
Such hideous cries that with the very noise  
I trembling waked, and for a season after  
Could not believe but that I was in hell,  
Such terrible impression made my dream.

Keeper                    No marvel, lord, though it affrighted you;  
I am afraid, methinks, to hear you tell it.

Clarence                Ah, Keeper, Keeper, I have done these things,  
That now give evidence against my soul,  
For Edward's sake; and see how he requites me.  
O God, if my deep prayers cannot appease Thee,  
But Thou wilt be avenged on my misdeeds,  
Yet execute Thy wrath in me alone:  
O, spare my guiltless wife and my poor children.  
Keeper, I prithee sit by me awhile;  
My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep.

Keeper                    I will, my lord. God give your grace good rest.  
[CLARENCE sleeps.]

**Enter** BRAKENBURY, the Lieutenant.

Brakenbury             Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours,  
Makes the night morning, and the noontide night.  
Princes have but their titles for their glories,  
An outward honour for an inward toil;  
And for unfelt imaginations  
They often feel a world of restless cares,  
So that between their titles and low name  
There's nothing differs but the outward fame.

**Enter** two MURDERERS.

1st Murderer           Ho, who's here?

Brakenbury             What wouldst thou, fellow? And how cam'st thou hither?

2nd Murderer           I would speak with Clarence, and I came hither on my legs.

Brakenbury             What, so brief?

1st Murderer           'Tis better, sir, than to be tedious.  
[To 2nd MURDERER]  
Let him see our commission, and talk no more.  
[BRAKENBURY reads.  
Brakenbury    I am in this commanded to deliver

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The noble Duke of Clarence to your hands.  
I will not reason what is meant hereby,  
Because I will be guiltless from the meaning.  
There lies the duke asleep, and there the keys.  
I'll to the king, and signify to him  
That thus I have resigned to you my charge.

1st Murderer      You may, sir; 'tis a point of wisdom. Fare you well.

**Exit** BRAKENBURY with the KEEPER.

2nd Murderer      What, shall I stab him as he sleeps?

1st Murderer      No; he'll say 'twas done cowardly, when he wakes.

2nd Murderer      Why, he shall never wake until the great Judgement Day.

1st Murderer      Why, then he'll say we stabbed him sleeping.

2nd Murderer      The urging of that word 'judgement' hath bred a kind of remorse in me.

1st Murderer      What, art thou afraid?

2nd Murderer      Not to kill him, having a warrant, but to be damned for killing him, from the which  
no warrant can defend me.

1st Murderer      I thought thou hadst been resolute.

2nd Murderer      So I am - to let him live.

1st Murderer      I'll back to the Duke of Gloucester, and tell him so.

2nd Murderer      Nay, I prithee stay a little: I hope this passionate humour of mine will change. It  
was wont to hold me but while one tells twenty.

1st Murderer      How dost thou feel thyself now?

2nd Murderer      Some certain dregs of conscience are yet within me.

1st Murderer      Remember our reward when the deed's done.

2nd Murderer      'Zounds, he dies! I had forgot the reward.

1st Murderer      Where's thy conscience now?

2nd Murderer      O, in the Duke of Gloucester's purse.

1st Murderer      When he opens his purse to give us our reward, thy conscience flies out.

2nd Murderer      'Tis no matter; let it go. There's few or none will entertain it.

1st Murderer      What if it come to thee again?

2nd Murderer      I'll not meddle with it; it makes a man a coward. A man cannot steal but it  
accuseth him; a man cannot swear but it checks him; a man cannot lie with his  
neighbour's wife but it detects him. 'Tis a blushing, shamefaced spirit, that  
mutinies in a man's bosom. It fills a man full of obstacles. It made me once  
restore a purse of gold that by chance I found. It beggars any man that keeps it.  
It is turned out of towns and cities for a dangerous thing; and every man that  
means to live well endeavours to trust to himself, and live without it.

1st Murderer      'Zounds, 'tis even now at my elbow, persuading me not to kill the duke.

2nd Murderer      Take the devil in thy mind, and believe him not. He would insinuate with thee but  
to make thee sigh.

1st Murderer      I am strong-framed; he cannot prevail with me.

2nd Murderer      Spoke like a tall man that respects thy reputation. Come, shall we fall to work?

1st Murderer      Take him on the costard with the hilts of thy sword, and then throw him into the  
malmsey-butt in the next room.

2nd Murderer      Oh excellent device! - and make a sop of him.

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1st Murderer Soft, he wakes.

2nd Murderer Strike!

1st Murderer No, we'll reason with him.

Clarence Where art thou, Keeper? Give me a cup of wine.

2nd Murderer You shall have wine enough, my lord, anon.

Clarence In God's name, what art thou?

2nd Murderer A man, as you are.

Clarence But not as I am, royal.

1st Murderer Nor you as we are, loyal.

Clarence Thy voice is thunder, but thy looks are humble.

1st Murderer My voice is now the king's, my looks mine own.

Clarence How darkly and how deadly dost thou speak.  
Your eyes do menace me. Why look you pale?  
Who sent you hither? Wherefore do you come?

1st & 2nd  
Murderers To - to - to -

Clarence To murder me?

1st & 2nd  
Murderers Ay, ay.

Clarence You scarcely have the hearts to tell me so,  
And therefore cannot have the hearts to do it.  
Wherein, my friends, have I offended you?

1st Murderer Offended us you have not, but the king.

Clarence I shall be reconciled to him again.

2nd Murderer Never, my lord; therefore prepare to die.

Clarence Are you drawn forth among a world of men  
To slay the innocent? What is my offence?  
Where is the evidence that doth accuse me?  
What lawful quest have given their verdict up  
Unto the frowning judge? Or who pronounced  
The bitter sentence of poor Clarence' death  
Before I be convict by course of law?  
To threaten me with death is most unlawful.  
I charge you, as you hope to have redemption  
By Christ's dear blood shed for our grievous sins,  
That you depart, and lay no hands on me.  
The deed you undertake is damnable.

1st Murderer What we will do, we do upon command.

2nd Murderer And he that hath commanded is our king.

Clarence Erroneous vassals! The great King of kings  
Hath in the table of His law commanded  
That thou shalt do no murder. Will you then  
Spurn at His edict, and fulfil a man's?  
Take heed, for He holds vengeance in His hand  
To hurl upon their heads that break His law.

2nd Murderer And that same vengeance doth He hurl on thee,  
For false forswearing, and for murder too.  
Thou didst receive the sacrament to fight  
In quarrel of the House of Lancaster.

1st Murderer And like a traitor to the name of God

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Didst break that vow, and with thy treacherous blade  
Unripped'st the bowels of thy sovereign's son.

2nd Murderer Whom thou wast sworn to cherish and defend.

1st Murderer How canst thou urge God's dreadful law to us,  
When thou hast broke it in such dear degree?

Clarence Alas, for whose sake did I that ill deed?  
For Edward, for my brother, for his sake.  
He sends you not to murder me for this,  
For in that sin he is as deep as I.  
If God will be avenged for the deed,  
O know you yet, He doth it publicly.  
Take not the quarrel from His powerful arm:  
He needs no indirect or lawless course  
To cut off those that have offended Him.

1st Murderer Who made thee then a bloody minister  
When gallant-springing brave Plantagenet,  
That princely novice, was struck dead by thee?

Clarence My brother's love, the devil, and my rage.

1st Murderer Thy brother's love, our duty, and thy faults,  
Provoke us hither now to slaughter thee.

Clarence If you do love my brother, hate not me:  
I am his brother, and I love him well.  
If you are hired for meed, go back again,  
And I will send you to my brother Gloucester,  
Who shall reward you better for my life  
Than Edward will for tidings of my death.

2nd Murderer You are deceived: your brother Gloucester hates you.

Clarence O no, he loves me, and he holds me dear.  
Go you to him from me.

1st Murderer Ay, so we will.

Clarence Tell him, when that our princely father York  
Blessed his three sons with his victorious arm  
And charged us from his soul to love each other,  
He little thought of this divided friendship.  
Bid Gloucester think of this, and he will weep.

1st Murderer Ay, millstones, as he lessoned us to weep.

Clarence O, do not slander him, for he is kind.

1st Murderer Right, as snow in harvest. Come, you deceive yourself;  
'Tis he that sends us to destroy you here.

Clarence It cannot be; for he bewept my fortune,  
And hugged me in his arms, and swore with sobs  
That he would labour my delivery.

1st Murderer Why, so he doth, when he delivers you  
From this earth's thraldom to the joys of heaven.

2nd Murderer Make peace with God, for you must die, my lord.

Clarence Have you that holy feeling in your souls  
To counsel me to make my peace with God,  
And are you yet to your own souls so blind  
That you will war with God by murd'ring me?  
O sirs, consider: they that set you on  
To do this deed will hate you for the deed.

2nd Murderer What shall we do?

Clarence Relent, and save your souls.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

1st Murderer Relent? No, 'tis cowardly and womanish.

Clarence Not to relent is beastly, savage, devilish.  
[To 2nd MURDERER]  
My friend, I spy some pity in thy looks:  
O, if thine eye be not a flatterer,  
Come thou on my side, and entreat for me -  
A begging prince, what beggar pities not?  
Which of you, if you were a prince's son,  
Being pent from liberty as I am now, If two such murderers as yourselves  
came to you,  
Would not entreat for life? As you would beg,  
Were you in my distress -

2nd Murderer Look behind you, my lord!

1st Murderer Take that! And that!  
[Stabs him.  
If all this will not do,  
I'll drown you in the malmsey-butt within.

**Exit** with CLARENCE's body.

2nd Murderer A bloody deed, and desperately dispatched.  
How fain, like Pilate, would I wash my hands  
Of this most grievous murder.

**Re-enter** 1st MURDERER.

1st Murderer How now! What mean'st thou that thou help'st me not?  
By heavens, the duke shall know how slack you have been.

2nd Murderer I would he knew that I had saved his brother!  
Take thou the fee, and tell him what I say;  
For I repent me that the duke is slain.

**Exit**

1st Murderer So do not I. Go, coward as thou art.  
Well, I'll go hide the body in some hole  
Till that the duke give order for his burial.  
And when I have my meed, I will away;  
For this will out, and then I must not stay.

**Exit**

## ACT 2.

### Scene 1. London. A Room in the Palace.

**Enter** KING EDWARD sick, the QUEEN ELIZABETH, LORD MARQUIS DORSET, RIVERS, LORD HASTINGS, CATESBY, BUCKINGHAM, and GREY.

Edward IV           Why, so; now have I done a good day's work.  
 You peers, continue this united league.  
 I every day expect an embassy  
 From my Redeemer to redeem me hence;  
 And more in peace my soul shall part to heaven  
 Since I have made my friends at peace on earth.  
 Rivers and Hastings, take each other's hand;  
 Dissemble not your hatred; swear your love.

Rivers               By heaven, my soul is purged from grudging hate,  
 And with my hand I seal my true heart's love.

Lord Hastings       So thrive I, as I truly swear the like.

Edward IV           Take heed you dally not before your king,  
 Lest He that is the supreme King of kings  
 Confound your hidden falsehood, and award  
 Either of you to be the other's end.

Lord Hastings       So prosper I, as I swear perfect love.

Rivers               And I, as I love Hastings with my heart.

Edward IV           Madam, yourself is not exempt from this;  
 Nor you, son Dorset; Buckingham, nor you.  
 You have been factious, one against the other.  
 Wife, love Lord Hastings, let him kiss your hand;  
 And what you do, do it unfeignedly.

Elizabeth           There, Hastings; I will never more remember  
 Our former hatred, so thrive I and mine.

Edward IV           Dorset, embrace him. Hastings, love Lord Marquis.

Dorset               This interchange of love, I here protest,  
 Upon my part shall be inviolable.

Lord Hastings       And so swear I.

Edward IV           Now, princely Buckingham, seal thou this league  
 With thy embracements to my wife's allies,  
 And make me happy in your unity.

Buckingham         [To ELIZABETH] Whenever Buckingham doth turn his hate  
 Upon your grace, but with all duteous love  
 Doth cherish you and yours, God punish me  
 With hate in those where I expect most love.  
 When I have most need to employ a friend,  
 And most assured that he is a friend,  
 Deep, hollow, treacherous, and full of guile  
 Be he unto me. This do I beg of God  
 When I am cold in love to you or yours.  
 [Embrace.  
 Edward IV        A pleasing cordial, princely Buckingham,  
 Is this thy vow unto my sickly heart.  
 There wanteth now our brother Gloucester here,  
 To make the blessed period of this peace.

**Enter** RATCLIFFE and RICHARD.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Buckingham	And in good time - Here comes Sir Richard Ratcliffe and the duke.
Richard	Good morrow to my sovereign king and queen; And princely peers, a happy time of day.
Edward IV	Happy indeed, as we have spent the day. Gloucester, we have done deeds of charity, Made peace of enmity, fair love of hate, Between these swelling, wrong-incensed peers.
Richard	A blessed labour, my most sovereign lord. Among this princely heap, if any here By false intelligence or wrong surmise Hold me a foe, If I unwittingly, or in my rage, Have aught committed that is hardly borne By any in this presence, I desire To reconcile me to his friendly peace. 'Tis death to me to be at enmity; I hate it, and desire all good men's love. First, madam, I entreat true peace of you, Which I will purchase with my duteous service; Of you, my noble cousin Buckingham, If ever any grudge were lodged between us; Of you, Lord Rivers, and Lord Grey, of you, That all without desert have frowned on me; Dukes, earls, lords, gentlemen - indeed, of all. I do not know that Englishman alive With whom my soul is any jot at odds More than the infant that is born tonight. I thank my God for my humility.
Elizabeth	A holy day shall this be kept hereafter. I would to God all strifes were well compounded. My sovereign lord, I do beseech your highness To take our brother Clarence to your grace.
Richard	Why, madam, have I offered love for this, To be so flouted in this royal presence? Who knows not that the gentle duke is dead? [They all start. You do him injury to scorn his corpse.
Rivers	Who knows not he is dead? Who knows he is?
Elizabeth	All-seeing heaven, what a world is this!
Buckingham	Look I so pale, Lord Dorset, as the rest?
Dorset	Ay, my good lord; and no man in the presence But his red colour hath forsook his cheeks.
Edward IV	Is Clarence dead? The order was reversed.
Richard	But he, poor man, by your first order died, And that a winged Mercury did bear; Some tardy cripple bore the countermand, That came too lag to see him buried. God grant that some, less noble and less loyal, Nearer in bloody thoughts, but not in blood, Deserve not worse than wretched Clarence did, And yet go current from suspicion.
<b>Enter</b> Lord STANLEY Earl of Derby.	
Stanley	[Kneeling] A boon, my sovereign, for my service done.
Edward IV	I prithee peace; my soul is full of sorrow.
Stanley	I will not rise unless your highness hear me.

Edward IV            Then say at once what is it thou requests.

Stanley              The forfeit, sovereign, of my servant's life,  
Who slew today a riotous gentleman  
Lately attendant on the Duke of Norfolk.

Edward IV            Have I a tongue to doom my brother's death,  
And shall that tongue give pardon to a slave?  
My brother killed no man - his fault was thought;  
And yet his punishment was bitter death.  
Who sued to me for him? Who, in my wrath,  
Kneeled at my feet and bade me be advised?  
Who spoke of brotherhood? Who spoke of love?  
Who told me how the poor soul did forsake  
The mighty Warwick, and did fight for me?  
Who told me, in the field at Tewkesbury,  
When Oxford had me down, he rescued me  
And said "Dear brother, live and be a king"?  
Who told me, when we both lay in the field  
Frozen almost to death, how he did lap me  
Even in his garments, and did give himself  
All thin and naked to the numb-cold night?  
All this from my remembrance brutish wrath  
Sinfully plucked, and not a man of you  
Had so much grace to put it in my mind.  
But when your carters or your waiting vassals  
Have done a drunken slaughter and defaced  
The precious image of our dear Redeemer,  
You straight are on your knees for "pardon, pardon";  
And I, unjustly too, must grant it you.  
But for my brother not a man would speak,  
Nor I, ungracious, speak unto myself  
For him, poor soul. The proudest of you all  
Have been beholding to him in his life,  
Yet none of you would once beg for his life.  
O God, I fear Thy justice will take hold  
On me - and you, and mine and yours - for this.  
Come, Hastings, help me to my closet.  
Ah, poor Clarence!

**Exeunt** SOME with KING and QUEEN.

Richard              This is the fruits of rashness. Marked you not  
How that the guilty kindred of the queen  
Looked pale when they did hear of Clarence' death?  
O, they did urge it still unto the king.  
God will revenge it. Come, lords, will you go  
To comfort Edward with our company?

Buckingham        We wait upon your grace.

