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William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of King Richard the Third* [1597]

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**THE TRAGEDY OF  
KING RICHARD THE THIRD**

DRAMATIC PERSONÆ.

<p>KING EDWARD THE FOURTH. EDWARD, Prince of Wales; afterwards King Edward the Fifth. RICHARD, Duke of York, GEORGE, Duke of Clarence, RICHARD, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard the Third, A young Son of Clarence. HENRY, Earl of Richmond; afterwards King Henry the Seventh. CARDINAL BOURCHIER, Archbishop of Canterbury. THOMAS ROTHERHAM, Archbishop of York. JOHN MORTON, Bishop of Ely. DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM. DUKE OF NORFOLK. EARL OF STURNEY, his Son. EARL RIVERS, Brother to King Edward's Queen. MARGARET OF DORSET, and LORD GREY, her Son. EARL OF OXFORD. LORD HASTINGS. LORD STANLEY, called also EARL OF DEBRY. LORD LOVELL. SIR THOMAS VAUGHAN. SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF. SIR WILLIAM CATESBY.</p>	<p>Sons to the King. Brothers to the King. Lord Mayor of London. Sheriff of Wiltshire. TERRILL and BEECHLEY, Gentlemen attending on Lady Anne. ELIZABETH, Queen of King Edward the Fourth. MARGARET, Widow of King Henry the Sixth. DUCHESS OF YORK, Mother to King Edward the Fourth, Clarence, and Gloucester. LADY ANNE, Widow of Edward, Prince of Wales, Son to King Henry the Sixth; afterwards married to the Duke of Gloucester. LADY MARGARET PLANTAGENET, a young Daughter of Clarence. Lords, and other Attendants; two Gentlemen, a Pursuivant, Scrivener, Cleric, Messenger, Messengers, Officers of those murdered by Richard the Third, Soldiers, &amp;c.</p>
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SCENE.—England.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—London. A Street.

Enter GLOUCESTER.

<p>Glo. Now is the winter of our discontent Mads glorious summer by this sun 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 alarms changed to merry meetings; Our dreadful marches to delightful measures. Grim-visag'd war hath smooth'd 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</p>	<p>To the lascivious pleasing of a lute. But I, that am not shap'd for sportive tricks, Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass; I, that am russet stamp'd, and want love's majesty To strut before a wanton ambling nymph; I, that am curial'd of this fair proportion, Chas'd of feature by dissembling nature, Deform'd, unfinish'd, 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 see my shadow in the sun; And descend on mine own deformity; And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover, To entertain these fair well-spoken days,</p>
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## Edition Used:

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Author: [William Shakespeare](#)

Editor: [William James Craig](#)

## About This Title:

One of the plays in the 1916 Oxford University Press edition of all of Shakespeare's plays and poems.

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THE TRAGEDY OF KING RICHARD THE THIRD  
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING EDWARD THE FOURTH.	
EDWARD, Prince of Wales; afterwards King Edward the Fifth, }	Sons to the King.
RICHARD, Duke of York, }	
GEORGE, Duke of Clarence, }	
RICHARD, Duke of Gloucester, afterwards King Richard the Third, }	Brothers to the King.
A young Son of Clarence.	
HENRY,	Earl of Richmond; afterwards King Henry the Seventh.
CARDINAL BOURCHIER,	Archbishop of Canterbury.
THOMAS ROTHERHAM,	Archbishop of York.
JOHN MORTON,	Bishop of Ely.
DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.	
DUKE OF NORFOLK.	
EARL OF SURREY,	his Son.
EARL RIVERS,	Brother to King Edward's Queen.
MARQUESS OF DORSET, and LORD GREY,	her Sons.
EARL OF OXFORD.	
LORD HASTINGS.	
LORD STANLEY, called also EARL OF DERBY.	
LORD LOVEL.	
SIR THOMAS VAUGHAN.	
SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF.	
SIR WILLIAM CATESBY.	
SIR JAMES TYRRELL.	
SIR JAMES BLOUNT.	
SIR WALTER HERBERT.	
SIR ROBERT BRAKENBURY,	Lieutenant of the Tower.
SIR WILLIAM BRANDON.	
CHRISTOPHER URSWICK,	a Priest.
Another Priest.	
Lord Mayor of London.	Sheriff of Wiltshire.
TRESSEL and BERKELEY,	Gentlemen attending on Lady Anne.
ELIZABETH,	Queen of King Edward the Fourth.
MARGARET,	Widow of King Henry the Sixth.
DUCHESS OF YORK,	Mother to King Edward the Fourth, Clarence, and Gloucester.
LADY ANNE,	Widow of Edward, Prince of Wales, Son to King Henry the Sixth; afterwards married to the Duke of Gloucester.

LADY MARGARET

a young Daughter of Clarence.

PLANTAGENET,

Lords, and other Attendants; two Gentlemen, a Pursuivant, Scrivener, Citizens,  
Murderers, Messengers, Ghosts of those murdered by Richard the Third, Soldiers,  
&c.

Scene.—*England.*



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ACT I.

Scene I.—

*London. A Street.*

*Enter Gloucester.*

GLO.

Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this sun 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-visag'd war hath smooth'd 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 shap'd for sportive tricks,  
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;  
I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty  
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;  
I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,

Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,  
Deform'd, unfinish'd, 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 see 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?

CLAR.

His majesty,

Tendering my person's safety, hath appointed

This conduct to convey me to the Tower.

GLO.

Upon what cause?

CLAR.

Because my name is George.

GLO.

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-christen'd in the Tower.

But what's the matter, Clarence? may I know?

CLAR.

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 such like toys as these,  
Have mov'd his highness to commit me now.

GLO.

Why, this it is, when men are rul'd 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,

Antony Woodville, her brother there,

That made him send Lord Hastings to the Tower,

From whence this present day he is deliver'd?

We are not safe, Clarence; we are not safe.

CLAR.

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 a humble suppliant

Lord Hastings was to her for his delivery?

GLO.

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'er-worn widow and herself,

Since that our brother dubb'd them gentlewomen,  
Are mighty gossips in our monarchy.

BRAK.

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 your brother.

GLO.

Even so; an 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?

BRAK.

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

GLO.

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.

BRAK.

What one, my lord?

GLO.

Her husband, knave. Wouldst thou betray me?

BRAK.

I beseech your Grace to pardon me; and withal

Forbear your conference with the noble duke.

CLAR.

We know thy charge, Brakenbury, and will obey.

GLO.

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.

Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood

Touches me deeper than you can imagine.

CLAR.

I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

GLO.

Well, your imprisonment shall not be long;

I will deliver you, or else lie for you:

Meantime, have patience.

CLAR.

I must perforce: farewell.

*[Exeunt Clarence, Brakenbury, and Guard.]*

GLO.

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-deliver'd Hastings!

*Enter Hastings.*

HAST.

Good time of day unto my gracious lord!

GLO.

As much unto my good lord chamberlain!

Well are you welcome to this open air.

How hath your lordship brook'd imprisonment?

HAST.

With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must:

But I shall live, my lord, to give them thanks

That were the cause of my imprisonment.

GLO.

No doubt, no doubt; and so shall Clarence too;

For they that were your enemies are his,

And have prevail'd as much on him as you.

HAST.

More pity that the eagles should be mew'd,  
While kites and buzzards prey at liberty.

GLO.

What news abroad?

HAST.

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

GLO.

Now by Saint Paul, this news is bad indeed.  
O! he hath kept an evil diet long,  
And over-much consum'd his royal person:  
'Tis very grievous to be thought upon.  
What, is he in his bed?

HAST.

He is.

GLO.

Go you before, and I will follow you.

*[Exit Hastings.]*

He cannot live, I hope; and must not die  
Till George be pack'd with post-horse up to heaven.  
I'll in, to urge his hatred more to Clarence,  
With lies well steel'd 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 kill'd her husband and her father,  
The readiest way to make the wench amends  
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.*

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Scene II.—

***London. Another Street.***

*Enter the corpse of King Henry the Sixth, borne in an open coffin; Gentlemen bearing halberds to guard it; and Lady Anne, as mourner.*

ANNE.

Set down, set down your honourable load,  
If honour may be shrouded in a hearse,  
Whilst I a while obsequiously lament  
The untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.  
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 slaughter'd son,  
Stabb'd by the self-same 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 toward Chertsey with your holy load,  
Taken from Paul's to be interred there;  
And still, as you are weary of the weight,  
Rest you, whiles I lament King Henry's corse.

*[The Bearers take up the corpse and advance.*

*Enter Gloucester.*

GLO.

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

ANNE.

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

GLO.

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

FIRST GENT.

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

GLO.

Unmanner'd 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 Bearers set down the coffin.]*

ANNE.

What! do you tremble? are you all afraid?

Alas! I blame you not; for you are mortal,

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.

GLO.

Sweet saint, for charity, be not so curst.

ANNE.

Foul devil, for God's sake hence, and trouble us not;

For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,

Fill'd it with cursing cries and deep exclaims.

If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,

Behold this pattern of thy butcheries.

O! gentlemen; see, see! dead Henry's wounds

Open their congeal'd 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 heaven with lightning strike the murderer dead,

Or earth, gape open wide, and eat him quick,

As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood,

Which his hell-govern'd arm hath butchered!

GLO.

Lady, you know no rules of charity,

Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

ANNE.

Villain, thou know'st no law of God nor man:

No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

GLO.

But I know none, and therefore am no beast.

ANNE.

O! wonderful, when devils tell the truth.

GLO.

More wonderful when angels are so angry.

Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,

Of these supposed evils, to give me leave,

By circumstance, but to acquit myself.

ANNE.

Vouchsafe, diffus'd infection of a man,  
For these known evils, but to give me leave,  
By circumstance, to curse thy cursed self.

GLO.

Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have  
Some patient leisure to excuse myself.

ANNE.

Fouler than heart can think thee, thou canst make  
No excuse current, but to hang thyself.

GLO.

By such despair I should accuse myself.

ANNE.

And by despairing shouldst thou stand excus'd  
For doing worthy vengeance on thyself,  
Which didst unworthy slaughter upon others.

GLO.

Say that I slew them not.

ANNE.

Then say they were not slain:  
But dead they are, and, devilish slave, by thee.

GLO.

I did not kill your husband.

ANNE.

Why, then he is alive.

GLO.

Nay, he is dead; and slain by Edward's hand.

ANNE.

In thy foul throat thou liest: Queen Margaret saw  
Thy murderous falchion smoking in his blood;  
The which thou once didst bend against her breast,  
But that thy brothers beat aside the point.

GLO.

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

ANNE.

Thou wast provoked by thy bloody mind,  
That never dreamt on aught but butcheries.  
Didst thou not kill this king?

GLO.

I grant ye.

ANNE.

Dost grant me, hedge-hog? Then, God grant me too  
Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed!  
O! he was gentle, mild, and virtuous.

GLO.

The fitter for the King of heaven, that hath him.

ANNE.

He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come.

GLO.

Let him thank me, that help'd to send him thither;

For he was fitter for that place than earth.

ANNE.

And thou unfit for any place but hell.

GLO.

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

ANNE.

Some dungeon.

GLO.

Your bed-chamber.

ANNE.

Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest!

GLO.

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

ANNE.

I hope so.

GLO.

I know so. But, gentle Lady Anne,

To leave this keen encounter of our wits,

And fall somewhat into a slower method,

Is not the causer of the timeless deaths



Of these Plantagenets, Henry and Edward,  
As blameful as the executioner?

ANNE.

Thou wast the cause, and most accurs'd effect.

GLO.

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 might I live one hour in your sweet bosom.

ANNE.

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

GLO.

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.

ANNE.

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

GLO.

Curse not thyself, fair creature; thou art both.

ANNE.

I would I were, to be reveng'd on thee.

GLO.

It is a quarrel most unnatural,  
To be reveng'd on him that loveth thee.

ANNE.

It is a quarrel just and reasonable,  
To be reveng'd on him that kill'd my husband.

GLO.

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

ANNE.

His better doth not breathe upon the earth.

GLO.

He lives that loves thee better than he could.

ANNE.

Name him.

GLO.

Plantagenet.

ANNE.

Why, that was he.

GLO.

The self-same name, but one of better nature.

ANNE.

Where is he?

GLO.

Here. [*She spitteth at him.*] Why dost thou spit at me?

ANNE.

Would it were mortal poison, for thy sake!

GLO.

Never came poison from so sweet a place.

ANNE.

Never hung poison on a fouler toad.

Out of my sight! thou dost infect mine eyes.

GLO.

Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

ANNE.

Would they were basilisks, to strike thee dead!

GLO.

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,

Sham'd 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-fac'd Clifford shook his sword at him;

Nor when thy war-like 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 bedash'd 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 su'd to friend, nor enemy;  
My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing words;  
But, now thy beauty is propos'd 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 adoreth thee,  
I lay it open 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 stabb'd young Edward;

*[She again offers at his breast.]*

But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.

*[She lets fall the sword.]*

Take up the sword again, or take up me.

ANNE.

Arise, dissembler: though I wish thy death,

I will not be thy executioner.

GLO.

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

ANNE.

I have already.

GLO.

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.

ANNE.

I would I knew thy heart.

GLO.

'Tis figur'd in my tongue.

ANNE.

I fear me both are false.

GLO.

Then never man was true.

ANNE.

Well, well, put up your sword.

GLO.

Say, then, my peace is made.

ANNE.

That shalt thou know hereafter.

GLO.

But shall I live in hope?

ANNE.

All men, I hope, live so.

GLO.

Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

ANNE.

To take is not to give.

