

**УИЛЬЯМ  
ШЕКСПИР**

KING RICHARD

III

Уильям Шекспир  
**King Richard III**

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*King Richard III:*

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# William Shakespeare

## King Richard III

### Dramatis Personae

#### EDWARD THE FOURTH

Sons to the King

EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES afterwards KING

EDWARD V

RICHARD, DUKE OF YORK,

Brothers to the King

GEORGE, DUKE OF CLARENCE,

RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, afterwards KING

RICHARD III

A YOUNG SON OF CLARENCE (Edward, Earl of Warwick)

HENRY, EARL OF RICHMOND, afterwards KING

HENRY VII

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

MARQUIS OF DORSET and LORD GREY, her sons

EARL OF OXFORD

LORD HASTINGS

LORD LOVEL

LORD STANLEY, called also EARL OF DERBY

SIR THOMAS VAUGHAN

SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF

SIR WILLIAM CATESBY

SIR JAMES TYRREL

SIR JAMES BLOUNT

SIR WALTER HERBERT

SIR WILLIAM BRANDON

SIR ROBERT BRAKENBURY, Lieutenant of the Tower

CHRISTOPHER URSWICK, a priest

LORD MAYOR OF LONDON

SHERIFF OF WILTSHIRE

HASTINGS, a pursuivant

TRESSEL and BERKELEY, gentlemen attending on Lady

Anne

ELIZABETH, Queen to King Edward IV

MARGARET, widow of King Henry VI

DUCHESS OF YORK, mother to King Edward IV

LADY ANNE, widow of Edward, Prince of Wales, son to

King

Henry VI; afterwards married to the Duke of Gloucester

A YOUNG DAUGHTER OF CLARENCE (Margaret

Plantagenet,

Countess of Salisbury)

Ghosts, of Richard's victims

Lords, Gentlemen, and Attendants; Priest, Scrivener, Page,

Bishops,

Aldermen, Citizens, Soldiers, Messengers, Murderers,

Keeper

# **SCENE: England**

King Richard the Third

# ACT I. SCENE 1

London. A street

Enter RICHARD, DUKE OF GLOUCESTER, solus

GLOUCESTER. 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 chang'd 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 spy my shadow in the sun  
And descant on mine own deformity.  
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover  
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,  
I am determined to prove a villain  
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.  
Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,  
By drunken prophecies, libels, and dreams,  
To set my brother Clarence and the King  
In deadly hate the one against the other;  
And if King Edward be as true and just  
As I am subtle, false, and treacherous,  
This day should Clarence closely be mew'd up-  
About a prophecy which says that G  
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be.  
Dive, thoughts, down to my soul. Here Clarence comes.

Enter CLARENCE, guarded, and BRAKENBURY

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

CLARENCE. His Majesty,  
Tend'ring my person's safety, hath appointed  
This conduct to convey me to th' Tower.

GLOUCESTER. Upon what cause?

CLARENCE. Because my name is George.

GLOUCESTER. 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-christ'ned in the Tower.  
But what's the matter, Clarence? May I know?

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

GLOUCESTER. 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 delivered?  
We are not safe, Clarence; we are not safe.

CLARENCE. By heaven, I think there is no man is secure  
But the Queen's kindred, and night-walking heralds  
That trudge betwixt the King and Mistress Shore.  
Heard you not what an humble suppliant

Lord Hastings was, for her delivery?

GLOUCESTER. 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.

BRAKENBURY. I beseech your Graces both to pardon me:

His Majesty hath straitly given in charge

That no man shall have private conference,

Of what degree soever, with your brother.

GLOUCESTER. Even so; an't please your worship,  
Brakenbury,

You may partake of any thing we say:

We speak no treason, man; we say the King

Is wise and virtuous, and his noble queen

Well struck in years, fair, and not jealous;

We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,

A cherry lip, a bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue;

And that the Queen's kindred are made gentlefolks.

How say you, sir? Can you deny all this?

BRAKENBURY. With this, my lord, myself have naught  
to do.

GLOUCESTER. Naught to do with Mistress Shore! I tell  
thee,

fellow,

He that doth naught with her, excepting one,

Were best to do it secretly alone.

BRAKENBURY. What one, my lord?

GLOUCESTER. Her husband, knave! Wouldst thou betray me?

BRAKENBURY. I do beseech your Grace to pardon me, and

withal

Forbear your conference with the noble Duke.

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

GLOUCESTER. 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.

CLARENCE. I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

GLOUCESTER. Well, your imprisonment shall not be long;

I will deliver or else lie for you.

Meantime, have patience.

CLARENCE. I must perforce. Farewell.

Exeunt CLARENCE, BRAKENBURY,

and guard

GLOUCESTER. Go tread the path that thou shalt ne'er return.