**Exeunt**

## Scene 2. Another Room in the Palace.

**Enter** the old DUCHESS of York with the two CHILDREN of Clarence.

Boy                    Good grandam, tell us - is our father dead?

Duchess              No, boy.

Girl                    Why do you weep so oft, and beat your breast?  
And cry "O Clarence, my unhappy son"?

Boy                    Why do you look on us, and shake your head,  
And call us orphans, wretches, castaways,

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

If that our noble father were alive?

- Duchess My pretty cousins, you mistake me both.  
I do lament the sickness of the king,  
As loath to lose him, not your father's death.  
It were lost sorrow to wail one that's lost.
- Boy Then you conclude, my grandam, he is dead.  
The king mine uncle is to blame for it.  
God will revenge it, whom I will importune  
With earnest prayers, all to that effect.
- Girl And so will I.
- Duchess Peace, children, peace! The king doth love you well.  
Incapable and shallow innocents,  
You cannot guess who caused your father's death.
- Boy Grandam, we can; for my good uncle Gloucester  
Told me the king, provoked by the queen,  
Devised impeachments to imprison him;  
And when my uncle told me so he wept,  
And pitied me, and kindly kissed my cheek;  
Bade me rely on him as on my father,  
And he would love me dearly as a child.
- Duchess Ah, that deceit should steal such gentle shape,  
And with a virtuous visor hide deep vice!  
He is my son, ay, and therein my shame;  
Yet from my dugs he drew not this deceit.
- Boy Think you my uncle did dissemble, grandam?
- Duchess Ay, boy.
- Boy I cannot think it. Hark, what noise is this?
- Enter** QUEEN ELIZABETH with her hair about her ears, RIVERS and DORSET after her.
- Elizabeth Ah, who shall hinder me to wail and weep,  
To chide my fortune, and torment myself?  
I'll join with black despair against my soul,  
And to myself become an enemy.
- Duchess What means this scene of rude impatience?
- Elizabeth To make an act of tragic violence.  
Edward, my lord, thy son, our king, is dead.  
Why grow the branches when the root is gone?  
Why wither not the leaves that want their sap?  
If you will live, lament; if die, be brief,  
That our swift-winged souls may catch the king's,  
Or like obedient subjects follow him  
To his new kingdom of ne'er-changing night.
- Duchess Ah, so much interest have I in thy sorrow  
As I had title in thy noble husband.  
I have bewept a worthy husband's death,  
And lived with looking on his images;  
But now two mirrors of his princely semblance  
Are cracked in pieces by malignant death,  
And I for comfort have but one false glass,  
That grieves me when I see my shame in him.  
Thou art a widow: yet thou art a mother,  
And hast the comfort of thy children left;  
But death hath snatched my husband from mine arms,  
And plucked two crutches from my feeble hands,  
Clarence and Edward. O, what cause have I,  
Thine being but a moiety of my moan,  
To overgo thy woes and drown thy cries.
- Boy Ah, aunt, you wept not for our father's death -

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

How can we aid you with our kindred tears?

Girl Our fatherless distress was left unmoaned;  
Your widow-dolour likewise be unwept.

Elizabeth Give me no help in lamentation;  
I am not barren to bring forth complaints.  
All springs reduce their currents to mine eyes,  
That I, being governed by the watery moon,  
May send forth plenteous tears to drown the world.  
Ah, for my husband, for my dear lord Edward!

Children Ah, for our father, for our dear lord Clarence!

Duchess Alas for both, both mine, Edward and Clarence!

Elizabeth What stay had I but Edward? - and he's gone.

Children What stay had we but Clarence? - and he's gone.

Duchess What stays had I but they? - and they are gone.

Elizabeth Was never widow had so dear a loss!

Children Were never orphans had so dear a loss!

Duchess Was never mother had so dear a loss!  
Alas, I am the mother of these griefs;  
Their woes are parcelled, mine is general.  
She for an Edward weeps, and so do I;  
I for a Clarence weep, so doth not she;  
These babes for Clarence weep, and so do I;  
I for an Edward weep, so do not they.  
Alas, you three on me, threefold distressed,  
Pour all your tears. I am your sorrow's nurse,  
And I will pamper it with lamentation.

Dorset Comfort, dear mother. God is much displeased  
That you take with unthankfulness His doing.  
In common worldly things 'tis called ungrateful  
With dull unwillingness to repay a debt  
Which with a bounteous hand was kindly lent;  
Much more to be thus opposite with heaven,  
For it requires the royal debt it lent you.

Rivers Madam, bethink you like a careful mother  
Of the young prince your son. Send straight for him;  
Let him be crowned; in him your comfort lives.  
Drown desperate sorrow in dead Edward's grave,  
And plant your joys in living Edward's throne.

**Enter** RICHARD, BUCKINGHAM, STANLEY, LORD HASTINGS, and RATCLIFFE.

Richard Sister, have comfort. All of us have cause  
To wail the dimming of our shining star,  
But none can help our harms by wailing them.  
Madam my mother, I do cry you mercy;  
I did not see your grace. Humbly on my knee  
I crave your blessing.

Duchess God bless thee, and put meekness in thy breast,  
Love, charity, obedience, and true duty.

Richard Amen! [Aside] And make me die a good old man -  
That is the butt-end of a mother's blessing;  
I marvel that her grace did leave it out.

Buckingham You cloudy princes and heart-sorrowing peers  
That bear this heavy mutual load of moan,  
Now cheer each other in each other's love.  
Though we have spent our harvest of this king,  
We are to reap the harvest of his son.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

The broken rancour of your high-swoll'n hearts,  
But lately splintered, knit, and joined together,  
Must gently be preserved, cherished, and kept.  
Meseemeth good that with some little train  
Forthwith from Ludlow the young prince be fet  
Hither to London to be crowned our king.

Rivers Why with some little train, my lord of Buckingham?

Buckingham Marry, my lord, lest by a multitude  
The new-healed wound of malice should break out,  
Which would be so much the more dangerous  
By how much the estate is green and yet ungoverned.  
Where every horse bears his commanding rein  
And may direct his course as please himself,  
As well the fear of harm, as harm apparent,  
In my opinion ought to be prevented.

Richard I hope the king made peace with all of us,  
And the compact is firm and true in me.

Rivers And so in me, and so, I think, in all;  
Yet, since it is but green, it should be put  
To no apparent likelihood of breach,  
Which haply by much company might be urged.  
Therefore I say with noble Buckingham  
That it is meet so few should fetch the prince.

Lord Hastings And so say I.

Richard Then be it so; and go we to determine  
Who they shall be that straight shall post to Ludlow.  
Madam, and you, my sister, will you go  
To give your censures in this business?

Elizabeth & Duchess With all our hearts.

**Exeunt** all but BUCKINGHAM and RICHARD.

Buckingham My lord, whoever journeys to the prince,  
For God's sake let not us two stay at home;  
For by the way I'll sort occasion,  
As index to the story we late talked of,  
To part the queen's proud kindred from the prince.

Richard My other self, my counsel's consistory,  
My oracle, my prophet, my dear cousin,  
I, as a child, will go by thy direction.  
Toward Ludlow then, for we'll not stay behind.

**Exeunt**

### Scene 3. London. A Street.

**Enter** 1st CITIZEN at one door, and 2nd CITIZEN at the other.

1st Citizen Good morrow, neighbour. Whither away so fast?

2nd Citizen I promise you, I scarcely know myself.  
Hear you the news abroad?

1st Citizen Yes, that the king is dead.

2nd Citizen Ill news, byrlady; seldom comes the better.  
I fear, I fear, 'twill prove a giddy world.

**Enter** 3rd CITIZEN.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

3rd Citizen Neighbours, God speed.

1st Citizen Give you good morrow, sir.

3rd Citizen Doth the news hold of good King Edward's death?

2nd Citizen Ay, sir, it is too true - God help the while!

3rd Citizen Then, masters, look to see a troublous world.

1st Citizen No, no; by God's good grace his son shall reign.

3rd Citizen Woe to that land that's governed by a child.

2nd Citizen In him there is a hope of government,  
Which, in his nonage, council under him,  
And in his full and ripened years himself,  
No doubt shall then, and till then, govern well.

1st Citizen So stood the state when Henry the Sixth  
Was crowned in Paris but at nine months old.

3rd Citizen Stood the state so? No, no, good friends, God wot;  
For then this land was famously enriched  
With politic grave counsel; then the king  
Had virtuous uncles to protect his grace.

1st Citizen Why, so hath this, both by his father and mother.

3rd Citizen Better it were they all came by his father,  
Or by his father there were none at all;  
For emulation who shall now be nearest  
Will touch us all too near, if God prevent not.  
O, full of danger is the Duke of Gloucester,  
And the queen's sons and brothers haught and proud;  
And were they to be ruled, and not to rule,  
This sickly land might solace as before.

1st Citizen Come, come, we fear the worst. All will be well.

3rd Citizen When clouds are seen, wise men put on their cloaks;  
When great leaves fall, then winter is at hand;  
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?  
Untimely storms makes men expect a dearth.  
All may be well; but if God sort it so  
'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.

2nd Citizen Truly the hearts of men are full of fear.  
You cannot reason almost with a man  
That looks not heavily and full of dread.

3rd Citizen Before the days of change, still is it so.  
By a divine instinct men's minds mistrust  
Ensuing danger, as by proof we see  
The water swell before a boist'rous storm.  
But leave it all to God. Whither away?

2nd Citizen Marry, we were sent for to the justices.

3rd Citizen And so was I; I'll bear you company.

**Exeunt**

**Scene 4. London. A Room in the Palace.**

**Enter** ARCHBISHOP, young DUKE OF YORK, the QUEEN, and the DUCHESS.

Archbishop Last night, I hear, they lay at Stony Stratford,

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

And at Northampton they do rest tonight;  
Tomorrow, or next day, they will be here.

- Duchess I long with all my heart to see the prince.  
I hope he is much grown since last I saw him.
- Elizabeth But I hear no. They say my son of York  
Has almost overta'en him in his growth.
- Duke of York Ay, mother, but I would not have it so.
- Duchess Why, my good cousin? It is good to grow.
- Duke of York Grandam, one night as we did sit at supper,  
My uncle Rivers talked how I did grow  
More than my brother. "Ay" quoth my uncle Gloucester  
"Small herbs have grace; great weeds do grow apace."  
And since, methinks I would not grow so fast,  
Because sweet flowers are slow and weeds make haste.
- Duchess Good faith, good faith, the saying did not hold  
In him that did object the same to thee.  
He was the wretched'st thing when he was young,  
So long a-growing, and so leisurely,  
That, if his rule were true, he should be gracious.
- Archbishop And so no doubt he is, my gracious madam.
- Duchess I hope he is; but yet let mothers doubt.
- Duke of York Now, by my troth, if I had been remembered,  
I could have given my uncle's grace a flout  
To touch his growth nearer than he touched mine.
- Duchess How, my young York? I prithee let me hear it.
- Duke of York Marry, they say my uncle grew so fast  
That he could gnaw a crust at two hours old;  
'Twas full two years ere I could get a tooth.  
Grandam, this would have been a biting jest.
- Duchess I prithee, pretty York, who told thee this?
- Duke of York Grandam, his nurse.
- Duchess His nurse? Why she was dead ere thou wast born.
- Duke of York If 'twere not she, I cannot tell who told me.
- Elizabeth A parlous boy! Go to, you are too shrewd.
- Duchess Good madam, be not angry with the child.
- Elizabeth Pitchers have ears.

**Enter** a MESSENGER.

- Archbishop Here comes a messenger. What news?
- Messenger Such news, my lord, as grieves me to report.
- Elizabeth How doth the prince?
- Messenger Well, madam, and in health.
- Duchess What is thy news?
- Messenger Lord Rivers and Lord Grey are sent to Pomfret,  
And with them Sir Thomas Vaughan, prisoners.
- Duchess Who hath committed them?
- Messenger The mighty dukes  
Gloucester and Buckingham.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Archbishop For what offence?

Messenger The sum of all I can I have disclosed.  
Why, or for what, the nobles were committed  
Is all unknown to me, my gracious lord.

Elizabeth Ay me! I see the ruin of my house:  
The tiger now hath seized the gentle hind;  
Insulting tyranny begins to jut  
Upon the innocent and aweless throne.  
Welcome destruction, blood, and massacre!  
I see, as in a map, the end of all.

Duchess Accursed and unquiet wrangling days,  
How many of you have mine eyes beheld!  
My husband lost his life to get the crown,  
And often up and down my sons were tossed  
For me to joy and weep their gain and loss;  
And being seated, and domestic broils  
Clean overblown, themselves the conquerors  
Make war upon themselves, brother to brother,  
Blood to blood, self against self. O preposterous  
And frantic outrage, end thy damned spleen,  
Or let me die, to look on earth no more.

Elizabeth Come, come, my boy; we will to sanctuary.  
Madam, farewell.

Duchess Stay, I will go with you.

Elizabeth You have no cause.

Archbishop My gracious lady, go,  
And thither bear your treasure and your goods.  
For my part, I'll resign unto your grace  
The seal I keep; and so betide to me  
As well I tender you and all of yours.  
Come, I'll conduct you to the sanctuary.

**Exeunt**

## ACT 3.

### Scene 1. London. A Street.

The trumpets sound.

Enter young PRINCE EDWARD, RICHARD, BUCKINGHAM, Lord CARDINAL Bouchier, CATESBY, with OTHERS.

Buckingham Welcome, sweet prince, to London, to your chamber.

Richard Welcome, dear cousin, my thoughts' sovereign.  
The weary way hath made you melancholy.

Prince Edward No, uncle, but our crosses on the way  
Have made it tedious, wearisome, and heavy.  
I want more uncles here to welcome me.

Richard Sweet prince, the untainted virtue of your years  
Hath not yet dived into the world's deceit,  
Nor more can you distinguish of a man  
Than of his outward show, which, God He knows,  
Seldom or never jumpeth with the heart.  
Those uncles which you want were dangerous;  
Your grace attended to their sugared words,  
But looked not on the poison of their hearts.  
God keep you from them, and from such false friends!

Prince Edward God keep me from false friends - but they were none.

**Enter** LORD MAYOR with his TRAIN.

Richard My lord, the Mayor of London comes to greet you.

Lord Mayor God bless your grace with health and happy days!

Prince Edward I thank you, good my lord, and thank you all.  
[To RICHARD] I thought my mother and my brother York  
Would long ere this have met us on the way.  
Fie, what a slug is Hastings! that he comes not  
To tell us whether they will come or no.

**Enter** LORD HASTINGS.

Buckingham And in good time here comes the sweating lord.

Prince Edward Welcome, my lord. What, will our mother come?

Lord Hastings On what occasion God He knows, not I,  
The queen your mother and your brother York  
Have taken sanctuary. The tender prince  
Would fain have come with me to meet your grace,  
But by his mother was perforce withheld.

Buckingham Fie, what an indirect and peevish course  
Is this of hers! Lord Cardinal, will your grace  
Persuade the queen to send the Duke of York  
Unto his princely brother presently?  
If she deny, Lord Hastings, go with him,  
And from her jealous arms pluck him perforce.

Cardinal My Lord of Buckingham, if my weak oratory  
Can from his mother win the Duke of York,  
Anon expect him here; but if she be obdurate  
To mild entreaties, God in heaven forbid  
We should infringe the holy privilege  
Of blessed sanctuary. Not for all this land  
Would I be guilty of so deep a sin.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Buckingham      You are too senseless-obstinate, my lord,  
Too ceremonious and traditional.  
Weigh it but with the grossness of this age,  
You break not sanctuary in seizing him.  
The benefit thereof is always granted  
To those whose dealings have deserved the place,  
And those who have the wit to claim the place.  
This prince hath neither claimed it nor deserved it;  
And therefore, in mine opinion, cannot have it.  
Then, taking him from thence that is not there,  
You break no privilege nor charter there.  
Oft have I heard of sanctuary men,  
But sanctuary children ne'er till now.

Cardinal          My lord, you shall o'errule my mind for once.  
Come on, Lord Hastings, will you go with me?

Lord Hastings    I go, my lord.

Prince Edward    Good lords, make all the speedy haste you may.

**Exeunt** CARDINAL and HASTINGS.

Say, uncle Gloucester, if our brother come,  
Where shall we sojourn till our coronation?

Richard          Where it seems best unto your royal self.  
If I may counsel you, some day or two  
Your highness shall repose you at the Tower,  
Then where you please and shall be thought most fit  
For your best health and recreation.

Prince Edward    I do not like the Tower, of any place.  
Did Julius Caesar build that place, my lord?

Buckingham      He did, my gracious lord, begin that place,  
Which since succeeding ages have re-edified.

Prince Edward    Is it upon record, or else reported  
Successively from age to age, he built it?