*[She puts on the ring.]*

GLO.

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.

ANNE.

What is it?

GLO.

That it may please you leave these sad designs  
To him that hath most cause to be a mourner,  
And presently repair to Crosby-place;  
Where, after I have solemnly interr'd  
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.

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.

GLO.

Bid me farewell.

ANNE.

'Tis more than you deserve;  
But since you teach me how to flatter you,  
Imagine I have said farewell already.  
*[Exeunt Lady Anne, Tressel, and Berkeley.]*

GLO.

Sirs, take up the corse.

GENT.

Toward Chertsey, noble lord?

GLO.

No, to White-Friars; there attend my coming.

*[Exeunt all but Gloucester.*

Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?

Was ever woman in this humour won?

I'll have her; but I will not keep her long.

What! I, that kill'd 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 her hatred by;

Having God, her conscience, and these bars against me,

And nothing I to back my suit withal

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,

Stabb'd in my angry mood at Tewksbury?

A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,

Fram'd 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 cropp'd 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 halt 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 marvellous 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.]*

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Scene III.—

***London. A Room In The Palace.***

*Enter* Queen Elizabeth, Lord Rivers, *and* Lord Grey.

RIV.

Have patience, madam: there's no doubt his majesty  
Will soon recover his accustom'd 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 words.

Q. ELIZ.

If he were dead, what would betide on me?

GREY.

No other harm but loss of such a lord.

Q. ELIZ.

The loss of such a lord includes all harms.

GREY.

The heavens have bless'd you with a goodly son,  
To be your comforter when he is gone.

Q. ELIZ.

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

RIV.

Is it concluded he shall be protector?

Q. ELIZ.

It is determin'd, not concluded yet:

But so it must be if the king miscarry.

*Enter Buckingham and Stanley.*

GREY.

Here come the Lords of Buckingham and Stanley.

BUCK.

Good time of day unto your royal Grace!

STAN.

God make your majesty joyful as you have been!

Q. ELIZ.

The Countess Richmond, good my Lord of Stanley,

To your good prayer will scarcely say amen.

Yet, Stanley, notwithstanding she's your wife,

And loves not me, be you, good lord, assur'd

I hate not you for her proud arrogance.

STAN.

I do beseech you, either not believe

The envious slanders of her false accusers;

Or, if she be accus'd on true report,

Bear with her weakness, which, I think, proceeds

From wayward sickness, and no grounded malice.

Q. ELIZ.

Saw you the king to-day, my Lord of Stanley?

STAN.

But now the Duke of Buckingham and I,

Are come from visiting his majesty.

Q. ELIZ.

What likelihood of his amendment, lords?

BUCK.

Madam, good hope; his Grace speaks cheerfully.

Q. ELIZ.

God grant him health! did you confer with him?

BUCK.

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.

Q. ELIZ.

Would all were well! But that will never be.

I fear our happiness is at the highest.

*Enter Gloucester, Hastings, and Dorset.*

GLO.

They do me wrong, and I will not endure it:

Who are they that complain 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 speak 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 abus'd  
By silken, sly, insinuating Jacks?

GREY.

To whom in all this presence speaks your Grace?

GLO.

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

Q. ELIZ.

Brother of Gloucester, you mistake the matter.  
The king, on his own royal disposition,  
And not provok'd 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 thereby he may gather  
The ground of your ill-will, and so remove it.

GLO.

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.

Q. ELIZ.

Come, come, we know your meaning, brother Gloucester;  
You envy my advancement and my friends'.  
God grant we never may have need of you!

GLO.

Meantime, God grants that we have need of you:  
Our brother is imprison'd by your means,  
Myself disgrac'd, 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.

Q. ELIZ.

By him that rais'd me to this careful height  
From that contented hap which I enjoy'd,  
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.

GLO.

You may deny that you were not the mean  
Of my Lord Hastings' late imprisonment.

RIV.

She may, my lord; for—

GLO.

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 deserts.

What may she not? She may,—ay, marry, may she,—

RIV.

What, marry, may she?

GLO.

What, marry, may she! marry with a king,

A bachelor, a handsome stripling too.

I wis your grandam had a worser match.

Q. ELIZ.

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 endur'd.

I had rather be a country servantmaid

Than a great queen, with this condition,

To be so baited, scorn'd, and stormed at:

Small joy have I in being England's queen.

*Enter Queen Margaret, behind.*

Q. MAR.

[*Apart.*] And lessen'd be that small, God, I beseech him!

Thy honour, state, and seat is due to me.

GLO.

What! threat you me with telling of the king?

Tell him, and spare not: look, what I have said

I will avouch in presence of the king:

I dare adventure to be sent to the Tower.

'Tis time to speak; my pains are quite forgot.

Q. MAR.

[*Apart.*] Out, devil! I remember them too well:

Thou kill'dst my husband Henry in the Tower,

And Edward, my poor son, at Tewksbury.

GLO.

Ere you were queen, ay, or your husband king,

I was a pack-horse in his great affairs,

A weeder-out of his proud adversaries,

A liberal rewarder of his friends;

To royalize his blood I split mine own.



Q. MAR.

Ay, and much better blood than his, or thine.

GLO.

In all which time you and your husband Grey  
Were factious for the house of Lancaster;  
And, Rivers, so were you. Was not your husband  
In Margaret's battle at Saint Alban's slain?  
Let me put in your minds, if you forget,  
What you have been ere now, and what you are;  
Withal, what I have been, and what I am.

Q. MAR.

A murderous villain, and so still thou art.

GLO.

Poor Clarence did forsake his father, Warwick,  
Ay, and forswore himself,—which Jesu pardon!—

Q. MAR.

Which God revenge!

GLO.

To fight on Edward's party for the crown;  
And for his meed, poor lord, he is mew'd 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.

Q. MAR.

Hie thee to hell for shame, and leave this world,  
Thou cacodemon! there thy kingdom is.

RIV.

My Lord of Gloucester, in those busy days  
Which here you urge to prove us enemies,  
We follow'd then our lord, our lawful king;  
So should we you, if you should be our king.

GLO

If I should be! I had rather be a pedlar.  
Far be it from my heart the thought thereof!

Q. ELIZ.

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.

Q. MAR.

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 pill'd from me!  
Which of you trembles not that looks on me?  
If not, that, I being queen, you bow like subjects,

Yet that, by you depos'd, you quake like rebels?

Ah! gentle villain, do not turn away.

GLO.

Foul wrinkled witch, what mak'st thou in my sight?

Q. MAR.

But repetition of what thou hast marr'd;

That will I make before I let thee go.

GLO.

Wert thou not banished on pain of death?

Q. MAR.

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;

And thou, a kingdom; all of you, allegiance:

This sorrow that I have by right is yours,

And all the pleasures you usurp are mine.

GLO.

The curse my noble father laid on thee,

When thou didst crown his war-like brows with paper,

And with thy scorns drew'st rivers from his eyes;

And then, to dry them, gav'st the duke a clout

Steep'd in the faultless blood of pretty Rutland;

His curses, then from bitterness of soul

Denounc'd against thee, are all fall'n upon thee;

And God, not we, hath plagu'd thy bloody deed.

Q. ELIZ.

So just is God, to right the innocent

HAST.

O! 'twas the foulest deed to slay that babe,  
And the most merciless, that e'er was heard of.

RIV.

Tyrants themselves wept when it was reported.

DORS.

No man but prophesied revenge for it.

BUCK.

Northumberland, then present, wept to see it.

Q. MAR.

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, my son, which 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 loss,  
And see another, as I see thee now,  
Deck'd in thy rights, as thou art stall'd in mine!  
Long die thy happy days before thy death;  
And, after many lengthen'd 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 stabb'd with bloody daggers: God, I pray him,  
That none of you may live your natural age,  
But by some unlook'd accident cut off.

GLO.

Have done thy charm, thou hateful wither'd hag!

Q. MAR.

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-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog!  
Thou that wast seal'd in thy nativity  
The slave of nature and the son of hell!  
Thou slander of thy mother's heavy womb!  
Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins!  
Thou rag of honour! thou detested—

GLO.

Margaret!

Q. MAR.

Richard!

GLO.

Ha!

Q. MAR.

I call thee not.

GLO.

I cry thee mercy then, for I did think  
That thou hadst call'd me all these bitter names.

Q. MAR.

Why, so I did; but look'd for no reply.

O! let me make the period to my curse.

GLO.

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

Q. ELIZ.

Thus have you breath'd your curso against yourself.

Q. MAR.

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 pois'nous bunch-back'd toad.

HAST.

False-boding woman, end thy frantic curse,

Lest to thy harm thou move our patience.

Q. MAR.

Foul shame upon you! you have all mov'd mine.

RIV.

Were you well serv'd, you would be taught your duty.

Q. MAR.

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.

DOR.

Dispute not with her, she is lunatic.

Q. MAR.

Peace! Master marquess, 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.

GLO.

Good counsel, marry: learn it, learn it, marquess.

DOR.

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

GLO.

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.

Q. MAR.

And turns the sun to shade; alas! alas!

Witness my son, now in the shade of death;

Whose bright out-shining 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 was won with blood, lost be it so!

BUCK.

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

Q. MAR.

Urge neither charity nor shame to me:  
Uncharitably with me have you dealt,  
And shamefully my hopes by you are butcher'd.  
My charity is outrage, life my shame;  
And in that shame still live my sorrow's rage!

BUCK.

Have done, have done.

Q. MAR.

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.

BUCK.

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

Q. MAR.

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.

GLO.

What doth she say, my Lord of Buckingham?

BUCK.

Nothing that I respect, my gracious lord.

Q. MAR.

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 subject to his hate,  
And he to yours, and all of you to God's!

[*Exit.*

HAST.

My hair doth stand on end to hear her curses.

RIV.

And so doth mine. I muse why she's at liberty.

GLO.

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.

Q. ELIZ.

I never did her any, to my knowledge.

GLO.

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 frank'd up to fatting for his pains:  
God pardon them that are the cause thereof!

RIV.

A virtuous and a Christian-like conclusion,  
To pray for them that have done scath to us.

GLO.

So do I ever [*Aside*], being well-advis'd;  
For had I curs'd now, I had curs'd myself.

*Enter* Catesby.

CATES.

Madam, his majesty doth call for you;  
And for your Grace; and you, my noble lords.

Q. ELIZ.

Catesby, I come. Lords, will you go with me?

RIV.

We wait upon your Grace.

*[Exeunt all but Gloucester.*

GLO.

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, whom I, indeed, have cast in darkness,

I do bewep to many simple gulls;

Namely, to Stanley, 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 reveng'd on Rivers, Vaughan, 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 villany

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?

FIRST MURD.

We are, my lord; and come to have the warrant,

That we may be admitted where he is.

GLO.

Well thought upon; I have it here about me:

*[Gives 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.

FIRST MURD.

Tut, tut, my lord, we will not stand to prate;

Talkers are no good doers: be assur'd

We go to use our hands and not our tongues.

GLO.

Your eyes drop millstones, when fools' eyes fall tears:

I like you, lads; about your business straight;

Go, go, dispatch.

FIRST MURD.

We will, my noble lord.

*[Exeunt.]*

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Scene IV.—

***The Same. The Tower.***

*Enter Clarence and Brakenbury.*

BRAK.

Why looks your Grace so heavily to-day?

CLAR.

O, I have pass'd a miserable night,  
So full of ugly sights, of ghastly dreams,  
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.

BRAK.

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

CLAR.

Methought that I had broken from the Tower,  
And was embark'd to cross to Burgundy;  
And in my company my brother Gloucester,  
Who from my cabin tempted me to walk  
Upon the hatches: thence we look'd toward England,  
And cited up a thousand heavy times,  
During the wars of York and Lancaster,  
That had befall'n us. As we pac'd 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.

Lord, Lord! methought what pain it was to drown:

What dreadful noise of water in mine ears!

What sights of ugly death within mine eyes!

Methought I saw a thousand fearful wracks;

A thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon;

Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,

Inestimable stones, unvalu'd jewels,

All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea.

Some lay in dead men's skulls; and in those holes

Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept,

As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems,

That woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,

And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by.

BRAK.

Had you such leisure in the time of death

To gaze upon those secrets of the deep?

CLAR.

Methought I had; and often did I strive

To yield the ghost; but still the envious flood

Stopt in my soul, and would not let it forth

To find the empty, vast, and wandering air;

But smother'd it within my panting bulk,  
Which almost burst to belch it in the sea.

BRAK.

Awak'd you not with this sore agony?

CLAR.

No, no, my dream was lengthen'd after life;

O! then began the tempest to my soul.

I pass'd, methought, the melancholy flood,

With that grim 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 cried aloud, 'What scourge for perjury

Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?'

And so he vanish'd: then came wandering by

A shadow like an angel, with bright hair

Dabbled in blood; and he shriek'd out aloud,

'Clarence is come,—false, fleeting, perjur'd Clarence,

That stabb'd me in the field by Tewksbury;—

Seize on him! Furies, take him unto torment.'

With that, methought, a legion of foul fiends

Environ'd me, and howled in mine ears

Such hideous cries, that, with the very noise

I trembling wak'd, and, for a season after

Could not believe but that I was in hell,



Such terrible impression made my dream.

BRAK.

No marvel, lord, though it affrighted you;

I am afraid, methinks, to hear you tell it.

CLAR

O Brakenbury! 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 aveng'd on my misdeeds,

Yet execute thy wrath on me alone:

O! spare my guiltless wife and my poor children.

I pray thee, gentle keeper, stay by me;

My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep.

BRAK.