Simple, plain Clarence, I do love thee so

That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,

If heaven will take the present at our hands.

But who comes here? The new-delivered Hastings?

Enter LORD HASTINGS

HASTINGS. Good time of day unto my gracious lord!

GLOUCESTER. As much unto my good Lord Chamberlain!

Well are you welcome to the open air.

How hath your lordship brook'd imprisonment?

HASTINGS. With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must;

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

That were the cause of my imprisonment.

GLOUCESTER. 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.

HASTINGS. More pity that the eagles should be mew'd

Whiles kites and buzzards prey at liberty.

GLOUCESTER. What news abroad?

HASTINGS. No news so bad abroad as this at home:

The King is sickly, weak, and melancholy,

And his physicians fear him mightily.

GLOUCESTER. Now, by Saint John, that news is bad indeed.

O, he hath kept an evil diet long

And overmuch consum'd his royal person!

'Tis very grievous to be thought upon.

Where is he? In his bed?

HASTINGS. He is.

GLOUCESTER. 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 posthorse 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

## SCENE 2

London. Another street

Enter corpse of KING HENRY THE SIXTH, with halberds  
to guard it;

LADY ANNE being the mourner, attended by TRESSEL and

# BERKELEY

ANNE. Set down, set down your honourable load-  
If honour may be shrouded in a hearse;  
Whilst I awhile obsequiously lament  
Th' untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.  
Poor key-cold figure of a holy king!  
Pale ashes of the house of Lancaster!  
Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood!  
Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost  
To hear the lamentations of poor Anne,  
Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughtered son,  
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 towards Chertsey with your holy load,  
Taken from Paul's to be interred there;  
And still as you are weary of this weight  
Rest you, whiles I lament King Henry's corse.

[The bearers take up the coffin]

Enter GLOUCESTER

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

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

GLOUCESTER. Villains, set down the corse; or, by Saint Paul,

I'll make a corse of him that disobeys!

FIRST GENTLEMAN. My lord, stand back, and let the coffin

pass.

GLOUCESTER. Unmannerd 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.

GLOUCESTER. 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 deeds inhuman and unnatural

Provokes this deluge most unnatural.

O God, which this blood mad'st, revenge his death!

O earth, which this blood drink'st, revenge his death!

Either, heav'n, with lightning strike the murd'rer dead;

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

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

Which his hell-govern'd arm hath butchered.

GLOUCESTER. Lady, you know no rules of charity,

Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

ANNE. Villain, thou knowest nor law of God nor man:

No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

GLOUCESTER. But I know none, and therefore am no  
beast.

ANNE. O wonderful, when devils tell the truth!

GLOUCESTER. More wonderful when angels are so angry.

Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,  
Of these supposed crimes to give me leave  
By circumstance but to acquit myself.

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

GLOUCESTER. 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.

GLOUCESTER. By such despair I should accuse myself.

ANNE. And by despairing shalt thou stand excused  
For doing worthy vengeance on thyself  
That didst unworthy slaughter upon others.

GLOUCESTER. Say that I slew them not?

ANNE. Then say they were not slain.

But dead they are, and, devilish slave, by thee.

GLOUCESTER. I did not kill your husband.

ANNE. Why, then he is alive.

GLOUCESTER. Nay, he is dead, and slain by Edward's  
hands.

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

GLOUCESTER. 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 dream'st on aught but butcheries.

Didst thou not kill this king?

GLOUCESTER. I grant ye.

ANNE. Dost grant me, hedgehog? Then, God grant me to

Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed!

O, he was gentle, mild, and virtuous!

GLOUCESTER. The better for the King of Heaven, that hath

him.

ANNE. He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come.

GLOUCESTER. Let him thank me that help to send him thither,

For he was fitter for that place than earth.

ANNE. And thou unfit for any place but hell.

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

ANNE. Some dungeon.

GLOUCESTER. Your bed-chamber.

ANNE. Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest!

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

ANNE. I hope so.

GLOUCESTER. I know so. But, gentle Lady Anne,

To leave this keen encounter of our wits,

And fall something into a slower method-

Is not the causer of the timeless deaths

Of these Plantagenets, Henry and Edward,

As blameful as the executioner?

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

GLOUCESTER. Your beauty was the cause of that effect-

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

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

GLOUCESTER. These eyes could not endure that beauty's  
wreck;

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!

GLOUCESTER. Curse not thyself, fair creature; thou art  
both.

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

GLOUCESTER. 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.

GLOUCESTER. 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.

GLOUCESTER. He lives that loves thee better than he  
could.

ANNE. Name him.

GLOUCESTER. Plantagenet.

ANNE. Why, that was he.