Buckingham      Upon record, my gracious lord.

Prince Edward    But say, my lord, it were not registered,  
Methinks the truth should live from age to age,  
As 'twere retailed to all posterity,  
Even to the general all-ending day.

Richard          [Aside] So wise so young, they say, do never live long.

Prince Edward    What say you, uncle?

Richard          I say, without characters fame lives long.  
[Aside] Thus, like the formal Vice, Iniquity,  
I moralize two meanings in one word.

Prince Edward    That Julius Caesar was a famous man -  
With what his valour did enrich his wit,  
His wit set down to make his valour live:  
Death makes no conquest of this conqueror,  
For now he lives in fame, though not in life.  
I'll tell you what, my cousin Buckingham.

Buckingham      What, my gracious lord?

Prince Edward    And if I live until I be a man,  
I'll win our ancient right in France again,  
Or die a soldier, as I lived a king.

Richard          [Aside] Short summers lightly have a forward spring.

**Re-enter** HASTINGS and the CARDINAL with the young DUKE OF YORK.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Buckingham Now in good time here comes the Duke of York

Prince Edward Richard of York, how fares our loving brother?

Duke of York Well, my dread lord - so must I call you now.

Prince Edward Ay, brother, to our grief, as it is yours:  
Too late he died that might have kept that title,  
Which by his death hath lost much majesty.

Richard How fares our cousin, noble Lord of York?

Duke of York I thank you, gentle uncle. O my lord,  
You said that idle weeds are fast in growth:  
The prince my brother hath outgrown me far.

Richard He hath, my lord.

Duke of York And therefore is he idle?

Richard O my fair cousin, I must not say so.

Duke of York Then he is more beholding to you than I.

Richard He may command me as my sovereign,  
But you have power in me as in a kinsman.

Duke of York I pray you, uncle, give me this dagger.

Richard My dagger, little cousin? With all my heart.

Prince Edward A beggar, brother?

Duke of York Of my kind uncle, that I know will give,  
And being but a toy, which is no grief to give.

Richard A greater gift than that I'll give my cousin.

Duke of York A greater gift? O, that's the sword to it.

Richard Ay, gentle cousin, were it light enough.

Duke of York O, then I see you will part but with light gifts;  
In weightier things you'll say a beggar nay.

Richard It is too heavy for your grace to wear.

Duke of York I weigh it lightly, were it heavier.

Richard What, would you have my weapon, little lord?

Duke of York I would, that I might thank you as you call me.

Richard How?

Duke of York Little.

Prince Edward My lord of York will still be cross in talk.  
Uncle, your grace knows how to bear with him.

Duke of York You mean to bear me, not to bear with me.  
Uncle, my brother mocks both you and me:  
Because that I am little, like an ape,  
He thinks that you should bear me on your shoulders.

Buckingham With what a sharp-provided wit he reasons!  
To mitigate the scorn he gives his uncle  
He prettily and aptly taunts himself.  
So cunning and so young is wonderful.

Richard My lord, will't please you pass along?  
Myself and my good cousin Buckingham  
Will to your mother, to entreat of her  
To meet you at the Tower and welcome you.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Duke of York           What, will you go unto the Tower, my lord?

Prince Edward         My Lord Protector needs will have it so.

Duke of York           I shall not sleep in quiet at the Tower.

Richard                Why, what should you fear?

Duke of York           Marry, my uncle Clarence' angry ghost.  
My grandam told me he was murdered there.

Prince Edward         I fear no uncles dead.

Richard                Nor none that live, I hope?

Prince Edward         And if they live, I hope I need not fear.  
But come, my lord; and with a heavy heart,  
Thinking on them, go I unto the Tower.  
[A sennet.

**Exeunt**

Manet RICHARD, BUCKINGHAM, and CATESBY.

Buckingham           Think you, my lord, this little prating York  
Was not incensed by his subtle mother  
To taunt and scorn you thus opprobriously?

Richard                No doubt, no doubt. O, 'tis a parlous boy,  
Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, capable.  
He is all the mother's, from the top to toe.

Buckingham           Well, let them rest. Come hither, Catesby. Thou art sworn  
As deeply to effect what we intend  
As closely to conceal what we impart: -  
Thou know'st our reasons, urged upon the way.  
What think'st thou? Is it not an easy matter  
To make William Lord Hastings of our mind  
For the instalment of this noble duke  
In the seat royal of this famous isle?

Catesby                He for his father's sake so loves the prince  
That he will not be won to aught against him.

Buckingham           What think'st thou then of Stanley? Will not he?

Catesby                He will do all in all as Hastings doth.

Buckingham           Well then, no more but this: go, gentle Catesby,  
And, as it were far off, sound thou Lord Hastings  
How he doth stand affected to our purpose,  
And summon him tomorrow to the Tower  
To sit about the coronation.  
If thou dost find him tractable to us,  
Encourage him, and tell him all our reasons;  
If he be leaden, icy, cold, unwilling,  
Be thou so too, and so break off the talk,  
And give us notice of his inclination;  
For we tomorrow hold divided councils,  
Wherein thyself shalt highly be employed.

Richard                Commend me to Lord William. Tell him, Catesby,  
His ancient knot of dangerous adversaries  
Tomorrow are let blood at Pomfret Castle,  
And bid my lord for joy of this good news  
Give Mistress Shore one gentle kiss the more.

Buckingham           Good Catesby, go effect this business soundly.

Catesby                My good lords both, with all the heed I can.

Richard                Shall we hear from you, Catesby, ere we sleep?

Catesby                    You shall, my lord.

Richard                    At Crosby Place, there shall you find us both.

**Exit CATESBY.**

Buckingham                Now, my lord, what shall we do if we perceive  
Lord Hastings will not yield to our complots?

Richard                    Chop off his head - something we will determine.  
And look when I am king, claim thou of me  
The earldom of Hereford, and all the moveables  
Whereof the king my brother was possessed.

Buckingham                I'll claim that promise at your grace's hand.

Richard                    And look to have it yielded with all kindness.  
Come, let us sup betimes, that afterwards  
We may digest our complots in some form.

**Exeunt**

## Scene 2. Before Lord Hastings' House.

**Enter** a MESSENGER to the door of Lord Hastings.

Messenger                [Knocking] My lord, my lord!

Lord Hastings             [Within] Who knocks?

Messenger                One from the Lord Stanley.

**Enter** LORD HASTINGS.

Lord Hastings             What is't o'clock?

Messenger                Upon the stroke of four.

Lord Hastings             Cannot my Lord Stanley sleep these tedious nights?

Messenger                So it appears by that I have to say.  
First, he commends him to your noble self.

Lord Hastings             What then?

Messenger                Then certifies your lordship that this night  
He dreamt the boar had razed off his helm.  
Besides, he says there are two councils kept,  
And that may be determined at the one  
Which may make you and him to rue at th'other.  
Therefore he sends to know your lordship's pleasure,  
If you will presently take horse with him,  
And with all speed post with him toward the north,  
To shun the danger that his soul divines.

Lord Hastings             Go, fellow, go, return unto thy lord;  
Bid him not fear the separated council.  
His honour and myself are at the one,  
And at the other is my good friend Catesby,  
Where nothing can proceed that toucheth us  
Whereof I shall not have intelligence.  
Tell him his fears are shallow, without instance.  
And for his dreams, I wonder he's so simple  
To trust the mock'ry of unquiet slumbers.  
To fly the boar before the boar pursues  
Were to incense the boar to follow us  
And make pursuit where he did mean no chase.  
Go, bid thy master rise, and come to me,

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

And we will both together to the Tower,  
Where he shall see the boar will use us kindly.

Messenger I'll go, my lord, and tell him what you say.

**Exit**

Enter CATESBY.

Catesby Many good morrows to my noble lord.

Lord Hastings Good morrow, Catesby; you are early stirring.  
What news, what news, in this our tott'ring state?

Catesby It is a reeling world indeed, my lord,  
And I believe will never stand upright  
Till Richard wear the garland of the realm.

Lord Hastings How, wear the garland? Dost thou mean the crown?

Catesby Ay, my good lord.

Lord Hastings I'll have this crown of mine cut from my shoulders  
Before I'll see the crown so foul misplaced.  
But canst thou guess that he doth aim at it?

Catesby Ay, on my life, and hopes to find you forward  
Upon his party for the gain thereof;  
And thereupon he sends you this good news:  
That this same very day your enemies,  
The kindred of the queen, must die at Pomfret.

Lord Hastings Indeed I am no mourner for that news,  
Because they have been still my adversaries;  
But that I'll give my voice on Richard's side  
To bar my master's heirs in true descent,  
God knows I will not do it, to the death.

Catesby God keep your lordship in that gracious mind.

Lord Hastings But I shall laugh at this a twelvemonth hence -  
That they which brought me in my master's hate,  
I live to look upon their tragedy.  
Well, Catesby, ere a fortnight make me older  
I'll send some packing that yet think not on't.

Catesby 'Tis a vile thing to die, my gracious lord,  
When men are unprepared and look not for it.

Lord Hastings O monstrous, monstrous! And so falls it out  
With Rivers, Vaughan, Grey; and so 'twill do  
With some men else that think themselves as safe  
As thou and I, who, as thou know'st, are dear  
To princely Richard and to Buckingham.

Catesby The princes both make high account of you. -  
[Aside] For they account his head upon the Bridge.

Lord Hastings I know they do, and I have well deserved it.

**Enter LORD STANLEY.**

Come on, come on, where is your boar-spear, man?  
Fear you the boar, and go so unprovided?

Stanley My lord, good morrow. Good morrow, Catesby.  
You may jest on, but by the Holy Rood  
I do not like these several councils, I.

Lord Hastings My lord, I hold my life as dear as you do yours,  
And never in my days, I do protest,  
Was it so precious to me as 'tis now.  
Think you, but that I know our state secure

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

I would be so triumphant as I am?

Stanley           The lords at Pomfret, when they rode from London,  
Were jocund, and supposed their states were sure,  
And they indeed had no cause to mistrust;  
But yet you see how soon the day o'ercast.  
This sudden stab of rancour I misdoubt;  
Pray God, I say, I prove a needless coward.  
What, shall we toward the Tower? The day is spent.

Lord Hastings   Come, come, have with you. Wot you what, my lord? -  
Today the lords you talked of are beheaded.

Stanley           They, for their truth, might better wear their heads  
Than some that have accused them wear their hats.  
But come, my lord, let's away.

**Enter** Hastings, a PURSUIVAN.

Lord Hastings    Go on before; I'll talk with this good fellow.

**Exeunt** LORD STANLEY and CATESBY.

Well met, Hastings; how goes the world with thee?

Pursuivan        The better that your lordship please to ask.

Lord Hastings    I tell thee, man, 'tis better with me now  
Than when I met thee last, where now we meet.  
Then was I going prisoner to the Tower,  
By the suggestion of the queen's allies.  
But now, I tell thee - keep it to thyself -  
This day those enemies are put to death,  
And I in better state than e'er I was.

Pursuivan        God hold it to your honour's good content.

Lord Hastings    Gramercy, Hastings. There, drink that for me.  
[Throws him his purse.]

Pursuivan        I thank your honour.

**Exit**

**Enter** a PRIEST.

Priest            Well met, my lord. I am glad to see your honour.

Lord Hastings    I thank thee, good Sir John, with all my heart.  
I am in your debt for your last exercise:  
Come the next Sabbath, and I will content you.  
[He whispers in his ear.]

**Enter** BUCKINGHAM.

Priest            I'll wait upon your lordship.

**Exit**

Buckingham      What, talking with a priest, Lord Chamberlain?  
Your friends at Pomfret, they do need the priest;  
Your honour hath no shriving work in hand.

Lord Hastings    Good faith, and when I met this holy man,  
The men you talk of came into my mind.  
What, go you toward the Tower?

Buckingham      I do, my lord, but long I cannot stay there;  
I shall return before your lordship thence.

Lord Hastings    Nay, like enough, for I stay dinner there.

Buckingham      [Aside] And supper too, although thou know'st it not.  
- Come, will you go?

Lord Hastings I'll wait upon your lordship.

**Exeunt**

### Scene 3. Pomfret. Before the Castle.

**Enter** SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, with HALBERDS, carrying the nobles, RIVERS, GREY, and VAUGHAN, to death at Pomfret.

Ratcliffe Come, bring forth the prisoners.

Rivers Sir Richard Ratcliffe, let me tell thee this:  
Today shalt thou behold a subject die  
For truth, for duty, and for loyalty.

Grey God bless the prince from all the pack of you!  
A knot you are of damned bloodsuckers.

Vaughan You live, that shall cry woe for this hereafter.

Ratcliffe Dispatch! The limit of your lives is out.

Rivers O Pomfret, Pomfret! O thou bloody prison,  
Fatal and ominous to noble peers!  
Within the guilty closure of thy walls  
Richard the Second here was hacked to death;  
And, for more slander to thy dismal seat,  
We give to thee our guiltless blood to drink.

Grey Now Margaret's curse is fall'n upon our heads,  
When she exclaimed on Hastings, you, and I,  
For standing by when Richard stabbed her son.

Rivers Then cursed she Richard, then cursed she Buckingham,  
Then cursed she Hastings. O remember, God,  
To hear her prayer for them, as now for us;  
And for my sister and her princely sons,  
Be satisfied, dear God, with our true blood,  
Which, as thou know'st, unjustly must be spilt.

Ratcliffe Make haste; the hour of death is expiate.

Rivers Come Grey, come Vaughan, let us here embrace.  
Farewell, until we meet again in heaven.

**Exeunt**

### Scene 4. London. A Room in the Tower.

**Enter** BUCKINGHAM, STANLEY, HASTINGS, BISHOP OF ELY, NORFOLK, RATCLIFFE, LEVEL, with OTHERS, at a table.

Lord Hastings Now, noble peers, the cause why we are met  
Is to determine of the coronation.  
In God's name, speak: when is the royal day?

Buckingham Is all things ready for the royal time?

Stanley It is, and wants but nomination.

Bishop of Ely Tomorrow, then, I judge a happy day.

Buckingham Who knows the Lord Protector's mind herein?

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Who is most inward with the noble duke?

Bishop of Ely Your grace, we think, should soonest know his mind.

Buckingham We know each other's faces. For our hearts,  
He knows no more of mine than I of yours,  
Or I of his, my lord, than you of mine.  
Lord Hastings, you and he are near in love.

Lord Hastings I thank his grace, I know he loves me well;  
But for his purpose in the coronation,  
I have not sounded him, nor he delivered  
His gracious pleasure any way therein.  
But you, my honourable lords, may name the time;  
And in the duke's behalf I'll give my voice,  
Which I presume he'll take in gentle part.

**Enter** RICHARD.

Bishop of Ely In happy time, here comes the duke himself.

Richard My noble lords and cousins all, good morrow.  
I have been long a sleeper, but I trust  
My absence doth neglect no great design  
Which by my presence might have been concluded.

Buckingham Had you not come upon your cue, my lord,  
William Lord Hastings had pronounced your part -  
I mean your voice for crowning of the king.

Richard Than my Lord Hastings no man might be bolder:  
His lordship knows me well, and loves me well.  
My Lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn  
I saw good strawberries in your garden there;  
I do beseech you send for some of them.

Bishop of Ely Marry, and will, my lord, with all my heart.

**Exit**

Richard Cousin of Buckingham, a word with you.  
[Aside to BUCKINGHAM]  
Catesby hath sounded Hastings in our business,  
And finds the testy gentleman so hot,  
That he will lose his head ere give consent  
His master's child, as worshipful he terms it,  
Shall lose the royalty of England's throne.

Buckingham Withdraw yourself a while; I'll go with you.

**Exeunt** RICHARD and BUCKINGHAM.

Stanley We have not yet set down this day of triumph.  
Tomorrow, in my judgement, is too sudden;  
For I myself am not so well provided  
As else I would be were the day prolonged.

**Re-enter** the BISHOP OF ELY.

Bishop of Ely Where is my lord the Duke of Gloucester?  
I have sent for these strawberries.

Lord Hastings His grace looks cheerfully and smooth this morning:  
There's some conceit or other likes him well  
When that he bids good morrow with such spirit.  
I think there's never a man in Christendom  
Can lesser hide his love or hate than he,  
For by his face straight shall you know his heart.

Stanley What of his heart perceive you in his face  
By any livelihood he showed today?

Lord Hastings Marry, that with no man here he is offended,

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

For were he, he had shown it in his looks.

Stanley I pray God he be not, I say.

**Re-enter** RICHARD and BUCKINGHAM.

Richard I pray you all, tell me what they deserve  
That do conspire my death with devilish plots  
Of damned witchcraft, and that have prevailed  
Upon my body with their hellish charms?