I will, my lord. God give your Grace good rest!

[Clarencesleeps.

Sorrow breaks seasons and reposing hours,

Makes the night morning, and the noon-tide 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 names,

There's nothing differs but the outward fame.

*Enter the two Murderers.*

FIRST MURD.

Ho! who's here?

BRAK.

What wouldst thou, fellow? and how cam'st thou hither?

FIRST MURD.

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

BRAK.

What! so brief?

SEC. MURD.

'Tis better, sir, than to be tedious.—

Let him see our commission, and talk no more.

*[A paper is delivered to Brakenbury, who reads it.]*

BRAK.

I am, in this, commanded to deliver

The noble Duke of Clarence to your hands:

I will not reason what is meant hereby,

Because I will be guiltless of the meaning.

There lies the duke asleep, and there the keys.

I'll to the king; and signify to him

That thus I have resign'd to you my charge.

FIRST MURD.

You may, sir; 'tis a point of wisdom: fare you well.

*[Exit Brakenbury.]*

SEC. MURD.

What! shall we stab him as he sleeps?

FIRST MURD.

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

SEC. MURD.

When he wakes! why, fool, he shall never wake till the judgment-day.

FIRST MURD.

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

SEC. MURD.

The urging of that word 'judgment' hath bred a kind of remorse in me.

FIRST MURD.

What! art thou afraid?

SEC. MURD.

Not to kill him, having a warrant for it; but to be damn'd for killing him, from the which no warrant can defend me.

FIRST MURD.

I thought thou hadst been resolute.

SEC. MURD.

So I am, to let him live.

FIRST MURD.

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

SEC. MURD.

Nay, I prithee, stay a little: I hope my holy humour will change; it was wont to hold me but while one tells twenty.

FIRST MURD.

How dost thou feel thyself now?

SEC. MURD.

Some certain dregs of conscience are yet within me.

FIRST MURD.

Remember our reward when the deed's done.

SEC. MURD.

'Zounds! he dies: I had forgot the reward.

FIRST MURD.

Where's thy conscience now?

SEC. MURD.

In the Duke of Gloucester's purse.

FIRST MURD.

So when he opens his purse to give us our reward, thy conscience flies out.

SEC. MURD.

'Tis no matter; let it go: there's few or none will entertain it.

FIRST MURD.

What if it come to thee again?

SEC. MURD.

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 shamefast spirit, that mutinies in a man's bosom; it fills one full of obstacles; it made me once restore a purse of gold that I found; it beggars any man that keeps it; it is turned out of all towns and cities for a dangerous thing; and every man that means to live well, endeavours to trust to himself and live without it.

FIRST MURD.

'Zounds! it is even now at my elbow, persuading me not to kill the duke.

SEC. MURD.

Take the devil in thy mind, and believe him not: he would insinuate with thee but to make thee sigh.

FIRST MURD.

Tut, I am strong-framed; he cannot prevail with me.

SEC. MURD.

Spoke like a tall fellow that respects his reputation. Come, shall we to this gear?

FIRST MURD.

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

SEC. MURD.

O, excellent device! make a sop of him.

FIRST MURD.

Soft! he wakes.

SEC. MURD.

Strike!

FIRST MURD.

No, we'll reason with him.

CLAR.

Where art thou, keeper? give me a cup of wine.

FIRST MURD.

You shall have wine enough, my lord, anon.

CLAR.

In God's name, what art thou?

FIRST MURD.

A man, as you are.

CLAR.

But not, as I am, royal.

FIRST MURD.

Nor you, as we are, loyal.

CLAR.

Thy voice is thunder, but thy looks are humble.

FIRST MURD.

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

CLAR.

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?

BOTH MURD.

To, to, to—

CLAR.

To murder me?

BOTH MURD.

Ay, ay.

CLAR.

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?

FIRST MURD.

Offended us you have not, but the king.

CLAR.

I shall be reconcil'd to him again.

SEC. MURD.

Never, my lord; therefore prepare to die.

CLAR.

Are you call'd forth from out 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 pronounc'd

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.

FIRST MURD.

What we will do, we do upon command.

SEC. MURD.

And he that hath commanded is our king.

CLAR.

Erroneous vassal! 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.

SEC. MURD.

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.

FIRST MURD.

And, like a traitor to the name of God,  
Didst break that vow, and, with thy treacherous blade  
Unripp'dst the bowels of thy sovereign's son.

SEC. MURD.

Whom thou wast sworn to cherish and defend.

FIRST MURD.

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



CLAR.

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.

FIRST MURD.

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

CLAR.

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

FIRST MURD.

Thy brother's love, our duty, and thy fault,  
Provoke us hither now to slaughter thee.

CLAR.

If you do love my brother, hate not me;  
I am his brother, and I love him well.  
If you are hir'd 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.

SEC. MURD.

You are deceiv'd, your brother Gloucester hates you.

CLAR.

O, no! he loves me, and he holds me dear:

Go you to him from me.

BOTH MURD.

Ay, so we will.

CLAR.

Tell him, when that our princely father York

Bless'd his three sons with his victorious arm,

And charg'd us from his soul to love each other,

He little thought of this divided friendship:

Bid Gloucester think on this, and he will weep.

FIRST MURD.

Ay, millstones; as he lesson'd us to weep.

CLAR.

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

FIRST MURD.

Right;

As snow in harvest. Thou deceiv'st thyself:

'Tis he that sends us to destroy you here.

CLAR.

It cannot be; for he bewept my fortune,

And hugg'd me in his arms, and swore, with sobs,  
That he would labour my delivery.

FIRST MURD.

Why, so he doth, when he delivers you  
From this earth's thralldom to the joys of heaven.

SEC. MURD.

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

CLAR.

Hast thou that holy feeling in thy soul,  
To counsel me to make my peace with God,  
And art thou yet to thy own soul so blind,  
That thou wilt war with God by murdering me?  
O! sirs, consider, he that set you on  
To do this deed, will hate you for the deed.

SEC. MURD.

What shall we do?

CLAR.

Relent and save your souls.

FIRST MURD.

Relent! 'tis cowardly, and womanish.

CLAR.

Not to relent, is beastly, savage, devilish.  
Which of you, if you were a prince's son,  
Being pent from liberty, as I am now,

If two such murd'ers as yourselves came to you,

Would not entreat for life?

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,

As you would beg, were you in my distress:

A begging prince what beggar pities not?

SEC. MURD.

Look behind you, my lord.

FIRST MURD.

[*Stabs him.*] Take that, and that: if all this will not do,

I'll drown you in the malmsey-butt within.

[*Exit with the body.*]

SEC. MURD.

A bloody deed, and desperately dispatch'd!

How fain, like Pilate, would I wash my hands

Of this most grievous murder.

*Re-enter first Murderer.*

FIRST MURD.

How now! what mean'st thou, that thou help'st me not?

By heaven, the duke shall know how slack you have been.

SEC. MURD.

I would he knew that I had sav'd his brother!

Take thou the fee, and tell him what I say;

For I repent me that the duke is slain.

*[Exit.*

FIRST MURD.

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 here I must not stay.

*[Exit.*

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ACT II.

Scene I.—

*London. A Room In The Palace.*

*Enter* King Edwardsick, Queen Elizabeth, Dorset, Rivers, Hastings, Buckingham, Grey, *and Others.*

K. EDW.

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.

RIV.

By heaven, my soul is purg'd from grudging hate;

And with my hand I seal my true heart's love.

HAST.

So thrive I, as I truly swear the like!

K. EDW.

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.

HAST.

So prosper I, as I swear perfect love!

RIV.

And I, as I love Hastings with my heart!

K. EDW.

Madam, yourself are not exempt in 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.

Q. ELIZ.

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

K. EDW.

Dorset, embrace him; Hastings, love lord marquess.

DOR.

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

HAST.

And so swear I.

*[They embrace.]*

K. EDW.

Now, princely Buckingham, seal thou this league

With thy embracements to my wife's allies,  
And make me happy in your unity.

BUCK.

[*To the Queen.*] 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.

[*They embrace.*]

K. EDW.

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.

BUCK.

And, in good time, here comes the noble duke.

*Enter Gloucester.*

GLO.

Good morrow to my sovereign king and queen;  
And princely peers, a happy time of day!



K. EDW.

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.

GLO.

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 lodg'd between us;  
Of you, Lord Rivers, and Lord Grey, of you,  
That all without desert have frown'd on me;  
Of you, Lord Woodvile, and Lord Scales, of you;  
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 to-night:

I thank my God for my humility.

Q. ELIZ.

A holy day shall this be kept hereafter:

I would to God all strifes were well compounded.

My sov'reign lord, I do beseech your highness

To take our brother Clarence to your grace.

GLO.

Why, madam, have I offer'd 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 corse.

K. EDW.

Who knows not he is dead! who knows he is?

Q. ELIZ.

All-seeing heaven, what a world is this!

BUCK.

Look I so pale, Lord Dorset, as the rest?

DOR.

Ay, my good lord; and no man in the presence

But his red colour hath forsook his cheeks.

K. EDW.

Is Clarence dead? the order was revers'd.

GLO.

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, and not in blood,  
Deserve not worse than wretched Clarence did,  
And yet go current from suspicion.

*Enter Stanley.*

STAN.

A boon, my sov'reign, for my service done!

K. EDW.

I prithee, peace: my soul is full of sorrow.

STAN.

I will not rise, unless your highness hear me.

K. EDW.

Then say at once, what is it thou request'st.

STAN.

The forfeit, sovereign, of my servant's life;  
Who slew to-day a riotous gentleman  
Lately attendant on the Duke of Norfolk.

K. EDW.

Have I a tongue to doom my brother's death,  
And shall that tongue give pardon to a slave?  
My brother kill'd no man, his fault was thought;  
And yet his punishment was bitter death.  
Who su'd to me for him? who, in my wrath,  
Kneel'd at my feet, and bade me be advis'd?  
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 Tewksbury,  
When Oxford had me down, he rescu'd 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 pluck'd, 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 defac'd  
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. O! poor Clarence!  
*[Exeunt King Edward, Queen, Hastings, Rivers, Dorset, and Grey.]*

GLO.

This is the fruit of rashness. Mark'd you not  
How that the guilty kindred of the queen  
Look'd 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?

BUCK.

We wait upon your Grace.

*[Exeunt.]*

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Scene II.—

***The Same. A Room In The Palace.***

*Enter the Duchess of York, with a Son and Daughter of Clarence.*

BOY.

Good grandam, tell us, is our father dead?

DUCH.

No, boy.

DAUGH.

Why do you wring your hands, 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,

If that our noble father be alive?

DUCH.

My pretty cousins, you mistake me much;

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, grandam, you conclude that 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.

DAUGH.

And so will I.

DUCH.

Peace, children, peace! the king doth love you well:

Incapable and shallow innocents,

You cannot guess who caus'd your father's death.

BOY.

Grandam, we can; for my good uncle Gloucester

Told me, the king, provok'd to't by the queen,

Devis'd impeachments to imprison him:

And when my uncle told me so, he wept,

And pitied me, and kindly kiss'd my cheek;

Bade me rely on him, as on my father,

And he would love me dearly as his child.

DUCH.

Ah! that deceit should steal such gentle shape,

And with a virtuous vizard 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?

DUCH.

Ay, boy.

BOY.

I cannot think it. Hark! what noise is this?

*Enter Queen Elizabeth, distractedly; Rivers and Dorset following her.*

Q. ELIZ.

Oh! 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.

DUCH.

What means this scene of rude impatience?

Q. ELIZ.

To make an act of tragic violence:  
Edward, my lord, thy son, our king, is dead!  
Why grow the branches now the root is wither'd?  
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 perpetual rest.

DUCH.

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 liv'd with looking on his images;  
But now two mirrors of his princely semblance



Are crack'd 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 thee:  
But death hath snatch'd my husband from mine arms,  
And pluck'd two crutches from my feeble limbs,  
Clarence and Edward. O! what cause have I—  
Thine being but a moiety of my grief—  
To overgo thy plaints, and drown thy cries!

BOY.

Ah, aunt, you wept not for our father's death;  
How can we aid you with our kindred tears?

DAUGH.

Our fatherless distress was left unmoan'd;  
Your widow-dolour likewise be unwept.

Q. ELIZ.

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 govern'd by the wat'ry moon,  
May send forth plenteous tears to drown the world!  
Ah! for my husband, for my dear Lord Edward!

CHIL.

Ah! for our father, for our dear Lord Clarence!

DUCH.

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

Q. ELIZ.

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

CHIL.

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

DUCH.

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

Q. ELIZ.

Was never widow had so dear a loss.

CHIL.

Were never orphans had so dear a loss.

DUCH.

Was never mother had so dear a loss.

Alas! I am the mother of these griefs:

Their woes are parcell'd, mine are 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 distress'd,

Pour all your tears; I am your sorrow's nurse,

And I will pamper it with lamentation.

DOR.

Comfort, dear mother: God is much displeas'd  
That you take with unthankfulness his doing.  
In common worldly things 'tis call'd 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.

RIV.

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

*Enter Gloucester, Buckingham, Stanley, Hastings, Ratcliff, and Others.*

GLO.

Sister, have comfort: all of us have cause  
To wail the dimming of our shining star;  
But none can cure their 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.

DUCH.

God bless thee! and put meekness in thy mind,  
Love, charity, obedience, and true duty.

GLO.

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.

BUCK

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.

The broken rancour of your high-swoln hearts,

But lately splinter'd, knit, and join'd together,

Must gently be preserv'd, cherish'd, and kept:

Me seemeth good, that, with some little train,

Forthwith from Ludlow the young prince be fetch'd

Hither to London, to be crown'd our king.