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

ANNE. Where is he?

GLOUCESTER. Here. [She spits at him] Why dost thou spit at me?

ANNE. Would it were mortal poison, for thy sake!

GLOUCESTER. 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.

GLOUCESTER. Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

ANNE. Would they were basilisks to strike thee dead!

GLOUCESTER. 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 warlike father, like a child,

Told the sad story of my father's death,

And twenty times made pause to sob and weep

That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks

Like trees 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 sued to friend nor enemy;

My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing word;

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 naked to the deadly stroke,  
And humbly beg the death upon my knee.

[He lays his breast open; she offers at it with his sword]

Nay, do not pause; for I did kill King Henry-  
But 'twas thy beauty that provoked me.  
Nay, now dispatch; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward-  
But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.

[She falls 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.

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

ANNE. I have already.

GLOUCESTER. 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.

GLOUCESTER. 'Tis figur'd in my tongue.

ANNE. I fear me both are false.

GLOUCESTER. Then never was man true.

ANNE. well put up your sword.

GLOUCESTER. Say, then, my peace is made.

ANNE. That shalt thou know hereafter.

GLOUCESTER. But shall I live in hope?

ANNE. All men, I hope, live so.

GLOUCESTER. Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

ANNE. To take is not to give. [Puts on the ring]

GLOUCESTER. 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?

GLOUCESTER. That it may please you leave these sad designs

To him that hath most cause to be a mourner,

And presently repair to Crosby House;

Where-after I have solemnly interr'd

At Chertsey monast'ry 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.

GLOUCESTER. 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 two GENTLEMEN With LADY

ANNE

GLOUCESTER. Sirs, take up the corse.

GENTLEMEN. Towards Chertsey, noble lord?

GLOUCESTER. 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 my hatred by;  
Having God, her conscience, and these bars against me,  
And I no friends to back my suit at all  
But the plain devil and dissembling looks,  
And yet to win her, all the world to nothing!  
Ha!  
Hath she forgot already that brave prince,  
Edward, her lord, whom I, some three months since,  
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 halts and am misshapen thus?  
My dukedom to a beggarly denier,  
I do mistake my person all this while.  
Upon my life, she finds, although I cannot,  
Myself to be a marv'llous proper man.  
I'll be at charges for a looking-glass,  
And entertain a score or two of tailors  
To study fashions to adorn my body.  
Since I am crept in favour with myself,  
I will maintain it with some little cost.  
But first I'll turn yon fellow in his grave,  
And then return lamenting to my love.  
Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass,  
That I may see my shadow as I pass. Exit

### SCENE 3

London. The palace

Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, LORD RIVERS, and LORD  
GREY

RIVERS. 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 eyes.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. If he were dead, what would betide  
on  
me?

GREY. No other harm but loss of such a lord.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. 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.

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

RIVER. Is it concluded he shall be Protector?

QUEEN ELIZABETH. It is determin'd, not concluded yet;  
But so it must be, if the King miscarry.

Enter BUCKINGHAM and DERBY

GREY. Here come the Lords of Buckingham and Derby.

BUCKINGHAM. Good time of day unto your royal Grace!

DERBY. God make your Majesty joyful as you have been.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. The Countess Richmond, good my  
Lord  
of Derby,

To your good prayer will scarcely say amen.  
Yet, Derby, notwithstanding she's your wife

And loves not me, be you, good lord, assur'd  
I hate not you for her proud arrogance.

DERBY. 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.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. Saw you the King to-day, my Lord  
of

Derby?

DERBY. But now the Duke of Buckingham and I  
Are come from visiting his Majesty.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. What likelihood of his amendment,  
Lords?

BUCKINGHAM. Madam, good hope; his Grace speaks  
cheerfully.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. God grant him health! Did you  
confer  
with him?

BUCKINGHAM. Ay, madam; he desires to make  
atonement

Between the Duke of Gloucester and your brothers,  
And between them and my Lord Chamberlain;  
And sent to warn them to his royal presence.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. Would all were well! But that will  
never be.

I fear our happiness is at the height.

Enter GLOUCESTER, HASTINGS, and DORSET

GLOUCESTER. They do me wrong, and I will not endure it.

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

GREY. To who in all this presence speaks your Grace?

GLOUCESTER. 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 Grace-  
Whom God preserve better than you would wish! -  
Cannot be quiet scarce a breathing while  
But you must trouble him with lewd complaints.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. 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 he may learn the ground.

GLOUCESTER. 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.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. Come, come, we know your  
meaning,

brother Gloucester:

You envy my advancement and my friends';  
God grant we never may have need of you!

GLOUCESTER. Meantime, God grants that I 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.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. 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.