Lord Hastings The tender love I bear your grace, my lord,  
Makes me most forward in this princely presence  
To doom th' offenders, whatsoever they be.  
I say, my lord, they have deserved death.

Richard Then be your eyes the witness of their evil.  
See how I am bewitched. Behold, mine arm  
Is like a blasted sapling, withered up.  
And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch,  
Consorted with that harlot, strumpet Shore,  
That by their witchcraft thus have marked me.

Lord Hastings If they have done this deed, my noble lord -

Richard If? - thou protector of this damned strumpet,  
Talk'st thou to me of ifs? Thou art a traitor.  
Off with his head! Now by Saint Paul I swear  
I will not dine until I see the same.  
Lovel and Ratcliffe, look that it be done;  
The rest that love me, rise, and follow me.

**Exeunt**

Manet LOVEL and RATCLIFFE with the Lord HASTINGS.

Lord Hastings Woe, woe for England! not a whit for me;  
For I, too fond, might have prevented this.  
Stanley did dream the boar did raze his helm,  
And I did scorn it, and disdain to fly;  
Three times today my footcloth horse did stumble,  
And started when he looked upon the Tower,  
As loath to bear me to the slaughterhouse.  
O, now I need the priest that spake to me.  
I now repent I told the pursuivan,  
As too triumphing, how mine enemies  
Today at Pomfret bloodily were butchered,  
And I myself secure in grace and favour.  
O Margaret, Margaret, now thy heavy curse  
Is lighted on poor Hastings' wretched head.

Ratcliffe Come, come, dispatch; the duke would be at dinner.  
Make a short shrift; he longs to see your head.

Lord Hastings O momentary grace of mortal men,  
Which we more hunt for than the grace of God!  
Who builds his hope in air of your good looks  
Lives like a drunken sailor on a mast,  
Ready with every nod to tumble down  
Into the fatal bowels of the deep.

Lovel Come, come, dispatch; 'tis bootless to exclaim.

Lord Hastings O bloody Richard! Miserable England!  
I prophesy the fearfull'st time to thee  
That ever wretched age hath looked upon.  
Come, lead me to the block; bear him my head:  
They smile at me who shortly shall be dead.

**Exeunt**

**Scene 5. London. The Tower Walls.**

**Enter** RICHARD and BUCKINGHAM in rotten armour, marvellous ill-favoured.

Richard                    Come, cousin, canst thou quake and change thy colour,  
Murder thy breath in middle of a word,  
And then again begin, and stop again,  
As if thou wert distraught, and mad with terror?

Buckingham              Tut, I can counterfeit the deep tragedian,  
Speak, and look back, and pry on every side,  
Tremble and start at wagging of a straw,  
Intending deep suspicion; ghastly looks  
Are at my service like enforced smiles,  
And both are ready in their offices  
At any time to grace my stratagems.  
But what, is Catesby gone?

**Enter** the LORD MAYOR and CATESBY.

Richard                    He is; and see, he brings the Mayor along.

Buckingham              Lord Mayor!

Richard                    Look to the drawbridge there!

Buckingham              Hark, a drum!

Richard                    Catesby, o'erlook the walls.

**Exit** CATESBY.

Buckingham    Lord Mayor, the reason we have sent -

**Enter** LOVEL and RATCLIFFE, with Hastings's head.

Richard                    Look back! Defend thee! Here are enemies.

Buckingham              God and our innocence defend and guard us!

Richard                    Be patient, they are friends: Ratcliffe and Lovel.

Lovel                        Here is the head of that ignoble traitor  
The dangerous and unsuspected Hastings.

Richard                    So dear I loved the man that I must weep.  
I took him for the plainest harmless creature  
That breathed upon the earth a Christian;  
Made him my book, wherein my soul recorded  
The history of all her secret thoughts.  
So smooth he daubed his vice with show of virtue  
That, his apparent open guilt omitted,  
- I mean his conversation with Shore's wife -  
He lived from all attainder of suspects.

Buckingham              Well, well, he was the covert'st sheltered traitor.  
Would you imagine, or almost believe,  
Were't not that by great preservation  
We live to tell it, that the subtle traitor  
This day had plotted, in the Council-house,  
To murder me and my good lord of Gloucester?

Lord Mayor                Had he done so?

Richard                    What, think you we are Turks or infidels?  
Or that we would, against the form of law,  
Proceed thus rashly in the villain's death  
But that the extreme peril of the case,  
The peace of England, and our persons' safety,  
Enforced us to this execution.

Lord Mayor                Now fair befall you! He deserved his death;

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

And your good graces both have well proceeded,  
To warn false traitors from the like attempts.

Buckingham I never looked for better at his hands  
After he once fell in with Mistress Shore.  
Yet had we not determined he should die  
Until your lordship came to see his end,  
- Which now the loving haste of these our friends,  
Something against our meanings, have prevented -  
Because, my lord, I would have had you heard  
The traitor speak, and timorously confess  
The manner and the purpose of his treasons,  
That you might well have signified the same  
Unto the citizens, who haply may  
Misconster us in him, and wail his death.

Lord Mayor But, my good lord, your graces' words shall serve  
As well as I had seen and heard him speak;  
And do not doubt, right noble princes both,  
But I'll acquaint our duteous citizens  
With all your just proceedings in this cause.

Richard And to that end we wished your lordship here,  
T' avoid the censures of the carping world.

Buckingham Which since you come too late of our intent,  
Yet witness what you hear we did intend.  
And so, my good Lord Mayor, we bid farewell.

**Exit** MAYOR.

Richard Go after, after, cousin Buckingham.  
The Mayor towards Guildhall hies him in all post:  
There, at your meet'st advantage of the time,  
Infer the bastardy of Edward's children.  
Tell them how Edward put to death a citizen  
Only for saying he would make his son  
"Heir to the crown" - meaning indeed his house,  
Which by the sign thereof was termed so.  
Moreover, urge his hateful luxury  
And bestial appetite in change of lust,  
Which stretched unto their servants, daughters, wives,  
Even where his raging eye or savage heart,  
Without control, listed to make a prey.  
Nay, for a need, thus far come near my person:  
Tell them, when that my mother went with child  
Of that insatiate Edward, noble York,  
My princely father, then had wars in France,  
And by true computation of the time  
Found that the issue was not his begot;  
Which well appeared in his lineaments,  
Being nothing like the noble duke my father.  
Yet touch this sparingly, as 'twere far off,  
Because, my lord, you know my mother lives.

Buckingham Doubt not, my lord, I'll play the orator  
As if the golden fee for which I plead  
Were for myself. And so, my lord, adieu.

Richard If you thrive well, bring them to Baynard's Castle,  
Where you shall find me well accompanied  
With reverend fathers and well-learned bishops.

Buckingham I go; and towards three or four o'clock  
Look for the news that the Guildhall affords.

**Exit**

Richard Go, Lovel, with all speed, to Doctor Shaw.  
[To RATCLIFFE] Go thou to Friar Penker. - Bid them both  
Meet me within this hour at Baynard's Castle.

**Exeunt** LOVEL and RATCLIFFE.

Now will I go to take some privy order  
To draw the brats of Clarence out of sight,  
And to give notice that no manner person  
Have any time recourse unto the princes.

**Exit**

## **Scene 6. London. A Street.**

**Enter** A SCRIVENER with a paper in his hand.

Scrivener            Here is the indictment of the good Lord Hastings,  
Which in a set hand fairly is engrossed,  
That it may be today read o'er in Paul's.  
And mark how well the sequel hangs together:  
Eleven hours I have spent to write it over,  
For yesternight by Catesby was it sent me;  
- The precedent was full as long a-doing -  
And yet within these five hours Hastings lived,  
Untainted, unexamined, free, at liberty.  
Here's a good world the while! Who is so gross  
That cannot see this palpable device?  
Yet who's so bold but says he sees it not?  
Bad is the world, and all will come to nought  
When such ill-dealing must be seen in thought.

**Exit**

## **Scene 7. London. The Court of Baynard's Castle.**

**Enter** RICHARD and BUCKINGHAM at several doors.

Richard            How now, how now! What say the citizens?

Buckingham        Now by the holy Mother of our Lord,  
The citizens are mum, say not a word.

Richard            Touched you the bastardy of Edward's children?

Buckingham        I did, with his contract with Lady Lucy,  
And his contract by deputy in France;  
Th' unsatiate greediness of his desire,  
And his enforcement of the city wives;  
His tyranny for trifles; his own bastardy,  
As being got, your father then in France,  
And his resemblance, being not like the duke.  
Withal, I did infer your lineaments -  
Being the right idea of your father,  
Both in your form and nobleness of mind;  
Laid open all your victories in Scotland,  
Your discipline in war, wisdom in peace,  
Your bounty, virtue, fair humility;  
Indeed, left nothing fitting for your purpose  
Untouched, or slightly handled in discourse.  
And when mine oratory drew to an end,  
I bid them that did love their country's good  
Cry "God save Richard, England's royal king!"

Richard            And did they so?

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Buckingham No, so God help me, they spake not a word,  
But, like dumb statues or breathing stones,  
Stared each on other, and looked deadly pale;  
Which when I saw, I reprehended them,  
And asked the Mayor what meant this wilful silence.  
His answer was, the people were not used  
To be spoke to but by the Recorder.  
Then he was urged to tell my tale again:  
"Thus saith the duke; thus hath the duke inferred";       But nothing spoke in  
warrant from himself.  
When he had done, some followers of mine own,  
At lower end of the hall, hurled up their caps,  
And some ten voices cried "God save King Richard!"  
And thus I took the vantage of those few:  
"Thanks, gentle citizens and friends," quoth I,  
"This general applause and cheerful shout  
Argues your wisdoms and your love to Richard."  
And even here brake off, and came away.

Richard What tongueless blocks were they! Would they not speak?  
Will not the Mayor then, and his brethren, come?

Buckingham The Mayor is here at hand. Intend some fear;  
Be not you spoke with but by mighty suit;  
And look you get a prayer-book in your hand,  
And stand between two churchmen, good my lord,  
For on that ground I'll build a holy descant;  
And be not easily won to our requests:  
Play the maid's part - still answer nay, and take it.

Richard I go; and if you plead as well for them  
As I can say nay to thee for myself,  
No doubt we bring it to a happy issue.

Buckingham Go, go up to the leads; the Lord Mayor knocks.

**Exit RICHARD.**

**Enter the MAYOR, ALDERMEN, and CITIZENS.**

Welcome, my lord. I dance attendance here;  
I think the duke will not be spoke withal.

**Enter CATESBY.**

Now, Catesby, what says your lord to my request?

Catesby He doth entreat your grace, my noble lord,  
To visit him tomorrow or next day.  
He is within, with two right reverend fathers,  
Divinely bent to meditation,  
And in no worldly suits would he be moved  
To draw him from his holy exercise.

Buckingham Return, good Catesby, to the gracious duke;  
Tell him, myself, the Mayor and aldermen,  
In deep designs, in matter of great moment,  
No less importing than our general good,  
Are come to have some conference with his grace.

Catesby I'll signify so much unto him straight.

**Exit**

Buckingham Ah ha, my lord, this prince is not an Edward!  
He is not lolling on a lewd love-bed,  
But on his knees at meditation;  
Not dallying with a brace of courtesans,  
But meditating with two deep divines;  
Not sleeping, to engross his idle body,  
But praying, to enrich his watchful soul.  
Happy were England would this virtuous prince

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Take on his grace the sovereignty thereof.  
But sure I fear we shall not win him to it.

Lord Mayor           Marry, God defend his grace should say us nay!

Buckingham           I fear he will. Here Catesby comes again.

**Re-enter** CATESBY.

Now, Catesby, what says his grace?

Catesby               He wonders to what end you have assembled  
Such troops of citizens to come to him,  
His grace not being warned thereof before.  
He fears, my lord, you mean no good to him.

Buckingham           Sorry I am my noble cousin should  
Suspect me that I mean no good to him.  
By heaven, we come to him in perfect love;  
And so once more return and tell his grace.

**Exit** CATESBY.

When holy and devout religious men  
Are at their beads, 'tis much to draw them thence,  
So sweet is zealous contemplation.

**Enter** RICHARD aloft, between two BISHOPS, with CATESBY.

Lord Mayor           See where his grace stands, 'tween two clergymen.

Buckingham           Two props of virtue for a Christian prince,  
To stay him from the fall of vanity;  
And see, a book of prayer in his hand -  
True ornaments to know a holy man.  
Famous Plantagenet, most gracious prince,  
Lend favourable ear to our requests,  
And pardon us the interruption  
Of thy devotion and right Christian zeal.

Richard               My lord, there needs no such apology:  
I do beseech your grace to pardon me,  
Who, earnest in the service of my God,  
Deferred the visitation of my friends.  
But leaving this, what is your grace's pleasure?

Buckingham           Even that, I hope, which pleaseth God above,  
And all good men of this ungoverned isle.

Richard               I do suspect I have done some offence  
That seems disgracious in the city's eye,  
And that you come to reprehend my ignorance.

Buckingham           You have, my lord. Would it might please your grace,  
On our entreaties, to emend your fault.

Richard               Else wherefore breathe I in a Christian land?

Buckingham           Know then, it is your fault that you resign  
The supreme seat, the throne majestic,  
The sceptred office of your ancestors,  
Your state of fortune, and your due of birth,  
The lineal glory of your royal house,  
To the corruption of a blemished stock;  
Whiles in the mildness of your sleepy thoughts  
- Which here we waken to our country's good -  
This noble isle doth want her proper limbs;  
Her face defaced with scars of infamy,  
Her royal stock graft with ignoble plants,  
And almost shouldered in the swallowing gulf  
Of dark forgetfulness and deep oblivion;  
Which to recure, we heartily solicit  
Your gracious self to take on you the charge

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

And kingly government of this your land:  
Not as Protector, steward, substitute,  
Or lowly factor for another's gain,  
But as successively, from blood to blood,  
Your right of birth, your empery, your own.  
For this, consorted with the citizens,  
Your very worshipful and loving friends,  
And by their vehement instigation,  
In this just cause come I to move your grace.

Richard

I cannot tell if to depart in silence  
Or bitterly to speak in your reproof  
Best fitteth my degree or your condition.  
If not to answer, you might haply think  
Tongue-tied ambition, not replying, yielded  
To bear the golden yoke of sovereignty,  
Which fondly you would here impose on me;  
If to reprove you for this suit of yours,  
So seasoned with your faithful love to me,  
Then, on the other side, I checked my friends.  
Therefore, to speak and to avoid the first,  
And then in speaking not to incur the last,  
Definitively thus I answer you:  
Your love deserves my thanks, but my desert  
Unmeritable shuns your high request.  
First, if all obstacles were cut away,  
And that my path were even to the crown,  
As the ripe revenue and due of birth,  
Yet so much is my poverty of spirit,  
So mighty and so many my defects,  
That I would rather hide me from my greatness  
- Being a bark to brook no mighty sea -  
Than in my greatness covet to be hid,  
And in the vapour of my glory smothered.  
But, God be thanked, there is no need of me;  
And much I need, to help you, were there need.  
The royal tree hath left us royal fruit,  
Which, mellowed by the stealing hours of time,  
Will well become the seat of majesty,  
And make, no doubt, us happy by his reign.  
On him I lay that you would lay on me,  
The right and fortune of his happy stars,  
Which God defend that I should wring from him.

Buckingham

My lord, this argues conscience in your grace;  
But the respects thereof are nice and trivial,  
All circumstances well considered.  
You say that Edward is your brother's son;  
So say we too - but not by Edward's wife:  
For first was he contract to Lady Lucy,  
- Your mother lives a witness to his vow -  
And afterward by substitute betrothed  
To Bona, sister to the King of France.  
These both put off, a poor petitioner,  
A care-crazed mother to a many sons,  
A beauty-waning and distressed widow,  
Even in the afternoon of her best days,  
Made prize and purchase of his wanton eye,  
Seduced the pitch and height of his degree  
To base declension and loathed bigamy.  
By her, in his unlawful bed, he got  
This Edward, whom our manners call the prince.  
More bitterly could I expostulate,  
Save that for reverence to some alive  
I give a sparing limit to my tongue.  
Then, good my lord, take to your royal self  
This proffered benefit of dignity:  
If not to bless us and the land withal,  
Yet to draw forth your noble ancestry

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

From the corruption of abusing times  
Unto a lineal, true-derived course.

Lord Mayor Do, good my lord; your citizens entreat you.

Buckingham Refuse not, mighty lord, this proffered love.

Catesby O make them joyful - grant their lawful suit.

Richard Alas, why would you heap this care on me?  
I am unfit for state and majesty.  
I do beseech you take it not amiss,  
I cannot, nor I will not, yield to you.