RIV.

Why with some little train, my Lord of Buckingham?

BUCK.

Marry, my lord, lest, by a multitude,

The new-heal'd wound of malice should break out;

Which would be so much the more dangerous,

By how much the estate is green and yet ungovern'd;

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.

GLO.

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

RIV.

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 urg'd:  
Therefore I say with noble Buckingham,  
That it is meet so few should fetch the prince.

HAST.

And so say I.

GLO.

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

*[Exeunt all except Buckingham and Gloucester.]*

BUCK.

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 talk'd of,  
To part the queen's proud kindred from the prince.

GLO.

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

*[Exeunt.]*

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Scene III.—

***The Same. A Street.***

*Enter two Citizens, meeting.*

FIRST CIT.

Good morrow, neighbour: whither away so fast?

SEC. CIT.

I promise you, I scarcely know myself:

Hear you the news abroad?

FIRST CIT.

Ay; that the king is dead.

SEC. CIT.

Ill news, by'r lady; seldom comes the better:

I fear, I fear, 'twill prove a giddy world.

*Enter a third Citizen.*

THIRD CIT.

Neighbours, God speed!

FIRST CIT.

Give you good morrow, sir.

THIRD CIT.

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

SEC. CIT.

Ay, sir, it is too true; God help the while!

THIRD CIT.

Then, masters, look to see a troublous world.

FIRST CIT.

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

THIRD CIT.

Woe to that land that's govern'd by a child!

SEC. CIT.

In him there is a hope of government,  
That in his nonage council under him,  
And in his full and ripen'd years himself,  
No doubt, shall then and till then govern well.

FIRST CIT.

So stood the state when Henry the Sixth  
Was crown'd at Paris but at nine months old.

THIRD CIT.

Stood the state so? no, no, good friends, God wot;  
For then this land was famously enrich'd  
With politic grave counsel; then the king  
Had virtuous uncles to protect his Grace.

FIRST CIT.

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

THIRD CIT.

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 rul'd, and not to rule,  
This sickly land might solace as before.

FIRST CIT.

Come, come, we fear the worst, all will be well.

THIRD CIT.

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 make men expect a dearth.  
All may be well; but, if God sort it so,  
'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.

SEC. CIT.

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

THIRD CIT.

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 waters swell before a boisterous storm.  
But leave it all to God. Whither away?

SEC. CIT.

Marry, we were sent for to the justices.

THIRD CIT.

And so was I: I'll bear you company.

*[Exeunt.]*

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Scene IV.—

***The Same. A Room In The Palace.***

*Enter the Archbishop of York, the young Duke of York, Queen Elizabeth, and the Duchess of York.*

ARCH.

Last night, I hear, they lay at Northampton;

At Stony-Stratford they do rest to-night:

To-morrow, or next day, they will be here.

DUCH.

I long with all my heart to see the prince.

I hope he is much grown since last I saw him.

Q. ELIZ.

But I hear, no; they say my son of York

Hath almost overta'en him in his growth.

YORK.

Ay, mother, but I would not have it so.

DUCH.

Why, my young cousin, it is good to grow.

YORK.

Grandam, one night, as we did sit at supper,

My uncle Rivers talk'd 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.

DUCH.

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.

ARCH.

And so, no doubt, he is, my gracious madam.

DUCH.

I hope he is; but yet let mothers doubt.

YORK.

Now, by my troth, if I had been remember'd,  
I could have given my uncle's grace a flout,  
To touch his growth nearer than he touch'd mine.

DUCH.

How, my young York? I prithee, let me hear it.

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.

DUCH.

I prithee, pretty York, who told thee this?

YORK.

Grandam, his nurse.

DUCH.

His nurse! why, she was dead ere thou wast born.

YORK.

If 'twere not she, I cannot tell who told me.

Q. ELIZ.

A parlous boy: go to, you are too shrewd.

ARCH.

Good madam, be not angry with the child.

Q. ELIZ.

Pitchers have ears.

*Enter a Messenger.*

ARCH.

Here comes a messenger. What news?

MESS.

Such news, my lord, as grieves me to report.

Q. ELIZ.

How doth the prince?

MESS.

Well, madam, and in health.

DUCH.

What is thy news?

MESS.

Lord Rivers and Lord Grey are sent to Pomfret,  
With them Sir Thomas Vaughan, prisoners.

DUCH.

Who hath committed them?

MESS.

The mighty dukes,  
Gloucester and Buckingham.

ARCH.

For what offence?

MESS.

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

Q. ELIZ.

Ah me! I see the ruin of my house!  
The tiger now hath seiz'd the gentle hind;  
Insulting tyranny begins to jet  
Upon the innocent and aweless throne:  
Welcome, destruction, death, and massacre!  
I see, as in a map, the end of all.

DUCH.

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 toss'd,  
For me to joy and weep their gain and loss:  
And being seated, and domestic broils  
Clean over-blown, 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 death no more.

Q. ELIZ.

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

DUCH.

Stay, I will go with you.

Q. ELIZ.

You have no cause.

ARCH.

[*To the Queen.*] 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.*]



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ACT III.

Scene I.—

***The Same. A Street.***

*The Trumpets sound. Enter the Prince of Wales, Gloucester, Buckingham, Catesby, Cardinal Bourchier, and Others.*

BUCK.

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

GLO.

Welcome, dear cousin, my thoughts' sovereign;

The weary way hath made you melancholy.

PRINCE.

No, uncle; but our crosses on the way

Have made it tedious, wearisome, and heavy:

I want more uncles here to welcome me.

GLO.

Sweet prince, the untainted virtue of your years

Hath not yet div'd into the world's deceit:

No 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 sugar'd words,

But look'd not on the poison of their hearts:

God keep you from them, and from such false friends!

PRINCE.

God keep me from false friends! but they were none.

GLO.

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

*Enter the Lord Mayor and his Train.*

MAY.

God bless your Grace with health and happy days!

PRINCE.

I thank you, good my lord; and thank you all.

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 Hastings.*

BUCK.

And in good time here comes the sweating lord.

PRINCE.

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

HAST.

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.

BUCK.

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.

CARD.

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 great a sin.

BUCK.

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 deserv'd the place  
And those who have the wit to claim the place:  
This prince hath neither claim'd it, nor deserv'd 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.

CARD.

My lord, you shall o'er-rule my mind for once.

Come on, Lord Hastings, will you go with me?

HAST.

I go, my lord.

PRINCE.

Good lords, make all the speedy haste you may.

*[Exeunt Cardinal Bouchier and Hastings.]*

Say, uncle Gloucester, if our brother come,

Where shall we sojourn till our coronation?

GLO.

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.

I do not like the Tower, of any place:

Did Julius Cæsar build that place, my lord?

BUCK.

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

PRINCE.

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

BUCK.

Upon record, my gracious lord.

PRINCE.

But say, my lord, it were not register'd,  
Methinks the truth should live from age to age,  
As 'twere retail'd to all posterity,  
Even to the general all-ending day.

GLO.

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

PRINCE.

What say you, uncle?

GLO.

I say, without characters, fame lives long.

[*Aside.*] Thus, like the formal Vice, Iniquity,

I moralize two meanings in one word.

PRINCE.

That Julius Cæsar 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,—

BUCK.

What, my gracious lord?

PRINCE.

An if I live until I be a man,  
I'll win our ancient right in France again,  
Or die a soldier, as I liv'd a king.

GLO.

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

*Enter* York, Hastings, *and* Cardinal Bouchier.

BUCK.

Now, in good time, here comes the Duke of York.

PRINCE.

Richard of York! how fares our loving brother?

YORK.

Well, my dread lord; so must I call you now.

PRINCE.

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.

GLO.

How fares our cousin, noble Lord of York?

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.

GLO.

He hath, my lord.

YORK.

And therefore is he idle?

GLO.

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

YORK.

Then he is more beholding to you than I.

GLO.

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

YORK.

I pray you, uncle, give me this dagger.

GLO.

My dagger, little cousin? with all my heart.

PRINCE.

A beggar, brother?

YORK.

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

GLO.

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

YORK.

A greater gift! O, that's the sword to it.

GLO.

Ay, gentle cousin, were it light enough.

YORK.

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

GLO.

It is too weighty for your Grace to wear.

YORK.

I weigh it lightly, were it heavier.

GLO.

What! would you have my weapon, little lord?

YORK.

I would, that I might thank you, as you call me.

GLO.

How?

YORK.

Little.



PRINCE.

My Lord of York will still be cross in talk.

Uncle, your Grace knows how to bear with him.

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.

BUCK.

With what a sharp provided with he reasons!

To mitigate the scorn he gives his uncle,

He prettily and aptly taunts himself:

So cunning and so young is wonderful.

GLO.

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.

YORK.

What! will you go unto the Tower, my lord?

PRINCE.

My Lord Protector needs will have it so.

YORK.

I shall not sleep in quiet at the Tower.

GLO.

Why, what would you fear?

YORK.

Marry, my uncle Clarence' angry ghost:

My grandam told me he was murder'd there.

PRINCE.

I fear no uncles dead.

GLO.

Nor none that live, I hope.

PRINCE.

An 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.

[*Sennet. Exeunt all but Gloucester, Buckingham, and Catesby.*]

BUCK.

Think you, my lord, this little prating York

Was not incensed by his subtle mother

To taunt and scorn you thus opprobriously?

GLO.

No doubt, no doubt: O! 'tis a parlous boy;

Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, capable:

He's all the mother's, from the top to toe.

BUCK.

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 urg'd 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?

CATE.

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

BUCK.

What think'st thou then of Stanley? what will he?

CATE.

He will do all in all as Hastings doth.

BUCK.

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 to-morrow 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 to-morrow hold divided councils,  
Wherein thyself shalt highly be employ'd.

GLO.

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

BUCK.

Good Catesby, go, effect this business soundly.

CATE.

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

GLO.

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

CATE.

You shall, my lord.

GLO.

At Crosby-place, there shall you find us both.

*[Exit Catesby.]*

BUCK.

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

GLO.

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 stood possess'd.

BUCK.

I'll claim that promise at your Grace's hand.

GLO.

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.]*

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Scene II.—

***The Same. Before Lord Hastings' House.***

*Enter a Messenger.*

MESS.

[*Knocking.*] My lord! my lord!

HAST.

[*Within.*] Who knocks?

MESS.

One from the Lord Stanley.

HAST.

[*Within.*] What is't o'clock?

MESS.

Upon the stroke of four.

*Enter Hastings.*

HAST.

Cannot my Lord Stanley sleep these tedious nights?

MESS.

So it appears by that I have to say.

First, he commends him to your noble self.

HAST.

What then?

MESS.

Then certifies your lordship, that this night  
He dreamt the boar had razed off his helm:  
Besides, he says there are two councils held;  
And that may be determin'd at the one  
Which may make you and him to rue at the 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 towards the north,  
To shun the danger that his soul divines.

HAST.

Go, fellow, go, return unto thy lord;  
Bid him not fear the separated councils:  
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, wanting instance:  
And for his dreams, I wonder he's so fond  
To trust the mockery 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;  
And we will both together to the Tower,

Where, he shall see, the boar will use us kindly.

MESS.

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

*[Exit.*

*Enter* Catesby.

CATE.

Many good morrows to my noble lord!

HAST.

Good morrow, Catesby; you are early stirring.

What news, what news, in this our tottering state?

CATE.

It is a reeling world, indeed, my lord;

And I believe will never stand upright

Till Richard wear the garland of the realm.

HAST.

How! wear the garland! dost thou mean the crown?

CATE.

Ay, my good lord.

HAST.

I'll have this crown of mine cut from my shoulders

Before I'll see the crown so foul misplac'd.

But canst thou guess that he doth aim at it?

CATE.

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.

HAST.

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.

CATE.

God keep your lordship in that gracious mind!

HAST.

But I shall laugh at this a twelve-month 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.

CATE.

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

HAST.

O monstrous, monstrous! and so falls it out  
With Rivers, Vaughan, Grey; and so 'twill do

With some men else, who think themselves as safe  
As thou and I; who, as thou know'st, are dear  
To princely Richard and to Buckingham.

CATE.

The princes both make high account of you;  
[*Aside.*] For they account his head upon the bridge.

HAST.

I know they do, and I have well deserv'd it.

*Enter Stanley.*

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

STAN.

My lord, good morrow; good morrow Catesby:  
You may jest on, but by the holy rood,  
I do not like these several councils, I.

HAST.

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,  
I would be so triumphant as I am?

STAN.

The lords at Pomfret, when they rode from London,  
Were jocund and suppos'd their state was 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.

HAST.

Come, come, have with you. Wot you what, my lord?  
To-day the lords you talk of are beheaded.

STAN.

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

*Enter a Pursuivant.*

HAST.

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

*[Exeunt Stanley and Catesby.]*

How now, sirrah! how goes the world with thee?

PURS.

The better that your lordship please to ask.

HAST.

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.

PURS.

God hold it to your honour's good content!

HAST.

Gramercy, fellow: there, drink that for me.

*[Throws him his purse.]*

PURS.

God save your lordship.

*[Exit.]*

*Enter a Priest.*

PR.

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

HAST.

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.

*Enter Buckingham.*

BUCK.

What, talking with a priest, lord chamberlain?

Your friends at Pomfret, they do need the priest:

Your honour hath no shriving work in hand.

HAST.

Good faith, and when I met this holy man,

The men you talk of came into my mind.

What, go you toward the Tower?

BUCK.