Buckingham If you refuse it - as in love and zeal  
Loath to depose the child, your brother's son;  
As well we know your tenderness of heart  
And gentle, kind, effeminate remorse,  
Which we have noted in you to your kindred,  
And equally indeed to all estates -  
Yet know, whe'er you accept our suit or no,  
Your brother's son shall never reign our king,  
But we will plant some other in the throne  
To the disgrace and downfall of your house;  
And in this resolution here we leave you.  
Come, citizens. Zounds! I'll entreat no more.

Richard O, do not swear, my lord of Buckingham.

**Exeunt** BUCKINGHAM and the rest, slowly.

Catesby Call him again, sweet prince, accept their suit;  
If you deny them, all the land will rue it.

Richard Will you enforce me to a world of cares?  
Call them again: I am not made of stone,  
But penetrable to your kind entreaties,  
Albeit against my conscience and my soul.

**Re-enter** BUCKINGHAM and the rest.

Cousin of Buckingham, and sage grave men,  
Since you will buckle fortune on my back,  
To bear her burden, whe'er I will or no,  
I must have patience to endure the load;  
But if black scandal or foul-faced reproach  
Attend the sequel of your imposition,  
Your mere enforcement shall acquittance me  
From all the impure blots and stains thereof;  
For God doth know, and you may partly see,  
How far I am from the desire of this.

Lord Mayor God bless your grace! We see it, and will say it.

Richard In saying so, you shall but say the truth.

Buckingham Then I salute you with this royal title:  
Long live King Richard, England's worthy king!

All Amen.

Buckingham Tomorrow may it please you to be crowned?

Richard Even when you please, for you will have it so.

Buckingham Tomorrow then we will attend your grace;  
And so most joyfully we take our leave.

Richard Come, let us to our holy work again.  
Farewell, my cousin; farewell, gentle friends.

**Exeunt**

## ACT 4.

### Scene 1. London. Before the Tower.

**Enter** QUEEN ELIZABETH, DUCHESS OF YORK, MARQUIS DORSET at one door; LADY ANNE with CLARENCE'S DAUGHTER at another door.

Duchess           Who meets us here? My niece Plantagenet,  
Led in the hand of her kind aunt of Gloucester?  
Now, for my life, she's wand'ring to the Tower,  
On pure heart's love, to greet the tender prince.  
Daughter, well met.

Lady Anne       God give your graces both  
A happy and a joyful time of day.

Elizabeth       As much to you, good sister. Whither away?

Lady Anne       No farther than the Tower, and - as I guess,  
Upon the like devotion as yourselves -  
To gratulate the gentle princes there.

Elizabeth       Kind sister, thanks; we'll enter all together.

**Enter** the Lieutenant BRAKENBURY.

And in good time here the Lieutenant comes.  
Master Lieutenant, pray you, by your leave,  
How doth the prince and my young son of York?

Brakenbury      Right well, dear madam. By your patience,  
I may not suffer you to visit them;  
The king hath strictly charged the contrary.

Elizabeth       The king? Who's that?

Brakenbury      I mean the Lord Protector.

Elizabeth       The Lord protect him from that kingly title.  
Hath he set bounds between their love and me?  
I am their mother - who shall bar me from them?

Duchess         I am their father's mother; I will see them.

Lady Anne       Their aunt I am in law, in love their mother;  
Then bring me to their sights. I'll bear thy blame,  
And take thy office from thee on my peril.

Brakenbury      No, madam, no; I may not leave it so:  
I am bound by oath, and therefore pardon me.

**Exit**

**Enter** LORD STANLEY.

Stanley          Let me but meet you ladies one hour hence,  
And I'll salute your Grace of York as mother  
And reverend looker-on of two fair queens.  
[To ANNE] Come, madam, you must straight to Westminster,  
There to be crowned Richard's royal queen.

Elizabeth       Ah, cut my lace asunder,  
That my pent heart may have some scope to beat,  
Or else I swoon with this dead-killing news.

Lady Anne       Despiteful tidings! O unpleasing news!

Dorset          Be of good cheer. Mother, how fares your grace?

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Elizabeth O Dorset, speak not to me; get thee gone.  
 Death and destruction dogs thee at thy heels;  
 Thy mother's name is ominous to children.  
 If thou wilt outstrip death, go cross the seas,  
 And live with Richmond, from the reach of hell.  
 Go, hie thee, hie thee from this slaughterhouse,  
 Lest thou increase the number of the dead,  
 And make me die the thrall of Margaret's curse:  
 Nor mother, wife, nor England's counted queen.

Stanley Full of wise care is this your counsel, madam.  
 [To DORSET] Take all the swift advantage of the hours;  
 You shall have letters from me to my son  
 In your behalf, to meet you on the way.  
 Be not ta'en tardy by unwise delay.

Duchess O ill-dispersing wind of misery!  
 O my accursed womb! - the bed of death -  
 A cockatrice hast thou hatched to the world,  
 Whose unavoyded eye is murderous.

Stanley Come, madam, come; I in all haste was sent.

Lady Anne And I with all unwillingness will go.  
 O would to God that the inclusive verge  
 Of golden metal that must round my brow  
 Were red-hot steel, to sear me to the brains!  
 Anointed let me be with deadly venom,  
 And die ere men can say "God save the queen".

Elizabeth Go, go. Poor soul, I envy not thy glory;  
 To feed my humour, wish thyself no harm.

Lady Anne No: why? When he that is my husband now  
 Came to me as I followed Henry's corse,  
 When scarce the blood was well washed from his hands  
 Which issued from my other angel husband  
 And that dear saint which then I weeping followed -  
 O when, I say, I looked on Richard's face  
 This was my wish: "Be thou" quoth I "accursed  
 For making me, so young, so old a widow;  
 And when thou wedd'st, let sorrow haunt thy bed;  
 And be thy wife, if any be so mad,  
 More miserable by the life of thee  
 Than thou hast made me by my dear lord's death".  
 Lo, ere I can repeat this curse again,  
 - Within so small a time - my woman's heart  
 Grossly grew captive to his honey words  
 And proved the subject of mine own soul's curse,  
 Which hitherto hath held my eyes from rest:  
 For never yet one hour in his bed  
 Did I enjoy the golden dew of sleep,  
 But with his timorous dreams was still awaked.  
 Besides, he hates me for my father Warwick,  
 And will, no doubt, shortly be rid of me.

Elizabeth Poor heart, adieu; I pity thy complaining.

Lady Anne No more than with my soul I mourn for yours.

Dorset Farewell, thou woeful welcomer of glory.

Lady Anne Adieu, poor soul, that tak'st thy leave of it.

Duchess [To DORSET]  
 Go thou to Richmond - and good fortune guide thee!  
 [To ANNE]  
 Go thou to Richard - and good angels tend thee!  
 [To ELIZABETH]  
 Go thou to sanctuary - and good thoughts possess thee!  
 I to my grave - where peace and rest lie with me!

Eighty odd years of sorrow have I seen,  
And each hour's joy wracked with a week of teen.

Elizabeth                    Stay, yet look back with me unto the Tower.  
Pity, you ancient stones, those tender babes  
Whom envy hath immured within your walls.  
Rough cradle for such little pretty ones,  
Rude ragged nurse, old sullen playfellow  
For tender princes - use my babies well;  
So foolish sorrow bids your stones farewell.

**Exeunt**

## Scene 2. London. A Room of State within the Palace.

Sound a Sennet.

Enter RICHARD in pomp, crowned; BUCKINGHAM, CATESBY, RATCLIFFE,  
LOVEL, other NOBLES, and a PAGE.

King Richard                Stand all apart. Cousin of Buckingham.

Buckingham                My gracious sovereign.

King Richard                Give me thy hand.  
[Sound a sennet.  
[Here he ascendeth the throne.

Thus high, by thy advice  
And thy assistance, is King Richard seated.  
But shall we wear these glories for a day?  
Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them?

Buckingham                Still live they, and for ever let them last.

King Richard                Ah, Buckingham, now do I play the touch,  
To try if thou be current gold indeed:  
Young Edward lives - think now what I would speak.

Buckingham                Say on, my loving lord.

King Richard                Why, Buckingham, I say I would be king.

Buckingham                Why, so you are, my thrice-renowned lord.

King Richard                Ha, am I king? - 'tis so: but Edward lives.

Buckingham                True, noble prince.

King Richard                O bitter consequence,  
That Edward still should live true noble prince!  
Cousin, thou wast not wont to be so dull.  
Shall I be plain? I wish the bastards dead,  
And I would have it suddenly performed.  
What sayst thou now? Speak suddenly, be brief.

Buckingham                Your grace may do your pleasure.

King Richard                Tut, tut, thou art all ice; thy kindness freezes.  
Say, have I thy consent that they shall die?

Buckingham                Give me some little breath, some pause, dear lord,  
Before I positively speak in this.  
I will resolve you herein presently.

**Exit**

Catesby                    The king is angry. See, he gnaws his lip.

King Richard                [Aside] I will converse with iron-witted fools

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

And unrespectful boys: none are for me  
That look into me with considerate eyes.  
High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspect.  
Boy!

Page [Advancing to the throne] My lord?

King Richard Know'st thou not any whom corrupting gold  
Will tempt unto a close exploit of death?

Page I know a discontented gentleman  
Whose humble means match not his haughty spirit.  
Gold were as good as twenty orators,  
And will, no doubt, tempt him to anything.

King Richard What is his name?

Page His name, my lord, is Tyrrel.

King Richard I partly know the man. Go, call him hither, boy.

**Exit PAGE.**

[Aside] The deep-revolving, witty Buckingham  
No more shall be the neighbour to my counsels.  
Hath he so long held out with me, untired,  
And stops he now for breath? Well, be it so.

**Enter LORD STANLEY.**

How now, Lord Stanley, what's the news?

Stanley Know, my loving lord,  
The Marquis Dorset, as I hear, is fled  
To Richmond in the parts where he abides.

King Richard Come hither, Catesby. Rumour it abroad  
That Anne my wife is very grievous sick;  
I will take order for her keeping close.  
Enquire me out some mean poor gentleman,  
Whom I will marry straight to Clarence' daughter -  
The boy is foolish, and I fear not him.  
Look how thou dream'st! I say again, give out  
That Anne, my queen, is sick and like to die.  
About it; for it stands me much upon  
To stop all hopes whose growth may damage me.

**Exit CATESBY.**

I must be married to my brother's daughter,  
Or else my kingdom stands on brittle glass.  
Murder her brothers, and then marry her -  
Uncertain way of gain! But I am in  
So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin;  
Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye.

**Re-enter PAGE, with TYRREL.**

Is thy name Tyrrel?

Tyrrel James Tyrrel, and your most obedient subject.

King Richard Art thou indeed?

Tyrrel Prove me, my gracious lord.

King Richard Dar'st thou resolve to kill a friend of mine?

Tyrrel Please you; but I had rather kill two enemies.

King Richard Why then thou hast it. Two deep enemies,  
Foes to my rest, and my sweet sleep's disturbers,  
Are they that I would have thee deal upon.  
Tyrrel, I mean those bastards in the Tower.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Tyrrel Let me have open means to come to them,  
And soon I'll rid you from the fear of them.

King Richard Thou sing'st sweet music. Hark, come hither, Tyrrel.  
Go by this token. Rise, and lend thine ear.  
[Whispers.  
There is no more but so. Say it is done;  
And I will love thee, and prefer thee for it.

Tyrrel I will dispatch it straight.

**Exit**

**Re-enter** BUCKINGHAM.

Buckingham My lord, I have considered in my mind  
The late request that you did sound me in.

King Richard Well, let that rest. Dorset is fled to Richmond.

Buckingham I hear the news, my lord.

King Richard Stanley, he is your wife's son. Well, look unto it.

Buckingham My lord, I claim the gift, my due by promise,  
For which your honour and your faith is pawned:  
Th' earldom of Hereford and the moveables  
Which you have promised I shall possess.

King Richard Stanley, look to your wife; if she convey  
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

Buckingham What says your highness to my just request?

King Richard I do remember me Henry the Sixth  
Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,  
When Richmond was a little peevish boy.  
A king? - perhaps - perhaps.

Buckingham My lord?

King Richard How chance the prophet could not at that time  
Have told me, I being by, that I should kill him?

Buckingham My lord, your promise for the earldom.

King Richard Richmond! When last I was at Exeter,  
The Mayor in courtesy showed me the castle,  
And called it Rougemont, at which name I started,  
Because a bard of Ireland told me once  
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

Buckingham My lord?

King Richard Ay - what's o'clock?

Buckingham I am thus bold to put your grace in mind  
Of what you promised me.

King Richard Well, but what's o'clock?

Buckingham Upon the stroke of ten.

King Richard Well, let it strike.

Buckingham Why let it strike?

King Richard Because that like a jack thou keep'st the stroke  
Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.  
I am not in the giving vein today.

Buckingham May it please you to resolve me in my suit?

King Richard Thou troublest me; I am not in the vein.

**Exit**, followed by all but BUCKINGHAM.

Buckingham           And is it thus? Repays he my deep service  
                               With such contempt? Made I him king for this?  
                               O, let me think on Hastings, and be gone  
                               To Brecknock while my fearful head is on.

**Exit**

### Scene 3. London. A Room of State in the Palace.

**Enter** TYRREL.

Tyrrel                   The tyrannous and bloody act is done;  
                               The most arch deed of piteous massacre  
                               That ever yet this land was guilty of.  
                               Dighton and Forrest, who I did suborn  
                               To do this piece of ruthless butchery,  
                               Albeit they were fleshed villains, bloody dog,  
                               Melted with tenderness and mild compassion,  
                               Wept like two children, in their deaths' sad story.  
                               "O thus" quoth Dighton "lay the gentle babes" -  
                               "Thus, thus," quoth Forrest "girdling one another  
                               Within their alabaster innocent arms.  
                               Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,  
                               And in their summer beauty kissed each other.  
                               A book of prayers on their pillow lay,  
                               Which once" quoth Forrest "almost changed my mind.  
                               But O the devil" - there the villain stopped,  
                               When Dighton thus told on: "We smothered  
                               The most replenished sweet work of nature  
                               That from the prime creation e'er she framed."  
                               Hence both are gone with conscience and remorse,  
                               They could not speak; and so I left them both,  
                               To bear this tidings to the bloody king.

**Enter** KING RICHARD.

                                  And here he comes. All health, my sovereign lord.

King Richard           Kind Tyrrel, am I happy in thy news?

Tyrrel                   If to have done the thing you gave in charge  
                               Beget your happiness, be happy then,  
                               For it is done.

King Richard           But didst thou see them dead?

Tyrrel                   I did, my lord.

King Richard           And buried, gentle Tyrrel?

Tyrrel                   The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them;  
                               But where, to say the truth, I do not know.

King Richard           Come to me, Tyrrel, soon at aftersupper,  
                               When thou shalt tell the process of their death.  
                               Meantime, but think how I may do thee good,  
                               And be inheritor of thy desire.  
                               Farewell till then.

Tyrrel                   I humbly take my leave.

**Exit**

King Richard           The son of Clarence have I pent up close,  
                               His daughter meanly have I matched in marriage,  
                               The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom,

And Anne my wife hath bid this world good night.  
 Now, for I know the Britaine Richmond aims  
 At young Elizabeth, my brother's daughter,  
 And by that knot looks proudly on the crown,  
 To her go I, a jolly thriving wooer.

**Enter RATCLIFFE.**

Ratcliffe My lord!

King Richard Good or bad news, that thou com'st in so bluntly?

Ratcliffe Bad news, my lord. Morton is fled to Richmond,  
 And Buckingham, backed with the hardy Welshmen,  
 Is in the field, and still his power increaseth.

King Richard Ely with Richmond troubles me more near  
 Than Buckingham and his rash-levied strength.  
 Come, I have learned that fearful commenting  
 Is leaden servitor to dull delay;  
 Delay leads impotent and snail-paced beggary.  
 Then fiery expedition be my wing,  
 Jove's Mercury, and herald for a king!  
 Go, muster men. My counsel is my shield.  
 We must be brief when traitors brave the field.

**Exeunt**

## Scene 4. London. Before the Palace.

**Enter old QUEEN MARGARET.**

Margaret So now prosperity begins to mellow,  
 And drop into the rotten mouth of death.  
 Here in these confines silyly have I lurked  
 To watch the waning of mine enemies.  
 A dire induction am I witness to,  
 And will to France, hoping the consequence  
 Will prove as bitter, black, and tragical.

**Enter DUCHESS OF YORK and QUEEN ELIZABETH.**

Withdraw thee, wretched Margaret. Who comes here?  
 [Stands apart.]

Elizabeth Ah, my poor princes! Ah, my tender babes,  
 My unblowed flowers, new-appearing sweets!  
 If yet your gentle souls fly in the air  
 And be not fixed in doom perpetual,  
 Hover about me with your airy wings,  
 And hear your mother's lamentation.

Margaret [Aside] Hover about her; say that right for right  
 Hath dimmed your infant morn to aged night.

Duchess So many miseries have crazed my voice  
 That my woe-wearied tongue is still and mute.  
 Edward Plantagenet, why art thou dead?

Margaret [Aside] Plantagenet doth quit Plantagenet;  
 Edward for Edward pays a dying debt.

Elizabeth Wilt thou, O God, fly from such gentle lambs,  
 And throw them in the entrails of the wolf?  
 When didst Thou sleep when such a deed was done?

Margaret [Aside] When holy Harry died, and my sweet son.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

- Duchess Dead life, blind sight, poor mortal living ghost,  
Woe's scene, world's shame, grave's due by life usurped,  
Brief abstract and record of tedious days,  
Rest thy unrest on England's lawful earth,  
Unlawfully made drunk with innocent blood.  
[She sits on the ground.]
- Elizabeth Ah, that thou wouldst as soon afford a grave  
As thou canst yield a melancholy seat;  
Then would I hide my bones, not rest them here.  
Ah, who hath any cause to mourn but we?  
[She sits on the ground.]
- Margaret [Advancing] If ancient sorrow be most reverend,  
Give mine the benefit of seignory,  
And let my griefs frown on the upper hand.  
If sorrow can admit society,  
Tell o'er your woes again by viewing mine.  
I had an Edward, till a Richard killed him;  
I had a husband, till a Richard killed him:  
Thou hadst an Edward, till a Richard killed him;  
Thou hadst a Richard, till a Richard killed him.
- Duchess I had a Richard too, and thou didst kill him;  
I had a Rutland too, thou holp'st to kill him.
- Margaret Thou hadst a Clarence too, and Richard killed him.  
From forth the kennel of thy womb hath crept  
A hellhound that doth hunt us all to death.  
That dog, that had his teeth before his eyes,  
To worry lambs and lap their gentle blood;  
That foul defacer of God's handiwork  
That reigns in galled eyes of weeping souls;  
That excellent grand tyrant of the earth  
Thy womb let loose to chase us to our graves.  
O upright, just, and true-disposing God,  
How do I thank Thee that this carnal cur  
Preys on the issue of his mother's body,  
And makes her pew-fellow with others' moan.
- Duchess O Harry's wife, triumph not in my woes.  
God witness with me, I have wept for thine.
- Margaret Bear with me: - I am hungry for revenge,  
And now I cloy me with beholding it.  
Thy Edward he is dead, that killed my Edward;  
Thy other Edward dead, to quit my Edward;  
Young York he is but boot, because both they  
Matched not the high perfection of my loss.  
Thy Clarence he is dead, that stabbed my Edward;  
And the beholders of this frantic play,  
Th' adulterate Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan, Grey,  
Untimely smothered in their dusky graves.  
Richard yet lives, hell's black intelligencer,  
Only reserved their factor to buy souls  
And send them thither. But at hand, at hand  
Ensues his piteous and unpitied end.  
Earth gapes, hell burns, fiends roar, saints pray,  
To have him suddenly conveyed from hence.  
Cancel his bond of life, dear God I pray,  
That I may live and say "The dog is dead".
- Elizabeth O, thou didst prophesy the time would come  
That I should wish for thee to help me curse  
That bottled spider, that foul bunch-backed toad.
- Margaret I called thee then vain flourish of my fortune;  
I called thee then poor shadow, painted queen,  
The presentation of but what I was,  
The flattering index of a direful pageant,  
One heaved a-high to be hurled down below,

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

A mother only mocked with two fair babes,  
 A dream of what thou wast, a garish flag  
 To be the aim of every dangerous shot,  
 A sign of dignity, a breath, a bubble,  
 A queen in jest, only to fill the scene.  
 Where is thy husband now? Where be thy brothers?  
 Where are thy two sons? Wherein dost thou joy?  
 Who sues and kneels and says "God save the queen"?  
 Where be the bending peers that flattered thee?  
 Where be the thronging troops that followed thee?  
 Decline all this, and see what now thou art:  
 For happy wife, a most distressed widow;  
 For joyful mother, one that wails the name;  
 For one being sued to, one that humbly sues;  
 For queen, a very caitiff crowned with care;  
 For she that scorned at me, now scorned of me;  
 For she being feared of all, now fearing one;  
 For she commanding all, obeyed of none.  
 Thus hath the course of justice whirled about,  
 And left thee but a very prey to time,  
 Having no more but thought of what thou wast  
 To torture thee the more, being what thou art.  
 Thou didst usurp my place, and dost thou not  
 Usurp the just proportion of my sorrow?  
 Now thy proud neck bears half my burdened yoke,  
 From which even here I slip my weary head  
 And leave the burden of it all on thee.  
 Farewell, York's wife, and queen of sad mischance;  
 These English woes shall make me smile in France.

- Elizabeth            O thou well skilled in curses, stay awhile,  
 And teach me how to curse mine enemies.
- Margaret            Forbear to sleep the nights, and fast the days;  
 Compare dead happiness with living woe;  
 Think that thy babes were sweeter than they were,  
 And he that slew them fouler than he is.  
 Bett'ring thy loss makes the bad-causer worse.  
 Revolving this will teach thee how to curse.
- Elizabeth            My words are dull - O quicken them with thine.
- Margaret            Thy woes will make them sharp and pierce like mine.
- Exit**
- Duchess            Why should calamity be full of words?
- Elizabeth            Windy attorneys to their clients' woes,  
 Airy succeeders of intestate joys,  
 Poor breathing orators of miseries,  
 Let them have scope; though what they will impart  
 Help nothing else, yet do they ease the heart.
- Duchess            If so, then be not tongue-tied; go with me,  
 And in the breath of bitter words let's smother  
 My damned son that thy two sweet sons smothered.  
 [Trumpet.  
 The trumpet sounds. Be copious in exclams.
- Enter KING RICHARD and his Train, marching with DRUMS and TRUMPETS**
- King Richard        Who intercepts me in my expedition?
- Duchess            O, she that might have intercepted thee,  
 By strangling thee in her accursed womb,  
 From all the slaughters, wretch, that thou hast done.
- Elizabeth            Hide'st thou that forehead with a golden crown  
 Where should be branded, if that right were right,  
 The slaughter of the prince that owed that crown,

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

And the dire death of my poor sons and brothers?  
Tell me, thou villain-slave, where are my children?

Duchess Thou toad, thou toad, where is thy brother Clarence?  
And little Ned Plantagenet, his son?

Elizabeth Where is the gentle Rivers, Vaughan, Grey?

Duchess Where is kind Hastings?

King Richard A flourish, trumpets! Strike alarum, drums!  
Let not the heavens hear these telltale women  
Rail on the Lord's anointed. Strike, I say!  
[Flourish] Alarums.  
Either be patient and entreat me fair,  
Or with the clamorous report of war  
Thus will I drown your exclamations.

Duchess Art thou my son?

King Richard Ay, I thank God, my father, and yourself.

Duchess Then patiently hear my impatience.

King Richard Madam, I have a touch of your condition  
That cannot brook the accent of reproof.

Duchess O let me speak.

King Richard Do then, but I'll not hear.

Duchess I will be mild and gentle in my words.

King Richard And brief, good mother, for I am in haste.

Duchess Art thou so hasty? I have stayed for thee,  
God knows, in torment and in agony.

King Richard And came I not at last to comfort you?

Duchess No, by the Holy Rood, thou know'st it well  
Thou cam'st on earth to make the earth my hell.  
A grievous burden was thy birth to me;  
Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;  
Thy schooldays frightful, desp'rate, wild, and furious;  
Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous;  
Thy age confirmed, proud, subtle, sly, and bloody,  
More mild but yet more harmful, kind in hatred.  
What comfortable hour canst thou name  
That ever graced me with thy company?

King Richard Faith, none but Humphrey Hour, that called your grace  
To breakfast once, forth of my company.  
If I be so disgracious in your eye,  
Let me march on and not offend you, madam.  
Strike up the drum!

Duchess I prithee hear me speak.

King Richard You speak too bitterly.

Duchess Hear me a word,  
For I shall never speak to thee again.

King Richard So.

Duchess Either thou wilt die by God's just ordinance  
Ere from this war thou turn a conqueror,  
Or I with grief and extreme age shall perish,  
And never more behold thy face again.  
Therefore, take with thee my most grievous curse,  
Which in the day of battle tire thee more  
Than all the complete armour that thou wear'st.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

My prayers on the adverse party fight,  
And there the little souls of Edward's children  
Whisper the spirits of thine enemies,  
And promise them success and victory.  
Bloody thou art, bloody will be thy end;  
Shame serves thy life and doth thy death attend.

**Exit**

- Elizabeth            Though far more cause, yet much less spirit to curse  
Abides in me; I say Amen to her.
- King Richard        Stay, madam; I must talk a word with you.
- Elizabeth            I have no more sons of the royal blood  
For thee to slaughter. For my daughters, Richard,  
They shall be praying nuns, not weeping queens;  
And therefore level not to hit their lives.
- King Richard        You have a daughter called Elizabeth,  
Virtuous and fair, royal and gracious.
- Elizabeth            And must she die for this? O let her live,  
And I'll corrupt her manners, stain her beauty,  
Slander myself as false to Edward's bed,  
Throw over her the veil of infamy;  
So she may live unscarred of bleeding slaughter,  
I will confess she was not Edward's daughter.
- King Richard        Wrong not her birth; she is a royal princess.
- Elizabeth            To save her life I'll say she is not so.
- King Richard        Her life is safest only in her birth.
- Elizabeth            And only in that safety died her brothers.
- King Richard        Lo, at their birth good stars were opposite.
- Elizabeth            No, to their lives ill friends were contrary.
- King Richard        All unavoided is the doom of destiny.
- Elizabeth            True, when avoided grace makes destiny.  
My babes were destined to a fairer death  
If grace had blest thee with a fairer life.
- King Richard        You speak as if that I had slain my cousins.
- Elizabeth            Cousins indeed, and by their uncle cozened  
Of comfort, kingdom, kindred, freedom, life.  
Whose hand soever lanced their tender hearts,  
Thy head, all indirectly, gave direction.  
No doubt the murd'rous knife was dull and blunt  
Till it was whetted on thy stone-hard heart  
To revel in the entrails of my lambs.  
But that still use of grief makes wild grief tame  
My tongue should to thy ears not name my boys  
Till that my nails were anchored in thine eyes,  
And I in such a desp'rate bay of death,  
Like a poor bark of sails and tackling reft,  
Rush all to pieces on thy rocky bosom.
- King Richard        Madam, so thrive I in my enterprise  
And dangerous success of bloody wars,  
As I intend more good to you and yours  
Than ever you or yours by me were harmed.
- Elizabeth            What good is covered with the face of heaven,  
To be discovered, that can do me good?
- King Richard        Th' advancement of your children, gentle lady.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Elizabeth Up to some scaffold, there to lose their heads.

King Richard Unto the dignity and height of fortune,  
The high imperial type of this earth's glory.

Elizabeth Flatter my sorrow with report of it:  
Tell me what state, what dignity, what honour,  
Canst thou demise to any child of mine?

King Richard Even all I have, ay, and myself and all,  
Will I withal endow a child of thine,  
So in the Lethe of thy angry soul  
Thou drown the sad remembrance of those wrongs  
Which thou supposest I have done to thee.

Elizabeth Be brief, lest that the process of thy kindness  
Last longer telling than thy kindness' date.

King Richard Then know that from my soul I love thy daughter.

Elizabeth My daughter's mother thinks it with her soul.

King Richard What do you think?

Elizabeth That thou dost love my daughter from thy soul.  
So from thy soul's love didst thou love her brothers,  
And from my heart's love I do thank thee for it.

King Richard Be not so hasty to confound my meaning.  
I mean that with my soul I love thy daughter,  
And do intend to make her Queen of England.

Elizabeth Well then, who dost thou mean shall be her king?

King Richard Even he that makes her queen. Who else should be?

Elizabeth What, thou?

King Richard Even so. How think you of it?

Elizabeth How canst thou woo her?

King Richard That would I learn of you,  
As one being best acquainted with her humour.

Elizabeth And wilt thou learn of me?

King Richard Madam, with all my heart.

Elizabeth Send to her, by the man that slew her brothers,  
A pair of bleeding hearts; thereon engrave  
'Edward' and 'York' - then haply will she weep;  
Therefore present to her (as sometimes Margaret  
Did to thy father, steeped in Rutland's blood)  
A handkerchief, which, say to her, did drain  
The purple sap from her sweet brother's body,  
And bid her wipe her weeping eyes withal.  
If this inducement move her not to love,  
Send her a letter of thy noble deeds:  
Tell her thou mad'st away her uncle Clarence,  
Her uncle Rivers - ay, and for her sake  
Mad'st quick conveyance with her good aunt Anne.

King Richard You mock me, madam; this is not the way  
To win your daughter.

Elizabeth There is no other way;  
Unless thou couldst put on some other shape  
And not be Richard that hath done all this.

King Richard Say that I did all this for love of her?

Elizabeth Nay, then indeed she cannot chose but hate thee,  
Having bought love with such a bloody spoil.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

King Richard      Look what is done cannot be now amended.  
 Men shall deal unadvisedly sometimes,  
 Which after-hours gives leisure to repent.  
 If I did take the kingdom from your sons,  
 To make amends I'll give it to your daughter;  
 If I have killed the issue of your womb,  
 To quicken your increase I will beget  
 Mine issue of your blood upon your daughter.  
 A grandam's name is little less in love  
 Than is the doting title of a mother;  
 They are as children but one step below,  
 Even of your metal, of your very blood;  
 Of all one pain, save for a night of groans  
 Endured of her for whom you bid like sorrow.  
 Your children were vexation to your youth,  
 But mine shall be a comfort to your age.  
 The loss you have is but a son being king,  
 And by that loss your daughter is made queen.  
 I cannot make you what amends I would,  
 Therefore accept such kindness as I can.  
 Dorset your son, that with a fearful soul  
 Leads discontented steps in foreign soil,  
 This fair alliance quickly shall call home  
 To high promotions and great dignity.  
 The king that calls your beauteous daughter wife  
 Familiarly shall call thy Dorset brother:  
 Again shall you be mother to a king,  
 And all the ruins of distressful times  
 Repaired with double riches of content.  
 What? - we have many goodly days to see.  
 The liquid drops of tears that you have shed  
 Shall come again, transformed to orient pearl,  
 Advantaging their loan with interest  
 Of ten times double gain of happiness.  
 Go then, my mother, to thy daughter go;  
 Make bold her bashful years with your experience;  
 Prepare her ears to hear a wooer's tale;  
 Put in her tender heart th' aspiring flame  
 Of golden sovereignty; acquaint the princess  
 With the sweet silent hours of marriage joys.  
 And when this arm of mine hath chastised  
 The petty rebel, dull-brained Buckingham,  
 Bound with triumphant garlands will I come  
 And lead thy daughter to a conqueror's bed;  
 To whom I will retail my conquest won,  
 And she shall be sole victoress, Caesar's Caesar.

Elizabeth      What were I best to say? Her father's brother  
 Would be her lord? Or shall I say her uncle?  
 Or he that slew her brothers and her uncles?  
 Under what title shall I woo for thee  
 That God, the law, my honour, and her love  
 Can make seem pleasing to her tender years?

King Richard      Infer fair England's peace by this alliance.

Elizabeth      Which she shall purchase with still-lasting war.

King Richard      Tell her the king that may command entreats.

Elizabeth      That, at her hands, which the king's King forbids.

King Richard      Say she shall be a high and mighty queen.

Elizabeth      To veil the title, as her mother doth.

King Richard      Say I will love her everlastingly.

Elizabeth      But how long shall that title `ever' last?

King Richard      Sweetly in force until her fair life's end.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Elizabeth But how long fairly shall her sweet life last?

King Richard As long as heaven and nature lengthens it.

Elizabeth As long as hell and Richard likes of it.

King Richard Say I, her sovereign, am her subject low.

Elizabeth But she, your subject, loathes such sovereignty.

King Richard Be eloquent in my behalf to her.

Elizabeth An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.

King Richard Then plainly to her tell my loving tale.

Elizabeth Plain and not honest is too harsh a style.

King Richard Your reasons are too shallow and too quick.

Elizabeth O no, my reasons are too deep and dead -  
Too deep and dead, poor infants, in their graves.

King Richard Harp not on that string, madam; that is past.

Elizabeth Harp on it still shall I, till heart-strings break.

King Richard Now, by my George, my Garter, and my crown -

Elizabeth Profaned, dishonoured, and the third usurped.