I do, my lord; but long I shall not stay:

I shall return before your lordship thence.

HAST.

Nay, like enough, for I stay dinner there.

BUCK.

[*Aside.*] And supper too, although thou know'st it not.

Come, will you go?

HAST.

I'll wait upon your lordship.

[*Exeunt.*]

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Scene III.—

***Pomfret. Before The Castle.***

*Enter Ratcliff, with halberds, carrying Rivers, Grey, and Vaughn to death.*

RIV.

Sir Richard Ratcliff, let me tell thee this:

To-day 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 blood suckers.

VAUGH.

You live that shall cry woe for this hereafter.

RAT.

Dispatch; the limit of your lives is out.

RIV.

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 hack'd to death;

And, for more slander to thy dismal seat,

We give thee up our guiltless blood to drink.

GREY.

Now Margaret's curse is fall'n upon our heads,

When she exclaim'd on Hastings, you, and I,  
For standing by when Richard stabb'd her son.

RIV.

Then curs'd she Richard, then curs'd she Buckingham,  
Then curs'd 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.

RAT.

Make haste; the hour of death is expiate.

RIV.

Come, Grey, come, Vaughan; let us here embrace:  
And take our leave until we meet in heaven.

*[Exeunt.]*

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Scene IV.—

***London. The Tower.***

Buckingham, Stanley, Hastings, *the* Bishop of Ely, Ratcliff, Lovel, *and Others, sitting at a table. Officers of the Council attending.*

HAST.

My lords, at once: the cause why we are met

Is to determine of the coronation:

In God's name, speak, when is the royal day?

BUCK.

Are all things ready for that royal time?

STAN.

It is; and wants but nomination.

ELY.

To-morrow then I judge a happy day.

BUCK.

Who knows the Lord Protector's mind herein?

Who is most inward with the noble duke?

ELY.

Your Grace, we think, should soonest know his mind.

BUCK.

We know each other's faces; for our hearts,

He knows no more of mine than I of yours;

Nor I of his, my lord, than you of mine.



Lord Hastings, you and he are near in love.

HAST.

I thank his Grace, I know he loves me well;

But, for his purpose in the coronation,

I have not sounded him, nor he deliver'd

His gracious pleasure any way therein:

But you, my noble 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 Gloucester.*

ELY.

In happy time, here comes the duke himself.

GLO.

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.

BUCK.

Had you not come upon your cue, my lord,

William Lord Hastings had pronounc'd your part,

I mean, your voice, for crowning of the king.

GLO.

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.

ELY.

Marry, and will, my lord, with all my heart.

*[Exit.*

GLO.

Cousin of Buckingham, a word with you.

*[Takes him aside.*

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 worshipfully he terms it,  
Shall lose the royalty of England's throne.

BUCK.

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

*[Exeunt Gloucester and Buckingham.*

STAN.

We have not yet set down this day of triumph.  
To-morrow, in my judgment, is too sudden;  
For I myself am not so well provided  
As else I would be, were the day prolong'd.

*Re-enter* Bishop of Ely.

ELY.

Where is my lord, the Duke of Gloucester?

I have sent for these strawberries.

HAST.

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 hate or love than he;

For by his face straight shall you know his heart.

STAN.

What of his heart perceiv'd you in his face

By any livelihood he show'd to-day?

HAST.

Marry, that with no man here he is offended;

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

*Re-enter Gloucester and Buckingham.*

GLO.

I pray you all, tell me what they deserve

That do conspire my death with devilish plots

Of damned witchcraft, and that have prevail'd

Upon my body with their hellish charms?

HAST.

The tender love I bear your Grace, my lord,

Makes me most forward in this princely presence

To doom th' offenders, whosoe'er they be:

I say, my lord, they have deserved death.

GLO.

Then be your eyes the witness of their evil.

Look how I am bewitch'd; behold mine arm

Is like a blasted sapling, wither'd up:

And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch

Consorted with that harlot strumpet Shore,

That by their witchcraft thus have marked me.

HAST.

If they have done this thing, my noble lord,—

GLO.

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 Ratcliff, look that it be done:

The rest, that love me, rise, and follow me.

*[Exeunt all but Hastings, Ratcliff, and Lovel.]*

HAST.

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'd to fly.

Three times to-day my foot-cloth horse did stumble,

And startled when he looked upon the Tower,

As loath to bear me to the slaughter-house.

O! now I need the priest that spake to me:

I now repent I told the pursuivant,

As too triumphing, how mine enemies

To-day at Pomfret bloodily were butcher'd

And I myself secure in grace and favour.

O Margaret, Margaret! now thy heavy curse

Is lighted on poor Hastings' wretched head.

RAT.

Come, come, dispatch; the duke would be at dinner:

Make a short shrift, he longs to see your head.

HAST.

O momentary grace of mortal man,

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.

LOV.

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

HAST.

O bloody Richard! miserable England!

I prophesy the fearfull'st time to thee

That ever wretched age hath look'd upon.

Come, lead me to the block; bear him my head:

They smile at me who shortly shall be dead.

*[Exeunt.]*

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Richard III, by R. Westall.

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Scene V.—

***London. The Tower Walls.***

*Enter Gloucester and Buckingham, in rotten armour, marvellous ill-favoured.*

GLO.

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?

BUCK.

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?

GLO.

He is; and, see, he brings the mayor along.

*Enter the Lord Mayor and Catesby.*

BUCK.

Lord Mayor,—

GLO.

Look to the drawbridge there!

BUCK.

Hark! a drum.

GLO.

Catesby, o'erlook the walls.

BUCK.

Lord Mayor, the reason we have sent,—

GLO.

Look back, defend thee; here are enemies.

BUCK.

God and our innocency defend and guard us!

*Enter Loveland Ratcliff, with Hastings' head.*

GLO.

Be patient, they are friends, Ratcliff and Lovel.

LOV.

Here is the head of that ignoble traitor,

The dangerous and unsuspected Hastings.

GLO.

So dear I lov'd the man, that I must weep.

I took him for the plainest harmless creature

That breath'd upon the earth a Christian;

Made him my book, wherein my soul recorded

The history of all her secret thoughts:



So smooth he daub'd his vice with show of virtue,  
That, his apparent open guilt omitted,  
I mean his conversation with Shore's wife,  
He liv'd from all attainder of suspect.

BUCK.

Well, well, he was the covert'st shelter'd traitor  
That ever liv'd.  
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?

MAY.

Had he done so?

GLO.

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 person's safety,  
Enforc'd us to this execution?

MAY.

Now, fair befall you! he deserv'd his death;  
And your good Graces both have well proceeded,  
To warn false traitors from the like attempts.

I never look'd for better at his hands,  
After he once fell in with Mistress Shore.

BUCK.

Yet had we not determin'd he should die,  
Until your lordship came to see his end;  
Which now the loving haste of these our friends,  
Something against our meaning, hath prevented:  
Because, my lord, we would have had you heard  
The traitor speak, and timorously confess  
The manner and the purpose of his treason;  
That you might well have signified the same  
Unto the citizens, who haply may  
Misconster us in him, and wail his death.

MAY.

But, my good lord, your Grace's word 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.

GLO.

And to that end we wish'd your lordship here,  
To avoid the censures of the carping world.

BUCK.

But 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* Lord Mayor.

GLO.

Go, after, after, cousin Buckingham.

The mayor towards Guildhall hies him in all post:

There, at your meetest vantage 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 stretch'd unto their servants, daughters, wives,

Even where his raging eye or savage heart

Without control lusted 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.

BUCK.

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.

GLO.

If you thrive well, bring them to Baynard's Castle;

Where you shall find me well accompanied

With reverend fathers and well-learned bishops.

BUCK.

I go; and towards three or four o'clock

Look for the news that the Guildhall affords.

[*Exit.*

GLO.

Go, Lovel, with all speed to Doctor Shaw;

[*To Catesby.*] Go thou to Friar Penker; bid them both

Meet me within this hour at Baynard's Castle.

[*Exeunt Loveland Catesby.*

Now will I in, 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.*

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Scene VI.—

***The Same. A Street.***

*Enter a Scrivener.*

SCRIV.

Here is the indictment of the good Lord Hastings;

Which in a set hand fairly is engross'd,

That it may be to-day 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 liv'd,

Untainted, unexamined, free, at liberty.

Here's a good world the while! Who is so gross

That cannot see this palpable device?

Yet who so bold but says he sees it not?

Bad is the world; and all will come to naught,

When such ill dealing must be seen in thought.

*[Exit.]*

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Scene VII.—

***The Same. The Court Of Baynard'S Castle.***

*Enter Gloucester and Buckingham, meeting.*

GLO.

How, now, how now! what say the citizens?

BUCK.

Now, by the holy mother of our Lord,

The citizens are mum, say not a word.

GLO.

Touch'd you the bastardy of Edward's children?

BUCK.

I did; with his contract with Lady Lucy,

And his contract by deputy in France;

The insatiate greediness of his desires,

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  
Untouch'd or slightly handled in discourse;  
And when my oratory drew toward end,  
I bade them that did love their country's good  
Cry 'God save Richard, England's royal king!'

GLO.

And did they so?

BUCK.

No, so God help me, they spake not a word;  
But, like dumb statuas or breathing stones,  
Star'd each on other, and look'd deadly pale.  
Which when I saw, I reprehended them;  
And ask'd the mayor what meant this wilful silence:  
His answer was, the people were not wont  
To be spoke to but by the recorder.  
Then he was urg'd to tell my tale again:  
'Thus saith the duke, thus hath the duke inferr'd;'  
But nothing spoke in warrant from himself.  
When he had done, some followers of mine own,  
At lower end of the hall, hurl'd 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 wisdom and your love to Richard:’

And even here brake off, and came away.

GLO.

What tongueless blocks were they! would they not speak?

Will not the mayor then and his brethren come?

BUCK.

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 make a holy descant:

And be not easily won to our requests;

Play the maid’s part, still answer nay, and take it.

GLO.

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.

BUCK.

Go, go, up to the leads! the Lord Mayor knocks.

*[Exit Gloucester.*

*Enter the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens.*

Welcome, my lord: I dance attendance here;

I think the duke will not be spoke withal.

*Enter, from the Castle, Catesby.*

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



CATE.

He doth entreat your Grace, my noble lord,  
To visit him to-morrow or next day.  
He is within, with two right reverend fathers,  
Divinely bent to meditation;  
And in no worldly suit would he be mov'd,  
To draw him from his holy exercise.

BUCK.

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.

CATE.

I'll signify so much unto him straight.

*[Exit.]*

BUCK.

Ah, ha, my lord, this prince is not an Edward!  
He is not lolling on a lewd day-bed,  
But on his knees at meditation;  
Not dallying with a brace of courtezans,  
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

Take on his Grace the sovereignty thereof:

But sore, I fear, we shall not win him to it.

MAY.

Marry, God defend his Grace should say us nay!

BUCK.

I fear he will. Here Catesby comes again.

*Re-enter*Catesby.

Now, Catesby, what says his Grace?

CATE.

He wonders to what end you have assembled

Such troops of citizens to come to him,

His Grace not being warn'd thereof before:

My lord, he fears you mean no good to him.

BUCK.

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*Gloucester,*in a gallery above, between two Bishops. Catesbyreturns.*

MAY.

See, where his Grace stands 'tween two clergymen!

BUCK.

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 ornament 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.

GLO.

My lord, there needs no such apology;

I do beseech your Grace to pardon me,

Who, earnest in the service of my God,

Deferr'd the visitation of my friends.

But, leaving this, what is your Grace's pleasure?

BUCK.

Even that, I hope, which pleaseth God above,

And all good men of this ungovern'd isle.

GLO.

I do suspect I have done some offence

That seems disgracious in the city's eye;

And that you come to reprehend my ignorance.

BUCK.

You have, my lord: would it might please your Grace,

On our entreaties to amend your fault!

GLO.

Else wherefore breathe I in a Christian land?

BUCK.

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 blemish'd 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 defac'd with scars of infamy,

Her royal stock graft with ignoble plants,

And almost shoulder'd 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

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.

GLO.

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 sov'reignty,  
Which fondly you would here impose on me;  
If to reprove you for this suit of yours,  
So season'd with your faithful love to me,  
Then, on the other side, I check'd 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 smother'd.  
But, God be thank'd, 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, mellow'd 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!

BUCK.

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 betroth'd  
To Bona, sister to the King of France.  
These both put by, a poor petitioner,

A care-craz'd 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,  
Seduc'd the pitch and height of his degree  
To base declension and loath'd 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 proffer'd benefit of dignity;  
If not to bless us and the land withal,  
Yet to draw forth your noble ancestry  
From the corruption of abusing times,  
Unto a lineal true-derived course.

MAY.

Do, good my lord; your citizens entreat you.

BUCK.

Refuse not, mighty lord, this proffer'd love.

CATE.

O! make them joyful: grant their lawful suit:

GLO.

Alas! why would you heap those cares 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.

BUCK.

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 egally, indeed, to all estates,

Yet whether 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, we will entreat no more.

*[Exit Buckingham and Citizens.]*

CATE.

Call them again, sweet prince; accept their suit:

If you deny them, all the land will rue it.

GLO.

Will you enforce me to a world of cares?

Call them again: I am not made of stone,

But penetrable to your kind entreats,

*[Exit Catesby.]*



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'r I will or no,

I must have patience to endure the load:

But if black scandal or foul-fac'd 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.

MAY.

God bless your Grace! we see it, and will say it.

GLO.

In saying so, you shall but say the truth.

BUCK.

Then I salute you with this royal title:

Long live King Richard, England's worthy king!

ALL.

Amen.

BUCK.

To-morrow may it please you to be crown'd?

GLO.

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

BUCK.

To-morrow then we will attend your Grace:

And so most joyfully we take our leave.

GLO.

[*To the Bishops.*] Come, let us to our holy work again.

Farewell, my cousin;—farewell, gentle friends.

[*Exeunt.*]

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ACT IV.

Scene I.—

***London. Before The Tower.***

*Enter on one side, Queen Elizabeth, Duchess of York, and Marquess of Dorset; on the other, Anne, Duchess of Gloucester, leading Lady Margaret Plantagenet, Clarence's young daughter.*

DUCH.

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 princes.  
Daughter, well met.

ANNE.

God give your Graces both  
A happy and a joyful time of day!

Q. ELIZ.

As much to you, good sister! whither away?

ANNE.

No further than the Tower; and, as I guess,  
Upon the like devotion as yourselves,  
To gratulate the gentle princes there.

Q. ELIZ.

Kind sister, thanks: we'll enter all together:—

*Enter 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?

BRAK.

Right well, dear madam. By your patience,  
I may not suffer you to visit them:  
The king hath strictly charg'd the contrary.

Q. ELIZ.

The king! who's that?

BRAK.

I mean the Lord Protector.

Q. ELIZ.

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?

DUCH.

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

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.

BRAK.

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

[*Exit.*

*Enter* Stanley.

STAN.

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 the* Duchess of Gloucester.] Come, madam, you must straight to Westminster,

There to be crowned Richard's royal queen.

Q. ELIZ.

Ah! cut my lace asunder,

That my pent heart may have some scope to beat,

Or else I swoon with this dead-killing news.

ANNE.

Despiteful tidings! O! unpleasing news!

DOR.

Be of good cheer: mother, how fares your Grace?

Q. ELIZ.

O, Dorset! speak not to me, get thee gone;

Death and destruction dog thee at the 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 slaughter-house,

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.

STAN.

Full of wise care is this your counsel, madam.  
[ToDorset.] 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.

DUCH.

O ill-dispersing wind of misery!  
O! my accursed womb, the bed of death,  
A cockatrice hast thou hatch'd to the world,  
Whose unavoided eye is murderous!

STAN.

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

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 brain.  
Anointed let me be with deadly venom;  
And die, ere men can say 'God save the queen!'

Q. ELIZ.

Go, go, poor soul, I envy not thy glory;

To feed my humour, wish thyself no harm.

ANNE.

No! why? When he, that is my husband now

Came to me, as I follow'd Henry's corse;

When scarce the blood was well wash'd from his hands,

Which issu'd from my other angel husband,

And that dead saint which then I weeping follow'd;

O! when I say, I look'd on Richard's face,

This was my wish, 'Be thou,' quoth I, 'accurs'd,

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 prov'd the subject of mine own soul's curse:

Which hitherto hath held mine 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 awak'd.

Besides, he hates me for my father Warwick,

And will, no doubt, shortly be rid of me.

Q. ELIZ.

Poor heart, adieu! I pity thy complaining.

ANNE.

No more than with my soul I mourn for yours.

Q. ELIZ.

Farewell! thou woeful welcomer of glory!

ANNE.

Adieu, poor soul, that tak'st thy leave of it!

DUCH.

[*To Dorset.*] Go thou to Richmond, and good fortune guide thee!

[*To Anne.*] Go thou to Richard, and good angels tend thee!

[*To Q. 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 wrack'd with a week of teen.

Q. ELIZ.

Stay yet, look back with me unto the Tower.

Pity, you ancient stones, those tender babes

Whom envy hath immur'd 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.*]



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Scene II.—

***The Same. A Room Of State In The Palace.***

*Sennet. Richard, in pomp, crowned: Buckingham, Catesby, a Page, and Others.*

K. RICH.

Stand all apart. Cousin of Buckingham.

BUCK.

My gracious sovereign!

K. RICH.

Give me thy hand. [*He ascends 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?

BUCK.

Still live they, and for ever let them last!

K. RICH.

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.

BUCK.

Say on, my loving lord.

K. RICH.

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

BUCK.

Why, so you are, my thrice-renowned liege.

K. RICH.

Ha! am I king? 'Tis so: but Edward lives.

BUCK.

True, noble prince.

K. RICH.

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 perform'd.

What sayst thou now? speak suddenly, be brief.

BUCK.

Your Grace may do your pleasure.

K. RICH.

Tut, tut! thou art all ice, thy kindness freezes:

Say, have I thy consent that they shall die?

BUCK.

Give me some little breath, some pause, dear lord,

Before I positively speak in this:

I will resolve you herein presently.

*[Exit.]*

CATE.

[*Aside to another.*] The king is angry: see, he gnaws his lip.

K. RICH.

[*Descends from his throne.*] I will converse with iron-witted fools

And unrespective boys: none are for me

That look into me with considerate eyes.

High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspect.

Boy!

PAGE.

My lord!

K. RICH.

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.

K. RICH.

What is his name?

PAGE.

His name, my lord, is Tyrrell.

K. RICH.

I partly know the man: go, call him hither.

*[Exit Page.*

The deep-revolving witty Buckingham  
No more shall be the neighbour to my counsel.  
Hath he so long held out with me untir'd,  
And stops he now for breath? well, be it so.

*Enter Stanley.*

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

STAN.

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

K. RICH.

Come hither, Catesby: rumour it abroad,  
That Anne my wife is very grievous sick;  
I will take order for her keeping close.  
Inquire 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* Tyrrell.

Is thy name Tyrrell?

TYR.

James Tyrrell, and your most obedient subject.

K. RICH.

Art thou, indeed?

TYR.

Prove me, my gracious lord.

K. RICH.

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

TYR.

Please you; but I had rather kill two enemies.

K. RICH.

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.

Tyrrell, I mean those bastards in the Tower.

TYR.

Let me have open means to come to them,

And soon I'll rid you from the fear of them.

K. RICH.

Thou sing'st sweet music. Hark, come hither, Tyrrell:

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.

TYR.

I will dispatch it straight.

*[Exit.*

*Re-enter* Buckingham.

BUCK.

My lord, I have consider'd in my mind

The late demand that you did sound me in.

K. RICH.

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

BUCK.

I hear the news, my lord.

K. RICH.

Stanley, he is your wife's son: well, look to it.

BUCK.

My lord, I claim the gift, my due by promise,

For which your honour and your faith is pawn'd;

The earldom of Hereford and the moveables

Which you have promised I shall possess.

K. RICH.

Stanley, look to your wife: if she convey

Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

BUCK.

What says your highness to my just request?

K. RICH.

I do remember me, Henry the Sixth

Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,

When Richmond was a little peevish boy.

A king! perhaps—

BUCK.

My lord!

K. RICH.

How chance the prophet could not at that time

Have told me, I being by, that I should kill him?

BUCK.

My lord, your promise for the earldom,—

K. RICH.

Richmond! When last I was at Exeter,

The mayor in courtesy show'd me the castle,

And call'd it Rougemont: at which name I started,

Because a bard of Ireland told me once

I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

BUCK.

My lord!

K. RICH.

Ay, what's o'clock?

BUCK.

I am thus bold to put your Grace in mind

Of what you promis'd me.

K. RICH.

Well, but what is't o'clock?

BUCK.

Upon the stroke of ten.

K. RICH.

Well, let it strike.

BUCK.

Why let it strike?

K. RICH.

Because that, like a Jack, thou keep'st the stroke

Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.

I am not in the giving vein to-day.

BUCK.

Why, then resolve me whe'r you will, or no.

K. RICH.

Thou troublest me: I am not in the vein.

*[Exeunt King Richard and Train.]*



BUCK.

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.*

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Scene III.—

***The Same.***

*Enter Tyrrell.*

TYR.

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, whom I did suborn

To do this piece of ruthless butchery,

Albeit they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,

Melting with tenderness and mild compassion,

Wept like to children in their death's sad story.

'Oh! 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,

Which in their summer beauty kiss'd each other.

A book of prayers on their pillow lay;

Which once,' quoth Forrest, 'almost chang'd my mind;

But, O, the devil'—there the villain stopp'd;

When Dighton thus told on: 'We smothered

The most replenished sweet work of nature,

That from the prime creation e'er she fram'd.'

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:

And here he comes.

*Enter* King Richard.

All health, my sovereign lord!

K. RICH.

Kind Tyrrell, am I happy in thy news?

TYR.

If to have done the thing you gave in charge

Beget your happiness, be happy then,

For it is done.

K. RICH.

But didst thou see them dead?

TYR

I did, my lord.

K. RICH.

And buried, gentle Tyrrell?

TYR.

The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them;

But how or in what place I do not know.

K. RICH.

Come to me, Tyrrell, soon at after-supper,

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.

TYR.

I humbly take my leave.

*[Exit.*

K. RICH.

The son of Clarence have I pent up close;  
His daughter meanly have I match'd in marriage;  
The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom,  
And Anne my wife hath bid the world good night.  
Now, for I know the Breton 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* Catesby.

CATE.

My lord!

K. RICH.

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

CATE.

Bad news, my lord: Morton is fled to Richmond;  
And Buckingham, back'd with the hardy Welshmen,  
Is in the field, and still his power increaseth.

K. RICH.

Ely with Richmond troubles me more near  
Than Buckingham and his rash-levied strength.  
Come; I have learn'd that fearful commenting  
Is leaden servitor to dull delay:  
Delay leads impotent and snail-pac'd 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.]*

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Scene IV.—

***The Same. Before The Palace.***

*Enter* Queen Margaret.

Q. MAR.

So, now prosperity begins to mellow  
And drop into the rotten mouth of death.  
Here in these confines slyly have I lurk'd  
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.  
Withdraw thee, wretched Margaret: who comes here?

*Enter* Queen Elizabeth *and the* Duchess of York.

Q. ELIZ.

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

Q. MAR.

Hover about her; say, that right for right  
Hath dimm'd your infant morn to aged night.

DUCH.

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

Q. MAR.

Plantagenet doth quit Plantagenet;  
Edward for Edward pays a dying debt.

Q. ELIZ.

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?

Q. MAR.

When holy Harry died, and my sweet son.

DUCH.

Dead life, blind sight, poor mortal living ghost,  
Woe's scene, world's shame, grave's due by life usurp'd,  
Brief abstract and record of tedious days,  
Rest thy unrest on England's lawful earth,  
*[Sitting down.*

Unlawfully made drunk with innocent blood!

Q. ELIZ.

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 I?

*[Sitting down by her.]*

Q. MAR.

If ancient sorrow be most reverend,

Give mine the benefit of seniory,

And let my griefs frown on the upper hand,

If sorrow can admit society.

*[Sitting down with them.]*

Tell o'er your woes again by viewing mine:

I had an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;

I had a Harry, till a Richard kill'd him:

Thou hadst an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;

Thou hadst a Richard, till a Richard kill'd him.

DUCH.

I had a Richard too, and thou didst kill him;

I had a Rutland too, thou holp'st to kill him.

Q. MAR.

Thou hadst a Clarence too, and Richard kill'd 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 excellent grand-tyrant of the earth,

That reigns in galled eyes of weeping souls,



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.

DUCH.

O! Harry's wife, triumph not in my woes:

God witness with me, I have wept for thine.

Q. MAR.

Bear with me; I am hungry for revenge,

And now I cloy me with beholding it.

Thy Edward he is dead, that kill'd my Edward;

Thy other Edward dead, to quit my Edward;

Young York he is but boot, because both they

Match not the high perfection of my loss:

Thy Clarence he is dead that stabb'd my Edward;

And the beholders of this tragic play,

The adulterate Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan, Grey,

Untimely smother'd in their dusky graves.

Richard yet lives, hell's black intelligencer,

Only reserv'd 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 convey'd from hence.

Cancel his bond of life, dear God! I pray,  
That I may live to say, The dog is dead.

Q. ELIZ.

O! thou didst prophesy the time would come  
That I should wish for thee to help me curse  
That bottled spider, that foul bunchback'd toad.

Q. MAR.

I call'd thee then vain flourish of my fortune;  
I call'd thee then poor shadow, painted queen;  
The presentation of but what I was;  
The flattering index of a direful pageant;  
One heav'd a-high to be hurl'd down below;  
A mother only mock'd with two fair babes;  
A dream of what thou wert, a breath, a bubble,  
A sign of dignity, a garish flag,  
To be the aim of every dangerous shot;  
A queen in jest, only to fill the scene.  
Where is thy husband now? where be thy brothers?  
Where are thy children? wherein dost thou joy?  
Who sues and kneels and cries God save the queen?  
Where be the bending peers that flatter'd thee?  
Where be the thronging troops that follow'd 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 su'd to, one that humbly sues;  
For queen, a very caitiff crown'd with care;  
For one that scorn'd at me, now scorn'd of me;  
For one being fear'd of all, now fearing one;  
For one commanding all, obey'd of none.

Thus hath the course of justice whirl'd about,  
And left thee but a very prey to time;  
Having no more but thought of what thou wert,  
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 burden'd yoke;  
From which even here, I slip my wearied 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.

Q. ELIZ.

O thou, well skill'd in curses, stay awhile,  
And teach me how to curse mine enemies.

Q. MAR.

Forbear to sleep the night, and fast the day;  
Compare dead happiness with living woe;  
Think that thy babes were fairer than they were,  
And he that slew them fouler than he is:  
Bettering thy loss makes the bad causer worse:

Revolving this will teach thee how to curse.

Q. ELIZ.

My words are dull; O! quicken them with thine!