King Richard I swear -

Elizabeth By nothing, for this is no oath:  
Thy George, profaned, hath lost his holy honour;  
Thy Garter, blemished, pawned his knightly virtue;  
Thy crown, usurped, disgraced his kingly glory.  
If something thou wouldst swear to be believed,  
Swear then by something that thou hast not wronged.

King Richard Then by my self -

Elizabeth Thy self is self-misused.

King Richard Now, by the world -

Elizabeth 'Tis full of thy foul wrongs.

King Richard My father's death -

Elizabeth Thy life hath it dishonoured.

King Richard Why then, by God -

Elizabeth God's wrong is most of all.  
If thou didst fear to break an oath with Him,  
The unity the king my husband made  
Thou hadst not broken, nor my brothers died.  
If thou hadst feared to break an oath by Him,  
Th' imperial metal circling now thy head  
Had graced the tender temples of my child,  
And both the princes had been breathing here,  
Which now, two tender bedfellows for dust,  
Thy broken faith hath made the prey for worms.  
What canst thou swear by now?

King Richard The time to come.

Elizabeth That thou hast wronged in the time o'erpast;  
For I myself have many tears to wash  
Hereafter time, for time past wronged by thee.  
The children live whose fathers thou hast slaughtered -  
Ungoverned youth, to wail it in their age;  
The parents live whose children thou hast butchered -

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Old barren plants, to wail it with their age.  
Swear not by time to come, for that thou hast  
Misused ere used, by times ill-used o'erpast.

King Richard      As I intend to prosper and repent,  
So thrive I in my dangerous affairs  
Of hostile arms. Myself myself confound;  
Heaven and fortune bar me happy hours;  
Day yield me not thy light, nor night thy rest.  
Be opposite, all planets of good luck,  
To my proceeding if with dear heart's love,  
Immaculate devotion, holy thoughts,  
I tender not thy beauteous princely daughter.  
In her consists my happiness and thine;  
Without her follows to myself, and thee,  
Herself, the land, and many a Christian soul,  
Death, desolation, ruin, and decay:  
It cannot be avoided but by this;  
It will not be avoided but by this.  
Therefore, dear mother - I must call you so -  
Be the attorney of my love to her;  
Plead what I will be, not what I have been;  
Not my deserts, but what I will deserve.  
Urge the necessity and state of times,  
And be not peevish found in great designs.

Elizabeth          Shall I be tempted of the devil thus?

King Richard      Ay, if the devil tempt you to do good.

Elizabeth          Shall I forget myself to be myself?

King Richard      Ay, if your self's remembrance wrong yourself.

Elizabeth          Yet thou didst kill my children.

King Richard      But in your daughter's womb I bury them,  
Where, in that nest of spicery, they will breed  
Selves of themselves, to your recomforture.

Elizabeth          Shall I go win my daughter to thy will?

King Richard      And be a happy mother by the deed.

Elizabeth          I go. Write to me very shortly,  
And you shall understand from me her mind.

King Richard      Bear her my true love's kiss;  
[Kisses her.  
and so farewell.

**Exit ELIZABETH.**

Relenting fool, and shallow changing woman.

**Enter RATCLIFFE,** with CATESBY following.

How now, what news?

Ratcliffe          Most mighty sovereign, on the western coast  
Rideth a puissant navy; to our shores  
Throng many doubtful hollow-hearted friends,  
Unarmed, and unresolved to beat them back.  
'Tis thought that Richmond is their admiral;  
And there they hull, expecting but the aid  
Of Buckingham to welcome them ashore.

King Richard      Some light-foot friend post to the Duke of Norfolk.  
Ratcliffe, thyself or Catesby - where is he?

Catesby            [Advancing] Here, my good lord.

King Richard      Catesby, fly to the duke.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Catesby I will, my lord, with all convenient haste.

King Richard Ratcliffe, come hither. Post to Salisbury.  
When thou com'st thither -  
[To CATESBY] Dull unmindful villain,  
Why stay'st thou here and go'st not to the duke?

Catesby First, mighty liege, tell me your highness' pleasure,  
What from your grace I shall deliver to him.

King Richard O, true, good Catesby: bid him levy straight  
The greatest strength and power that he can make,  
And meet me suddenly at Salisbury.

Catesby I go.

**Exit**

Ratcliffe What, may it please you, shall I do at Salisbury?

King Richard Why, what wouldst thou do there before I go?

Ratcliffe Your highness told me I should post before.

King Richard My mind is changed.

**Enter LORD STANLEY.**

Stanley, what news with you?

Stanley None good, my liege, to please you with the hearing,  
Nor none so bad but well may be reported.

King Richard Hoyday, a riddle! - neither good nor bad!  
What need'st thou run so many miles about,  
When thou mayst tell thy tale the nearest way?  
Once more, what news?

Stanley Richmond is on the seas.

King Richard There let him sink, and be the seas on him,  
White-livered runagate! What doth he there?

Stanley I know not, mighty sovereign, but by guess.

King Richard Well, as you guess?

Stanley Stirred up by Dorset, Buckingham, and Morton,  
He makes for England, here to claim the crown.

King Richard Is the chair empty? Is the sword unswayed?  
Is the king dead? The empire unpossessed?  
What heir of York is there alive but we?  
And who is England's king but great York's heir?  
Then tell me, what makes he upon the seas?

Stanley Unless for that, my liege, I cannot guess.

King Richard Unless for that he comes to be your liege  
You cannot guess wherefore the Welshman comes.  
Thou wilt revolt and fly to him, I fear.

Stanley No, my good lord; therefore mistrust me not.

King Richard Where is thy power then to beat him back?  
Where be thy tenants and thy followers?  
Are they not now upon the western shore,  
Safe-conducting the rebels from their ships?

Stanley No, my good lord, my friends are in the north.

King Richard Cold friends to me! What do they in the north,  
When they should serve their sovereign in the west?

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Stanley                    They have not been commanded, mighty king.  
Pleaseth your majesty to give me leave,  
I'll muster up my friends, and meet your grace  
Where and what time your majesty shall please.

King Richard            Ay, thou wouldst be gone to join with Richmond;  
But I'll not trust thee.

Stanley                    Most mighty sovereign,  
You have no cause to hold my friendship doubtful:  
I never was nor never will be false.

King Richard            Go then, and muster men; - but leave behind  
Your son George Stanley. Look your heart be firm,  
Or else his head's assurance is but frail.

Stanley                    So deal with him as I prove true to you.

**Exit**

**Enter** a MESSENGER.

1st Messenger           My gracious sovereign, now in Devonshire,  
As I by friends am well advertised,  
Sir Edward Courtney and the haughty prelate,  
Bishop of Exeter, his elder brother,  
With many more confederates, are in arms.

**Enter** another MESSENGER.

2nd Messenger           In Kent, my liege, the Guildfords are in arms;  
And every hour more competitors  
Flock to the rebels, and their power grows strong.

**Enter** another MESSENGER.

3rd Messenger           My lord, the army of great Buckingham -

King Richard            Out on you, owls! Nothing but songs of death?  
[He striketh him.  
There, take thou that, till thou bring better news.

3rd Messenger           The news I have to tell your majesty  
Is that by sudden flood and fall of water  
Buckingham's army is dispersed and scattered,  
And he himself wandered away alone,  
No man knows whither.

King Richard            I cry thee mercy:  
There is my purse to cure that blow of thine.  
Hath any well-advised friend proclaimed  
Reward to him that brings the traitor in?

3rd Messenger           Such proclamation hath been made, my lord.

**Enter** another MESSENGER.

4th Messenger           Sir Thomas Lovel and Lord Marquis Dorset,  
'Tis said, my liege, in Yorkshire are in arms;  
But this good comfort bring I to your highness:  
The Britaine navy is dispersed by tempest.  
Richmond in Dorsetshire sent out a boat  
Unto the shore to ask those on the banks  
If they were his assistants, yea or no;  
Who answered him they came from Buckingham  
Upon his party. He, mistrusting them,  
Hoist sail, and made his course again for Britaine.

King Richard            March on, march on, since we are up in arms;  
If not to fight with foreign enemies,  
Yet to beat down these rebels here at home.

**Re-enter** CATESBY.

Catesby My liege, the Duke of Buckingham is taken -  
That is the best news. That the Earl of Richmond  
Is with a mighty power landed at Milford  
Is colder tidings, yet they must be told.

King Richard Away towards Salisbury! While we reason here  
A royal battle might be won and lost.  
Someone take order Buckingham be brought  
To Salisbury; the rest march on with me.  
[Flourish]

**Exeunt**

## Scene 5. London. A Room in Lord Stanley's House.

**Enter** LORD STANLEY and SIR CHRISTOPHER URSWICK.

Stanley Sir Christopher, tell Richmond this from me:  
That in the sty of the most deadly boar  
My son George Stanley is franked up in hold;  
If I revolt, off goes young George's head -  
The fear of that holds off my present aid.  
So, get thee gone; commend me to thy lord.  
Withal say that the queen hath heartily consented  
He should espouse Elizabeth her daughter.  
But tell me, where is princely Richmond now?

Urswick At Pembroke, or at Ha'rfordwest in Wales.

Stanley What men of name resort to him?

Urswick Sir Walter Herbert, a renowned soldier,  
Sir Gilbert Talbot, Sir William Stanley,  
Oxford, redoubted Pembroke, Sir James Blunt,  
And Rice ap Thomas, with a valiant crew,  
And many other of great name and worth;  
And towards London do they bend their power,  
If by the way they be not fought withal.

Stanley Well, hie thee to thy lord. I kiss his hand;  
My letter will resolve him of my mind.  
Farewell.

**Exeunt**

## ACT 5.

### Scene 1. Salisbury. An open Plain.

**Enter** BUCKINGHAM with HALBERDS, led to execution by the SHERIFF.

Buckingham Will not King Richard let me speak with him?

Sheriff No, my good lord; therefore be patient.

Buckingham Hastings, and Edward's children, Grey, and Rivers,  
Holy King Henry, and thy fair son Edward,  
Vaughan, and all that have miscarried  
By underhand corrupted foul injustice,  
If that your moody discontented souls  
Do through the clouds behold this present hour,

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Even for revenge mock my destruction.  
This is All Souls' Day, fellow, is it not?

Sheriff                   It is.

Buckingham           Why, then All Souls' Day is my body's doomsday.  
This is the day which in King Edward's time  
I wished might fall on me when I was found  
False to his children and his wife's allies.  
This is the day wherein I wished to fall  
By the false faith of him whom most I trusted.  
This, this All Souls' Day to my fearful soul  
Is the determined respite of my wrongs.  
That high All-seer which I dallied with  
Hath turned my feigned prayer on my head,  
And given in earnest what I begged in jest.  
Thus doth He force the swords of wicked men  
To turn their own points in their masters' bosoms;  
Thus Margaret's curse falls heavy on my neck:  
"When he" quoth she "shall split thy heart with sorrow,  
Remember Margaret was a prophetess."  
Come, lead me, officers, to the block of shame.  
Wrong hath but wrong, and blame the due of blame.

**Exeunt**

**Scene 2. A Plain near Tamworth.**

**Enter** RICHMOND, OXFORD, BLUNT, HERBERT, and OTHERS, with DRUM and COLOURS.

Richmond           Fellows in arms, and my most loving friends  
Bruised underneath the yoke of tyranny,  
Thus far into the bowels of the land  
Have we marched on without impediment;  
And here receive we from our father Stanley  
Lines of fair comfort and encouragement.  
The wretched, bloody, and usurping boar,  
That spoiled your summer fields and fruitful vines,  
Swills your warm blood like wash, and makes his trough  
In your embowelled bosoms - this foul swine  
Is now even in the centre of this isle,  
Near to the town of Leicester, as we learn.  
From Tamworth thither is but one day's march.  
In God's name cheerly on, courageous friends,  
To reap the harvest of perpetual peace  
By this one bloody trial of sharp war.

Oxford               Every man's conscience is a thousand men,  
To fight against this guilty homicide.

Herbert              I doubt not but his friends will turn to us.

Blunt                 He hath no friends but what are friends for fear,  
Which in his dearest need will fly from him.

Richmond           All for our vantage. Then in God's name march!  
True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings:  
Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings.

**Exeunt**

**Scene 3. Bosworth Field.**

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

**Enter** KING RICHARD in arms, with NORFOLK, RATCLIFFE, and the EARL OF SURREY, with SOLDIERS.

King Richard            Here pitch our tent, even here in Bosworth field.  
[SOLDIERS pitch RICHARD's tent on one side of the stage.

My lord of Surrey, why look you so sad?

Surrey                    My heart is ten times lighter than my looks.

King Richard            My lord of Norfolk!

Norfolk                  Here, most gracious liege.

King Richard            Norfolk, we must have knocks; ha! - must we not?

Norfolk                  We must both give and take, my loving lord.

King Richard            Up with my tent! Here will I lie tonight -  
But where tomorrow? Well, all's one for that.  
Who hath descried the number of the traitors?

Norfolk                  Six or seven thousand is their utmost power.

King Richard            Why, our battalia trebles that account;  
Besides, the king's name is a tower of strength,  
Which they upon the adverse faction want.  
Up with the tent! Come, noble gentlemen,  
Let us survey the vantage of the ground.  
Call for some men of sound direction;  
Let's lack no discipline, make no delay;  
For, lords, tomorrow is a busy day.

**Exeunt**

**Enter** RICHMOND, SIR WILLIAM BRANDON, OXFORD, HERBERT, BLUNT, and SOLDIERS.  
The SOLDIERS pitch Richmond's tent on the other side of the stage.

Richmond                The weary sun hath made a golden set,  
And by the bright track of his fiery car  
Gives token of a goodly day tomorrow.  
Sir William Brandon, you shall bear my standard.  
Give me some ink and paper in my tent;  
I'll draw the form and model of our battle,  
Limit each leader to his several charge,  
And part in just proportion our small power.  
My lord of Oxford, you, Sir William Brandon,  
And you, Sir Walter Herbert, stay with me;  
The Earl of Pembroke keeps his regiment -  
Good captain Blunt, bear my goodnight to him,  
And by the second hour in the morning  
Desire the earl to see me in my tent.  
Yet one thing more, good captain, do for me -  
Where is Lord Stanley quartered, do you know?

Blunt                    Unless I have mista'en his colours much,  
Which well I am assured I have not done,  
His regiment lies half a mile at least  
South from the mighty power of the king.

Richmond                If without peril it be possible,  
Sweet Blunt, make some good means to speak with him,  
And give him from me this most needful note.

Blunt                    Upon my life, my lord, I'll undertake it;  
And so God give you quiet rest tonight.

Richmond                Good night, good captain Blunt.

**Exit** BLUNT.

Come, gentlemen;  
Let us consult upon tomorrow's business.  
Into my tent; the dew is raw and cold.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

[They withdraw into the tent.

**Enter** RICHARD, RATCLIFFE, NORFOLK, CATESBY and SOLDIERS.

King Richard       What is't o'clock?

Catesby             It's suppertime, my lord;  
It's nine o'clock.

King Richard       I will not sup tonight.  
Give me some ink and paper.  
What, is my beaver easier than it was?  
And all my armour laid into my tent?

Catesby             It is, my liege, and all things are in readiness.

King Richard       Good Norfolk, hie thee to thy charge;  
Use careful watch, choose trusty sentinels.

Norfolk             I go, my lord.

King Richard       Stir with the lark tomorrow, gentle Norfolk.

Norfolk             I warrant you, my lord.

**Exit**

King Richard       Catesby!

Catesby             My lord?

King Richard       Send out a pursuivan-at-arms  
To Stanley's regiment. Bid him bring his power  
Before sunrising, lest his son George fall  
Into the blind cave of eternal night.

**Exit** CATESBY.

Fill me a bowl of wine. Give me a watch.  
Saddle white Surrey for the field tomorrow.  
Look that my staves be sound, and not too heavy.  
Ratcliffe!

Ratcliffe            My lord?

King Richard       Saw'st thou the melancholy Lord Northumberland?

Ratcliffe            Thomas the Earl of Surrey and himself,  
Much about cockshut time, from troop to troop  
Went through the army cheering up the soldiers.

King Richard       So, I am satisfied. Give me a bowl of wine.  
I have not that alacrity of spirit  
Nor cheer of mind that I was wont to have.  
[Wine is brought.  
Set it down. Is ink and paper ready?

Ratcliffe            It is, my lord.

King Richard       Bid my guard watch. Leave me.  
Ratcliffe, about the mid of night come to my tent,  
And help to arm me. Leave me, I say.

**Exit** RATCLIFFE.

[RICHARD retires into his tent, and sleeps.

**Enter** LORD STANLEY to RICHMOND in his tent.

Stanley             Fortune and victory sit on thy helm!