Q. MAR.

Thy woes will make them sharp, and pierce like mine.

*[Exit.*

DUCH.

Why should calamity be full of words?

Q. ELIZ.

Windy attorneys to their client woes,

Airy succeeders of intestate joys,

Poor breathing orators of miseries!

Let them have scope: though what they do impart

Help nothing else, yet do they ease the heart.

DUCH.

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 smother'd.

*[A trumpet heard.*

The trumpet sounds: be copious in exclams.

*Enter King Richard, and his Train, marching.*

K. RICH.

Who intercepts me in my expedition?

DUCH.

O! she that might have intercepted thee,  
By strangling thee in her accursed womb,  
From all the slaughters, wretch, that thou hast done!

Q. ELIZ.

Hid'st thou that forehead with a golden crown,  
Where should be branded, if that right were right,  
The slaughter of the prince that ow'd that crown,  
And the dire death of my poor sons and brothers?  
Tell me, thou villain slave, where are my children?

DUCH.

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

Q. ELIZ.

Where is the gentle Rivers, Vaughan, Grey?

DUCH.

Where is kind Hastings?

K. RICH.

A flourish, trumpets! strike alarum, drums!  
Let not the heavens hear these tell-tale 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.

DUCH.

Art thou my son?

K. RICH.

Ay; I thank God, my father, and yourself.

DUCH.

Then patiently hear my impatience.

K. RICH.

Madam, I have a touch of your condition,

That cannot brook the accent of reproof.

DUCH.

O, let me speak!

K. RICH.

Do, then; but I'll not hear.

DUCH.

I will be mild and gentle in my words.

K. RICH.

And brief, good mother; for I am in haste.

DUCH.

Art thou so hasty? I have stay'd for thee,

God knows, in torment and in agony.

K. RICH.

And came I not at last to comfort you?

DUCH.

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 school-days frightful, desperate, wild and furious;  
Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous;  
Thy age confirm'd, proud, subtle, sly, and bloody,  
More mild, but yet more harmful, kind in hatred:  
What comfortable hour canst thou name  
That ever grac'd me in thy company?

K. RICH.

Faith, none, but Humphrey Hour, that call'd 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!

DUCH.

I prithee, hear me speak.

K. RICH.

You speak too bitterly.

DUCH.

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

K. RICH.

So!

DUCH.

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 look upon 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!  
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.*

Q. ELIZ.

Though far more cause, yet much less spirit to curse  
Abides in me: I say amen to her.

*[Going.*

K. RICH.

Stay, madam; I must talk a word with you.

Q. ELIZ.

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.

K. RICH.

You have a daughter call'd Elizabeth,  
Virtuous and fair, royal and gracious.

Q. ELIZ.

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 unscarr'd of bleeding slaughter,  
I will confess she was not Edward's daughter.

K. RICH.

Wrong not her birth; she is of royal blood.

Q. ELIZ.

To save her life, I'll say she is not so.

K. RICH.

Her life is safest only in her birth.

Q. ELIZ.

And only in that safety died her brothers.

K. RICH.

Lo! at their births good stars were opposite!

Q. ELIZ.

No, to their lives ill friends were contrary.

K. RICH.

All unavoyded is the doom of destiny.

Q. ELIZ.

True, when avoyded grace makes destiny.

My babes were destin'd to a fairer death,

If grace had bless'd thee with a fairer life.

K. RICH.

You speak as if that I had slain my cousins.

Q. ELIZ.

Cousins, indeed; and by their uncle cozen'd

Of comfort, kingdom, kindred, freedom, life.

Whose hands soever lanc'd their tender hearts

Thy head, all indirectly, gave direction:

No doubt the murderous 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 anchor'd in thine eyes;

And I, in such a desperate bay of death,

Like a poor bark, of sails and tackling reft,

Rush all to pieces on thy rocky bosom.

K. RICH.

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 harm'd.

Q. ELIZ.

What good is cover'd with the face of heaven,  
To be discover'd, that can do me good?

K. RICH.

The advancement of your children, gentle lady.

Q. ELIZ.

Up to some scaffold, there to lose their heads?

K. RICH.

No, to the dignity and height of fortune,  
The high imperial type of this earth's glory.

Q. ELIZ.

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

K. RICH.

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.

Q. ELIZ.

Be brief, lest that the process of thy kindness

Last longer telling than thy kindness' date.

K. RICH.

Then know, that from my soul I love thy daughter.

Q. ELIZ.

My daughter's mother thinks it with her soul.

K. RICH.

What do you think?

Q. ELIZ.

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.

K. RICH.

Be not too hasty to confound my meaning:

I mean, that with my soul I love thy daughter,

And do intend to make her Queen of England.

Q. ELIZ.

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

K. RICH.

Even he that makes her queen: who else should be?

Q. ELIZ.

What! thou?

K. RICH.

Even so: what think you of it?

Q. ELIZ.

How canst thou woo her?

K. RICH.

That I would learn of you,

As one being best acquainted with her humour.

Q. ELIZ.

And wilt thou learn of me?

K. RICH.

Madam, with all my heart.

Q. ELIZ.

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 sometime Margaret

Did to thy father, steep'd 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.

K. RICH.

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

Q. ELIZ.

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

K. RICH.

Say, that I did all this for love of her?

Q. ELIZ.

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

K. RICH.

Look, what is done cannot be now amended:  
Men shall deal unadvisedly sometimes,  
Which after-hours give 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 kill'd 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 mettle, of your very blood;  
Of all one pain, save for a night of groans  
Endur'd 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  
Repair'd 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, transform'd 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 the 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-brain'd 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 victress, Cæsar's Cæsar.

Q. ELIZ.

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?

K. RICH.

Infer fair England's peace by this alliance.

Q. ELIZ.

Which she shall purchase with still lasting war.

K. RICH.

Tell her, the king, that may command, entreats.



Q. ELIZ.

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

K. RICH.

Say, she shall be a high and mighty queen.

Q. ELIZ.

To wail the title, as her mother doth.

K. RICH.

Say, I will love her everlastingly.

Q. ELIZ.

But how long shall that title 'ever' last?

K. RICH.

Sweetly in force unto her fair life's end.

Q. ELIZ.

But how long fairly shall her sweet life last?

K. RICH.

As long as heaven and nature lengthens it.

Q. ELIZ.

As long as hell and Richard likes of it.

K. RICH.

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

Q. ELIZ.

But she, your subject, loathes such sovereignty.

K. RICH.

Be eloquent in my behalf to her.

Q. ELIZ.

An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.

K. RICH.

Then plainly to her tell my loving tale.

Q. ELIZ.

Plain and not honest is too harsh a style.

K. RICH.

Your reasons are too shallow and too quick.

Q. ELIZ.

O, no! my reasons are too deep and dead;

Too deep and dead, poor infants, in their graves.

K. RICH.

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

Q. ELIZ.

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

K. RICH.

Now, by my George, my garter, and my crown,—

Q. ELIZ.

Profan'd, dishonour'd, and the third usurp'd.

K. RICH.

I swear,—

Q. ELIZ.

By nothing; for this is no oath.

Thy George, profan'd, hath lost his holy honour;

Thy garter, blemish'd, pawn'd his knightly virtue;

Thy crown, usurp'd, disgrac'd his kingly glory.

If something thou wouldst swear to be believ'd,

Swear, then, by something that thou hast not wrong'd.

K. RICH.

Now, by the world,—

Q. ELIZ.

'Tis full of thy foul wrongs.

K. RICH.

My father's death,—

Q. ELIZ.

Thy life hath that dishonour'd.

K. RICH.

Then, by myself,—

Q. ELIZ.

Thyself is self-misus'd.

K. RICH.

Why, then, by God,—

Q. ELIZ.

God's wrong is most of all.

If thou hadst fear'd to break an oath by him,

The unity the king my husband made

Had not been broken, nor my brothers died:

If thou hadst fear'd to break an oath by him,

The imperial metal, circling now thy head,  
Had grac'd the tender temples of my child,  
And both the princes had been breathing here,  
Which now, too tender bed-fellows for dust,  
Thy broken faith hath made a prey for worms.  
What canst thou swear by now?

K. RICH.

The time to come.

Q. ELIZ.

That thou hast wronged in the time o'erpast;  
For I myself have many tears to wash  
Hereafter time for time past wrong'd by thee.  
The children live, whose parents thou hast slaughter'd,  
Ungovern'd youth, to wail it in their age:  
The parents live, whose children thou hast butcher'd,  
Old barren plants, to wail it with their age.  
Swear not by time to come; for that thou hast  
Misus'd ere us'd, by times ill-us'd o'erpast.

K. RICH.

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 pure 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-fond in great designs.

Q. ELIZ.

Shall I be tempted of the devil thus?

K. RICH.

Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.

Q. ELIZ.

Shall I forget myself to be myself?

K. RICH.

Ay, if your self's remembrance wrong yourself.

Q. ELIZ.

Yet thou didst kill my children.

K. RICH.

But in your daughter's womb I bury them:

Where, in that nest of spicery, they shall breed

Selves of themselves, to your recomforture.

Q. ELIZ.

Shall I go win my daughter to thy will?

K. RICH.

And be a happy mother by the deed.

Q. ELIZ.

I go. Write to me very shortly,

And you shall understand from me her mind.

K. RICH.

Bear her my true love's kiss; and so farewell.

*[Kissing her. Exit Queen Elizabeth.]*

Relenting fool, and shallow changing woman!

*Enter Ratcliff; Catesby following.*

How now! what news?

RAT.

Most mighty sovereign, on the western coast

Rideth a puissant navy; to the shores

Throng many doubtful hollow-hearted friends,

Unarm'd, and unresolv'd 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.

K. RICH.

Some light-foot friend post to the Duke of Norfolk:  
Ratcliff, thyself, or Catesby; where is he?

CATE.

Here, my good lord.

K. RICH.

Catesby, fly to the duke.

CATE.

I will, my lord, with all convenient haste.

K. RICH.

Ratcliff, 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?

CATE.

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

K. RICH.

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

CATE.

I go.

*[Exit.*

RAT.

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

K. RICH.

Why, what wouldst thou do there before I go?

RAT.

Your highness told me I should post before.

*Enter Stanley.*

K. RICH.

My mind is chang'd. Stanley, what news with you?

STAN.

None good, my liege, to please you with the hearing;

Nor none so bad but well may be reported.

K. RICH.

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?

STAN.

Richmond is on the seas.

K. RICH.

There let him sink, and be the seas on him!



White-liver'd runagate! what doth he there?

STAN.

I know not, mighty sovereign, but by guess.

K. RICH.

Well, as you guess?

STAN.

Stirr'd up by Dorset, Buckingham, and Morton,  
He makes for England, here to claim the crown.

K. RICH.

Is the chair empty? is the sword unsway'd?

Is the king dead? the empire unpossess'd?

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?

STAN.

Unless for that, my liege, I cannot guess.

K. RICH.

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.

STAN.

No, my good lord; therefore mistrust me not.

K. RICH.

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?

STAN.

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

K. RICH.

Cold friends to me: what do they in the north

When they should serve their sovereign in the west?

STAN.

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.

K. RICH.

Ay, ay, thou wouldst be gone to join with Richmond:

But I'll not trust thee.

STAN.

Most mighty sovereign,

You have no cause to hold my friendship doubtful.

I never was nor never will be false.

K. RICH.

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.

STAN.

So deal with him as I prove true to you.

*[Exit.*

*Enter a Messenger.*

MESS.

My gracious sovereign, now in Devonshire,

As I by friends am well advertised,

Sir Edward Courtney, and the haughty prelate,

Bishop of Exeter, his brother there,

With many more confederates are in arms.

*Enter a second Messenger.*

SEC. MESS.

In Kent, my liege, the Guildfords are in arms;

And every hour more competitors

Flock to the rebels, and their power grows strong.

*Enter a third Messenger.*

THIRD MESS.

My lord, the army of great Buckingham—

K. RICH.

Out on ye, owls! nothing but songs of death?

*[He strikes him.*

There, take thou that, till thou bring better news.

THIRD MESS.

The news I have to tell your majesty

Is, that by sudden floods and fall of waters,  
Buckingham's army is dispers'd and scatter'd;  
And he himself wander'd away alone,  
No man knows whither.

K. RICH.

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

THIRD MESS.

Such proclamation hath been made, my liege.  
*Enter a fourth Messenger.*

FOURTH MESS.

Sir Thomas Lovel, and Lord Marquess Dorset,  
'Tis said, my liege, in Yorkshire are in arms:  
But this good comfort bring I to your highness,  
The Breton navy is dispers'd 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 answer'd him, they came from Buckingham  
Upon his party: he, mistrusting them,  
Hois'd sail, and made away for Brittany.

K. RICH.

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.

CATE.

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 news, but yet they must be told.

K. RICH.

Away towards Salisbury! while we reason here,  
A royal battle might be won and lost.  
Some one take order Buckingham be brought  
To Salisbury; the rest march on with me.

*[Exeunt.]*

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Scene V.—

***The Same. A Room In Lord Stanley's House.***

*Enter Stanley and Sir Christopher Urswick.*

STAN.

Sir Christopher, tell Richmond this from me:

That in the sty of this most bloody boar

My son George Stanley is frank'd 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?

CHRIS.

At Pembroke, or at Ha'rford-west, in Wales.

STAN.

What men of name resort to him?

CHRIS.

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.

STAN.

Well, hie thee to thy lord; I kiss his hand:

My letter will resolve him of my mind.

Farewell.

*[Exeunt.]*

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ACT V.