Richmond           All comfort that the dark night can afford  
Be to thy person, noble father-in-law.  
Tell me, how fares our loving mother?

Stanley             I, by attorney, bless thee from thy mother,

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Who prays continually for Richmond's good.  
So much for that. The silent hours steal on,  
And flaky darkness breaks within the east.  
In brief, for so the season bids us be,  
Prepare thy battle early in the morning,  
And put thy fortune to th' arbitrement  
Of bloody strokes and mortal-staring war.  
I, as I may - that which I would, I cannot -  
With best advantage will deceive the time,  
And aid thee in this doubtful shock of arms.  
But on thy side I may not be too forward,  
Lest, being seen, thy brother, tender George,  
Be executed in his father's sight.  
Farewell; the leisure and the fearful time  
Cuts off the ceremonious vows of love  
And ample interchange of sweet discourse  
Which so long sundered friends should dwell upon.  
God give us leisure for these rites of love!  
Once more adieu; be valiant, and speed well.

Richmond            Good lords, conduct him to his regiment.  
I'll strive with troubled thoughts to take a nap,  
Lest leaden slumber peise me down tomorrow,  
When I should mount with wings of victory.  
Once more, good night, kind lords and gentlemen.

**Exeunt**

Manet RICHMOND.

[Kneels] O Thou, whose captain I account myself,  
Look on my forces with a gracious eye.  
Put in their hands Thy bruising irons of wrath  
That they may crush down with a heavy fall  
Th' usurping helmets of our adversaries.  
Make us Thy ministers of chastisement,  
That we may praise Thee in the victory.  
To Thee I do commend my watchful soul  
Ere I let fall the windows of mine eyes.  
Sleeping and waking, O defend me still!  
[Sleeps.]

**Enter** the GHOST OF PRINCE EDWARD, son to Henry the Sixth.

Ghost of Prince Edward

[To RICHARD]  
Let me sit heavy on thy soul tomorrow:  
Think how thou stabb'st me in my prime of youth  
At Tewkesbury. Despair therefore, and die!

[To RICHMOND]  
Be cheerful, Richmond, for the wronged souls  
Of butchered princes fight in thy behalf.  
King Henry's issue, Richmond, comforts thee.

**Exit**

**Enter** the GHOST OF HENRY THE SIXTH.

Ghost of Henry

[To RICHARD]  
When I was mortal, my anointed body  
By thee was punched full of deadly holes.  
Think on the Tower, and me. Despair and die!  
Harry the Sixth bids thee despair and die!

[To RICHMOND]  
Virtuous and holy, be thou conqueror!  
Harry that prophesied thou shouldst be king  
Doth comfort thee in thy sleep. Live and flourish!

**Exit**

**Enter** the GHOST OF CLARENCE.

Ghost of Clarence [To RICHARD]  
Let me sit heavy in thy soul tomorrow -  
I, that was washed to death with fulsome wine,  
Poor Clarence, by thy guile betrayed to death.  
Tomorrow in the battle think on me,  
And fall thy edgeless sword. Despair and die!

[To RICHMOND]  
Thou offspring of the House of Lancaster,  
The wronged heirs of York do pray for thee.  
Good angels guard thy battle. Live and flourish!

**Exit**

**Enter** the GHOSTS OF RIVERS, GREY, and VAUGHAN.

Ghost of Rivers [To RICHARD]  
Let me sit heavy in thy soul tomorrow,  
Rivers that died at Pomfret. Despair and die!

Ghost of Grey [To RICHARD]  
Think upon Grey, and let thy soul despair.

Ghost of Vaughan [To RICHARD]  
Think upon Vaughan, and with guilty fear  
Let fall thy lance. Despair and die!

All [To RICHMOND]  
Awake, and think our wrongs in Richard's bosom  
Will conquer him. Awake, and win the day!

**Exeunt** GHOSTS.

**Enter** the GHOST OF LORD HASTINGS.

Ghost of Hastings [To RICHARD]  
Bloody and guilty, guiltily awake,  
And in a bloody battle end thy days.  
Think on Lord Hastings. Despair and die!

[To RICHMOND]  
Quiet untroubled soul, awake, awake;  
Arm, fight, and conquer for fair England's sake.

**Exit**

**Enter** the GHOSTS OF THE TWO YOUNG PRINCES.

Ghosts of the princes [To RICHARD]  
Dream on thy cousins smothered in the Tower.  
Let us be lead within thy bosom, Richard,  
And weigh thee down to ruin, shame, and death.  
Thy nephews' souls bid thee - despair and die!

[To RICHMOND]  
Sleep, Richmond, sleep in peace, and wake in joy.  
Good angels guard thee from the boar's annoy.  
Live, and beget a happy race of kings.  
Edward's unhappy sons do bid thee [Flourish]

**Exeunt** GHOSTS.

**Enter** the GHOST OF LADY ANNE, his wife.

Ghost of Anne [To RICHARD]  
Richard, thy wife, that wretched Anne thy wife,  
That never slept a quiet hour with thee,  
Now fills thy sleep with perturbations.  
Tomorrow in the battle think on me,  
And fall thy edgeless sword. Despair and die!

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

[To RICHMOND]  
Thou quiet soul, sleep thou a quiet sleep.  
Dream of success and happy victory.  
Thy adversary's wife doth pray for thee.

**Exit**

**Enter** the GHOST OF BUCKINGHAM.

Ghost of Buckingham [To RICHARD]  
The first was I that helped thee to the crown;  
The last was I that felt thy tyranny.  
O, in the battle think of Buckingham,  
And die in terror of thy guiltiness.  
Dream on, dream on of bloody deeds and death;  
Fainting, despair; despairing, yield thy breath.

[To RICHMOND]  
I died for hope ere I could lend thee aid;  
But cheer thy heart, and be thou not dismayed.  
God and good angels fight on Richmond's side,  
And Richard falls in height of all his pride.

**Exit**

[RICHARD starts out of his dream.

King Richard Give me another horse! Bind up my wounds!  
Have mercy, Jesu! - Soft, I did but dream.  
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!  
The lights burn blue; it is now dead midnight.  
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.  
What do I fear? Myself? There's none else by.  
Richard loves Richard; that is, I and I.  
Is there a murderer here? No - Yes, I am.  
Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason - why?  
Lest I revenge? What, myself upon myself?  
Alack, I love myself. Wherefore? For any good  
That I myself have done unto myself?  
O no; alas, I rather hate myself  
For hateful deeds committed by myself.  
I am a villain - yet I lie I am not.  
"Fool, of thyself speak well." "Fool, do not flatter."  
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,  
And every tongue brings in a several tale,  
And every tale condemns me for a villain.  
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree;  
Murder, stern murder, in the direst degree;  
All several sins, all used in each degree,  
Throng to the bar, crying all "Guilty, guilty!"  
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;  
And if I die, no soul will pity me.  
Nay, wherefore should they, since that I myself  
Find in myself no pity to myself?  
Methought the souls of all that I had murdered  
Came to my tent, and every one did threat  
Tomorrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.

**Enter** RATCLIFFE.

Ratcliffe My lord?

King Richard Zounds! - who is there?

Ratcliffe Ratcliffe, my lord, 'tis I. The early village cock  
Hath twice done salutation to the morn.  
Your friends are up and buckle on their armour.

King Richard O Ratcliffe, I have dreamed a fearful dream.  
What thinkest thou - will our friends prove all true?

Ratcliffe No doubt, my lord.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

King Richard      O Ratcliffe, I fear, I fear!  
Ratcliffe            Nay, good my lord, be not afraid of shadows.  
King Richard      By the Apostle Paul, shadows tonight  
                          Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard  
                          Than can the substance of ten thousand soldiers  
                          Armed in proof and led by shallow Richmond.  
                          'Tis not yet near day. Come, go with me;  
                          Under our tents I'll play the eavesdropper,  
                          To see if any mean to shrink from me.

**Exeunt** RICHARD and RATCLIFFE.

**Enter** the LORDS to RICHMOND sitting in his tent.

Lords                Good morrow, Richmond  
Richmond          Cry mercy, lords and watchful gentlemen,  
                          That you have ta'en a tardy sluggard here.  
1st Lord            How have you slept, my lord?  
Richmond          The sweetest sleep and fairest-boding dreams  
                          That ever entered in a drowsy head  
                          Have I since your departure had, my lords.  
                          Methought their souls whose bodies Richard murdered  
                          Came to my tent and cried on victory.  
                          I promise you my soul is very jocund  
                          In the remembrance of so fair a dream.  
                          How far into the morning is it, lords?  
1st Lord            Upon the stroke of four.  
Richmond          Why, then 'tis time to arm and give direction.

His Oration to his Soldiers.

More than I have said, loving countrymen,  
The leisure and enforcement of the time  
Forbids to dwell upon. Yet remember this:  
God and our good cause fight upon our side;  
The prayers of holy saints and wronged souls,  
Like high-reared bulwarks, stand before our faces.  
Richard except, those whom we fight against  
Had rather have us win than him they follow.  
For what is he they follow? Truly, gentlemen,  
A bloody tyrant and a homicide;  
One raised in blood, and one in blood established;  
One that made means to come by what he hath,  
And slaughtered those that were the means to help him;  
A base foul stone, made precious by the foil  
Of England's chair, where he is falsely set;  
One that hath ever been God's enemy.  
Then, if you fight against God's enemy,  
God will in justice ward you as his soldiers.  
If you do sweat to put a tyrant down,  
You sleep in peace, the tyrant being slain;  
If you do fight against your country's foes,  
Your country's fat shall pay your pains the hire;  
If you do fight in safeguard of your wives,  
Your wives shall welcome home the conquerors;  
If you do free your children from the sword,  
Your children's children quits in it your age.  
Then, in the name of God and all these rights,  
Advance your standards, draw your willing swords.  
For me, the ransom of my bold attempt  
Shall be this cold corpse on the earth's cold face;  
But if I thrive, the gain of my attempt  
The least of you shall share his part thereof.  
Sound drums and trumpets boldly and cheerfully!

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

God and Saint George! Richmond and victory!

**Exeunt**

**Enter** KING RICHARD, RATCLIFFE, and SOLDIERS.

King Richard           What said Northumberland as touching Richmond?

Ratcliffe                That he was never trained up in arms.

King Richard           He said the truth. And what said Surrey then?

Ratcliffe                He smiled and said "The better for our purpose".

King Richard           He was in the right, and so indeed it is.  
[Clock strikes.  
Tell the clock there. Give me a calendar -  
Who saw the sun today?

Ratcliffe                Not I, my lord.

King Richard           Then he disdains to shine; for by the book  
He should have braved the east an hour ago.  
A black day will it be to somebody.  
Ratcliffe!

Ratcliffe                My lord?

King Richard           The sun will not be seen today;  
The sky doth frown and lour upon our army.  
I would these dewy tears were from the ground.  
Not shine today? - Why, what is that to me  
More than to Richmond? For the selfsame heaven  
That frowns on me looks sadly upon him.

**Enter** NORFOLK.

Norfolk                 Arm, arm, my lord! The foe vaunts in the field.

King Richard           Come, bustle, bustle! Caparison my horse!  
Call up Lord Stanley; bid him bring his power.  
I will lead forth my soldiers to the plain,  
And thus my battle shall be ordered:  
My foreward shall be drawn out all in length,  
Consisting equally of horse and foot;  
Our archers shall be placed in the midst.  
John Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Earl of Surrey,  
Shall have the leading of this foot and horse.  
They thus directed, we will follow  
In the main battle, whose puissance on either side  
Shall be well winged with our chiefest horse.  
This, and Saint George to boot! What think'st thou, Norfolk?

Norfolk                 A good direction, warlike sovereign.  
[He showeth him a paper.  
This found I on my tent this morning.

RICHARD III BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

King Richard [Reads] "Jockey of Norfolk, be not so bold,  
For Dickon thy master is bought and sold."  
  
A thing devised by the enemy.  
Go, gentlemen, every man unto his charge.  
Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls;  
Conscience is but a word that cowards use,  
Devised at first to keep the strong in awe.  
Our strong arms be our conscience, swords our law.  
March on! Join bravely! Let us to't pell-mell -  
If not to heaven, then hand in hand to hell.

His Oration to his Army.

What shall I say more than I have inferred?  
Remember whom you are to cope withal:  
A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and runaways,  
A scum of Britaines and base lackey peasants,  
Whom their o'eremployed country vomits forth  
To desperate adventures and assured destruction.  
You sleeping safe, they bring to you unrest;  
You having lands, and blessed with beauteous wives,  
They would restrain the one, distain the other.  
And who doth lead them? - but a paltry fellow  
Long kept in Britaine at our mother's cost,  
A milksop, one that never in his life  
Felt so much cold as over shoes in snow.  
Let's whip these stragglers o'er the seas again,  
Lash hence these overweening rags of France,  
These famished beggars, weary of their lives,  
Who but for dreaming on this fond exploit,  
For want of means, poor rats, had hanged themselves.  
If we be conquered, let men conquer us,  
And not these bastard Britaines whom our fathers  
Have in their own land beaten, bobbed, and thumped,  
And, in record, left them the heirs of shame.  
Shall these enjoy our lands? Lie with our wives?  
Ravish our daughters?  
[Drum afar off.  
Hark, I hear their drum.  
Fight, gentlemen of England. Fight, bold yeomen.  
Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head.  
Spur your proud horses hard, and ride in blood.  
Amaze the welkin with your broken staves.

**Enter** a MESSENGER.

What says Lord Stanley? Will he bring his power?

Messenger My lord, he doth deny to come.

King Richard Off with his son George's head!

Norfolk My lord, the enemy is past the marsh:  
After the battle let George Stanley die.

King Richard A thousand hearts are great within my bosom.  
Advance our standards; set upon our foes.  
Our ancient word of courage, fair Saint George,  
Inspire us with the spleen of fiery dragons.  
Upon them! Victory sits on our helms.

**Exeunt**

### Scene 4. Another Part of the Field.

Alarum. Excursions.

**Enter** CATESBY.

Catesby            Rescue, my lord of Norfolk, rescue, rescue!  
The king enacts more wonders than a man,  
Daring an opposite to every danger.  
His horse is slain, and all on foot he fights,  
Seeking for Richmond in the throat of death.  
Rescue, fair lord, or else the day is lost!

Alarums.

**Enter** KING RICHARD.

King Richard      A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!

Catesby            Withdraw, my lord; I'll help you to a horse.

King Richard      Slave, I have set my life upon a cast,  
And I will stand the hazard of the die.  
I think there be six Richmonds in the field;  
Five have I slain today instead of him.  
A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!

**Exeunt**

### Scene 5. Another Part of the Field.

Alarum.

**Enter** RICHARD, and RICHMOND; they fight; RICHARD is slain.

**Exit** RICHMOND, Retreat and [Flourish]

**Enter** RICHMOND, STANLEY bearing the crown, with divers other LORDS and SOLDIERS.

Richmond            God and your arms be praised, victorious friends.  
The day is ours; the bloody dog is dead.

Stanley              Courageous Richmond, well hast thou acquit thee.  
Lo, here this long-usurped royalty  
From the dead temples of this bloody wretch  
Have I plucked off, to grace thy brows withal.  
Wear it, enjoy it, and make much of it.  
[Presenting the crown to RICHMOND.]

Richmond            Great God of heaven, say Amen to all.  
But tell me, is young George Stanley living?

Stanley              He is, my lord, and safe in Leicester town,  
Whither, if it please you, we may now withdraw us.

Richmond            What men of name are slain on either side?

Stanley              John Duke of Norfolk, Walter Lord Ferrers,  
Sir Robert Brakenbury, and Sir William Brandon.

Richmond

Inter their bodies as becomes their births.  
Proclaim a pardon to the soldiers fled  
That in submission will return to us;  
And then, as we have ta'en the sacrament,  
We will unite the white rose and the red.  
Smile, heaven, upon this fair conjunction,  
That long have frowned upon their enmity.  
What traitor hears me and says not Amen?  
England hath long been mad, and scarred herself:  
The brother blindly shed the brother's blood;  
The father rashly slaughtered his own son;  
The son, compelled, been butcher to the sire.  
All this, divided, York and Lancaster  
Divided in their dire division.  
O now let Richmond and Elizabeth,  
The true succeeders of each royal house,  
By God's fair ordinance conjoin together;  
And let their heirs, God, if Thy will be so,  
Enrich the time to come with smooth-faced peace,  
With smiling plenty, and fair prosperous days.  
Abate the edge of traitors, gracious Lord,  
That would reduce these bloody days again,  
And make poor England weep in streams of blood.  
Let them not live to taste this land's increase  
That would with treason wound this fair land's peace.  
Now civil wounds are stopped, peace lives again -  
That she may long live here, God say Amen!

**Exeunt**

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