Scene I.—

***Salisbury. An Open Place.***

*Enter the Sheriff and Guard, with Buckingham, led to execution.*

BUCK.

Will not King Richard let me speak with him?

SHER.

No, my good lord; therefore be patient.

BUCK.

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,

Even for revenge mock my destruction!

This is All-Souls' day, fellows, is it not?

SHER.

It is, my lord.

BUCK.

Why, then All-Souls' day is my body's doomsday.

This is the day that, in King Edward's time,

I wish'd might fall on me, when I was found



False to his children or his wife's allies;  
This is the day wherein I wish'd to fall  
By the false faith of him whom most I trusted;  
This, this All-Souls' day to my fearful soul  
Is the determin'd respite of my wrongs.  
That high All-Seer which I dallied with  
Hath turn'd my feigned prayer on my head,  
And given in earnest what I begg'd in jest.  
Thus doth he force the swords of wicked men  
To turn their own points on 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.]*

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Scene II.—

***A Plain Near Tamworth.***

*Enter with drum and colours, Richmond, Oxford, Sir James Blunt, Sir Walter Herbert, and Others, with Forces, marching.*

RICHM.

Fellows in arms, and my most loving friends,  
Bruis'd underneath the yoke of tyranny,  
Thus far into the bowels of the land  
Have we march'd on without impediment:  
And here receive we from our father Stanley  
Lines of fair comfort and encouragement.  
The wretched, bloody, and usurping boar,  
That spoil'd your summer fields and fruitful vines,  
Swills your warm blood like wash, and makes his trough  
In your embowell'd 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.

OXF.

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

HERB.

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.

RICHM.

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.]*

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Scene III.—

***Bosworth Field.***

*Enter King Richard and Forces; the Duke of Norfolk, Earl of Surrey, and Others.*

K. RICH.

Here pitch our tent, even here in Bosworth field.

My Lord of Surrey, why look you so sad?

SUR.

My heart is ten times lighter than my looks.

K. RICH.

My Lord of Norfolk,—

NOR.

Here, most gracious liege.

K. RICH.

Norfolk, we must have knocks; ha! must we not?

NOR.

We must both give and take, my loving lord.

K. RICH.

Up with my tent! here will I lie to-night;

[*Soldiers begin to set up the King's tent.*]

But where to-morrow? Well, all's one for that.

Who hath descried the number of the traitors?

NOR.

Six or seven thousand is their utmost power.

K. RICH.

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, to-morrow is a busy day.

*[Exeunt.*

*Enter on the other side of the field, Richmond, Sir William Brandon, Oxford, and other Officers. Some of the Soldiers pitch Richmond's tent.*

RICHM.

The weary sun hath made a golden set,

And, by the bright track of his fiery car,

Gives token of a goodly day to-morrow.

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 good-night 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 quarter'd, do you know?

BLUNT.

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

RICHM.

If without peril it be possible,  
Good Captain Blunt, bear my good-night to 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 to-night!

RICHM.

Good-night, good Captain Blunt. Come, gentlemen,  
Let us consult upon to-morrow's business;  
In to my tent, the air is raw and cold.

*[They withdraw into the tent.]*

*Enter, to his tent, King Richard, Norfolk, Ratcliff, and Catesby.*

K. RICH.

What is 't o'clock?

CATE.

It's supper-time, my lord;

It's nine o'clock.

K. RICH.

I will not sup to-night.

Give me some ink and paper.

What, is my beaver easier than it was,

And all my armour laid into my tent?

CATE.

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

K. RICH.

Good Norfolk, hie thee to thy charge;

Use careful watch; choose trusty sentinels.

NOR.

I go, my lord.

K. RICH.

Stir with the lark to-morrow, gentle Norfolk.

NOR.

I warrant you, my lord.

[*Exit.*

K. RICH.

Ratcliff!

RAT.

My lord?

K. RICH.

Send out a pursuivant at arms

To Stanley's regiment; bid him bring his power

Before sun-rising, lest his son George fall

Into the blind cave of eternal night.

Fill me a bowl of wine. Give me a watch.

Saddle white Surrey for the field to-morrow.

Look that my staves be sound, and not too heavy.

Ratcliff!

RAT.

My lord!

K. RICH.

Saw'st thou the melancholy Lord Northumberland?

RAT.

Thomas the Earl of Surrey, and himself,

Much about cock-shut time, from troop to troop

Went through the army, cheering up the soldiers.

K. RICH.

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.

Set it down. Is ink and paper ready?



RAT.

It is, my lord.

K. RICH.

Bid my guard watch; leave me.

Ratcliff, about the mid of night come to my tent

And help to arm me. Leave me, I say.

[King Richard *retires into his tent. Exeunt Ratcliff and Catesby.*

Richmond's *stent opens, and discovers him and his Officers, &c.*

*Enter Stanley.*

STAN.

Fortune and victory sit on thy helm!

RICHM.

All comfort that the dark night can afford

Be to thy person, noble father-in-law!

Tell me, how fares our loving mother?

STAN.

I, by attorney, bless thee from thy mother,

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 the 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 sunder'd friends should dwell upon:  
God give us leisure for these rites of love!  
Once more, adieu: be valiant, and speed well!

RICHM.

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

*[Exeunt all but Richmond.]*

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  
The usurping helmets of our adversaries!  
Make us thy ministers of chastisement,  
That we may praise thee in thy 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.*

*The Ghost of Prince Edward, Son to Henry the Sixth, rises between the two tents.*

GHOST.

*[To King Richard.]* Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow!

Think how thou stab'st me in my prime of youth

At Tewksbury: despair, therefore, and die!

Be cheerful, Richmond; for the wronged souls

Of butcher'd princes fight in thy behalf:

King Henry's issue, Richmond, comforts thee.

*The Ghost of King Henry the Sixth rises.*

GHOST.

*[To King 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!

Henry the Sixth bids thee despair and die.

*[To Richmond.]* Virtuous and holy, be thou conqueror!

Harry, that prophesied thou shouldst be the king,

Doth comfort thee in thy sleep: live thou and flourish!

*The Ghost of Clarence rises.*

GHOST.

*[To King Richard.]* Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow!

I, that was wash'd to death with fulsome wine,

Poor Clarence, by thy guile betray'd to death!

To-morrow 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!

*The Ghosts of*Rivers, Grey,*and*Vaughan*rise.*

**GHOST OF**RIVERS.

[*To*King Richard.] Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow!

Rivers, that died at Pomfret! despair, and die!

**GHOST OF**GREY.

[*To*King Richard.] Think upon Grey, and let thy soul despair.

**GHOST OF**VAUGHAN.

[*To*King Richard.] Think upon Vaughan, and with guilty fear

Let fall thy pointless lance: despair, and die!—

ALL THREE.

[*To*Richmond.] Awake! and think our wrongs in Richard's bosom

Will conquer him: awake, and win the day!

*The Ghost of*Hastings*riseth.*

GHOST.

[*To*King Richard.] Bloody and guilty, guiltily awake;

And in a bloody battle end thy days!

Think on Lord Hastings, so despair, and die!—

[*To*Richmond.] Quiet, untroubled soul, awake, awake!

Arm, fight, and conquer, for fair England's sake!

*The Ghosts of the two young Princesses rise.*

GHOSTS.

[*To King Richard.*] Dream on thy cousins smother'd 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.

*The Ghost of Lady Annerises.*

GHOST.

[*To King Richard.*] Richard, thy wife, that wretched Anne thy wife,

That never slept a quiet hour with thee,

Now fills thy sleep with perturbations:

To-morrow in the battle think on me,

And fall thy edgeless sword: despair, and die!

[*To Richmond.*] Thou quiet soul, sleep thou a quiet sleep;

Dream of success and happy victory!

Thy adversary's wife doth pray for thee.

*The Ghost of Buckingham rises.*

GHOST.

[*To King Richard.*] The first was I that help'd thee to the crown;

The last was I that felt thy tyranny.

O! in the battle think on 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 dismay'd:  
God and good angels fight on Richmond's side;  
And Richard falls in height of all his pride.  
[The Ghosts vanish. King Richard starts out of his dream.

K. RICH.

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 am 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 dir'st degree;  
All several sins, all us'd 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 murder'd  
Came to my tent; and every one did threat  
To-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard.

*Enter* Ratcliff.

RAT.

My lord!

K. RICH.

'Zounds! who's there?

RAT.

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

K. RICH.

O Ratcliff! I have dream'd a fearful dream.

What thinkest thou, will our friends prove all true?

RAT.

No doubt, my lord.

K. RICH.

O Ratcliff! I fear, I fear,—

RAT.

Nay, good my lord, be not afraid of shadows.

K. RICH.

By the apostle Paul, shadows to-night

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.

It is not yet near day. Come, go with me;

Under our tents I'll play the eaves-dropper,

To hear if any mean to shrink from me.

*[Exeunt.*

*Richmond wakes. Enter Oxford and Others.*

LORDS.

Good morrow, Richmond!

RICHM.

Cry mercy, lords, and watchful gentlemen,

That you have ta'en a tardy sluggard here.



LORDS.

How have you slept, my lord?

RICHM.

The sweetest sleep, the fairest-boding dreams

That ever enter'd in a drowsy head,

Have I since your departure had, my lords.

Methought their souls, whose bodies Richard murder'd,

Came to my tent and cried on victory:

I promise you, my heart is very jocund

In the remembrance of so fair a dream.

How far into the morning is it, lords?

LORDS.

Upon the stroke of four.

RICHM.

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 on: yet remember this,

God and our good cause fight upon our side;

The prayers of holy saints and wronged souls,

Like high-rear'd 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 rais'd in blood, and one in blood establish'd;  
One that made means to come by what he hath,  
And slaughter'd 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 quit it in 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 corse 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;  
God and Saint George! Richmond and victory!

*[Exeunt.*

*Re-enter* King Richard, Ratcliff, Attendants, *and Forces.*

K. RICH.

What said Northumberland as touching Richmond?

RAT.

That he was never trained up in arms.

K. RICH.

He said the truth: and what said Surrey then?

RAT.

He smil'd, and said, 'The better for our purpose.'

K. RICH.

He was i' the right; and so, indeed, it is.

*[Clock strikes.*

Tell the clock there. Give me a calendar.

Who saw the sun to-day?

RAT.

Not I, my lord.

K. RICH.

Then he disdains to shine; for by the book

He should have brav'd the east an hour ago:

A black day will it be to somebody.

Ratcliff!

RAT.

My lord?

K. RICH.

The sun will not be seen to-day;  
The sky doth frown and lower upon our army.  
I would these dewy tears were from the ground.  
Not shine to-day! Why, what is that to me  
More than to Richmond? for the self-same heaven  
That frowns on me looks sadly upon him.

*Enter Norfolk.*

NOR.

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

K. RICH.

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?

NOR.

A good direction, war-like sovereign.

This found I on my tent this morning.

*[Giving a scroll.]*

K. RICH.

*Jockey of Norfolk, be not too bold,*

*For Dickon thy master is bought and sold.*

A thing devised by the enemy.

Go, gentlemen; every man to his charge:

Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls;

Conscience is but a word that cowards use,

Devis'd 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 inferr'd?

Remember whom you are to cope withal:

A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and run-aways,

A scum of Bretons and base lackey peasants,

Whom their o'er-cloyed country vomits forth

To desperate adventures and assur'd destruction.

You sleeping safe, they bring you to unrest;

You having lands, and bless'd 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 sea again;  
Lash hence these overweening rags of France,  
These famish'd beggars, weary of their lives;  
Who, but for dreaming on this fond exploit,  
For want of means, poor rats, had hang'd themselves:  
If we be conquer'd, let men conquer us,  
And not these bastard Bretons; whom our fathers  
Have in their own land beaten, bobb'd, and thump'd,  
And, on 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?

MESS.

My lord, he doth deny to come.

K. RICH.

Off with his son George's head!

NOR.

My lord, the enemy is pass'd the marsh:

After the battle let George Stanley die.

K. RICH.

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 upon our helms.

*[Exeunt.]*

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Scene IV.—

***Another Part Of The Field.***

*Alarum: Excursions. Enter Norfolk and Forces; to him Catesby.*

CATE.

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!

*Alarum. Enter King Richard.*

K. RICH.

A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

CATE.

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

K. RICH.

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 to-day, instead of him.—

A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

*[Exeunt.]*



*Alarums. Enter from opposite sides King Richard and Richmond, and exeunt fighting. Retreat and flourish. Then re-enter Richmond, Stanley, bearing the crown, with divers other Lords, and Forces.*

RICHM.

God and your arms be prais'd, victorious friends;

The day is ours, the bloody dog is dead.

STAN.

Courageous Richmond, well hast thou acquit thee!

Lo! here, this long-usurped royalty

From the dead temples of this bloody wretch

Have I pluck'd off, to grace thy brows withal:

Wear it, enjoy it, and make much of it.

RICHM.

Great God of heaven, say amen to all!

But, tell me, is young George Stanley living?

STAN.

He is, my lord, and safe in Leicester town;

Whither, if you please, we may withdraw us.

RICHM.

What men of name are slain on either side?

STAN.

John Duke of Norfolk, Walter Lord Ferrers,

Sir Robert Brakenbury, and Sir William Brandon.

RICHM.

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 hath frown'd upon their enmity!  
What traitor hears me, and says not amen?  
England hath long been mad, and scarr'd herself;  
The brother blindly shed the brother's blood,  
The father rashly slaughter'd his own son,  
The son, compell'd, 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-fac'd 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 stopp'd, peace lives again:

That she may long live here, God say amen!

*[Exeunt.]*