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

RIVERS. She may, my lord; for-

GLOUCESTER. She may, Lord Rivers? Why, who knows

not so?

She may do more, sir, than denying that:

She may help you to many fair preferments

And then deny her aiding hand therein,

And lay those honours on your high desert.

What may she not? She may-ay, marry, may she-  
RIVERS. What, marry, may she?

GLOUCESTER. What, marry, may she? Marry with a king,  
A bachelor, and a handsome stripling too.

Iwis your grandam had a worser match.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. My Lord of Gloucester, I have too  
long

borne

Your blunt upbraidings and your bitter scoffs.

By heaven, I will acquaint his Majesty

Of those gross taunts that oft I have endur'd.

I had rather be a country servant-maid

Than a great queen with this condition-

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

Enter old QUEEN MARGARET, behind

Small joy have I in being England's Queen.

QUEEN MARGARET. And less'ned be that small, God, I  
beseech Him!

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

GLOUCESTER. What! Threat you me with telling of the  
King?

Tell him and spare not. Look what I have said

I will avouch't in presence of the King.

I dare adventure to be sent to th' Tow'r.

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

QUEEN MARGARET. Out, devil! I do remember them to well:

Thou kill'dst my husband Henry in the Tower,

And Edward, my poor son, at Tewksbury.

GLOUCESTER. 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 spent mine own.

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

GLOUCESTER. 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 Albans slain?

Let me put in your minds, if you forget,

What you have been ere this, and what you are;

Withal, what I have been, and what I am.

QUEEN MARGARET. A murd'rous villain, and so still thou art.

GLOUCESTER. Poor Clarence did forsake his father, Warwick,

Ay, and forswore himself-which Jesu pardon! -

QUEEN MARGARET. Which God revenge!

GLOUCESTER. 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.

QUEEN MARGARET. Hie thee to hell for shame and leave  
this

world,

Thou cacodemon; there thy kingdom is.

RIVERS. My Lord of Gloucester, in those busy days

Which here you urge to prove us enemies,

We follow'd then our lord, our sovereign king.

So should we you, if you should be our king.

GLOUCESTER. If I should be! I had rather be a pedlar.

Far be it from my heart, the thought thereof!

QUEEN ELIZABETH. As little joy, my lord, as you  
suppose

You should enjoy were you this country's king,

As little joy you may suppose in me

That I enjoy, being the Queen thereof.

QUEEN MARGARET. 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 am Queen, you bow like subjects,

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

Ah, gentle villain, do not turn away!

GLOUCESTER. Foul wrinkled witch, what mak'st thou in my

sight?

QUEEN MARGARET. But repetition of what thou hast marr'd,

That will I make before I let thee go.

GLOUCESTER. Wert thou not banished on pain of death?

QUEEN MARGARET. I was; but I do find more pain in banishment

Than death can yield me here by my abode.

A husband and a son thou ow'st to me;

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.

GLOUCESTER. The curse my noble father laid on thee,

When thou didst crown his warlike brows with paper

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

And then to dry them gav'st the Duke a clout

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.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. So just is God to right the innocent.

HASTINGS. O, 'twas the foulest deed to slay that babe,

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

RIVERS. Tyrants themselves wept when it was reported.

DORSET. No man but prophesied revenge for it.

BUCKINGHAM. Northumberland, then present, wept to see it.

QUEEN MARGARET. What, were you snarling all before I came,

Ready to catch each other by the throat,  
And turn you all your hatred now on me?  
Did York's dread curse prevail so much with heaven  
That Henry's death, my lovely Edward's death,  
Their kingdom's loss, my woeful banishment,  
Should all but answer for that peevish brat?  
Can curses pierce the clouds and enter heaven?  
Why then, give way, dull clouds, to my quick curses!  
Though not by war, by surfeit die your king,  
As ours by murder, to make him a king!  
Edward thy son, that now is Prince of Wales,  
For Edward our son, that was Prince of Wales,  
Die in his youth by like untimely violence!  
Thyself a queen, for me that was a queen,  
Outlive thy glory, like my wretched self!  
Long mayest thou live to wail thy children's death,  
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 length'ned 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 his natural age,

But by some unlook'd accident cut off!

GLOUCESTER. Have done thy charm, thou hateful  
wither'd

hag.

QUEEN MARGARET. And leave out thee? Stay, dog, for  
thou

shalt hear me.

If heaven have any grievous plague in store

Exceeding those that I can wish upon thee,

O, let them keep it till thy sins be ripe,

And then hurl down their indignation

On thee, the troubler of the poor world's peace!

The worm of conscience still be-gnaw 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 heavy mother's womb,

Thou loathed issue of thy father's loins,

Thou rag of honour, thou detested-

GLOUCESTER. Margaret!

QUEEN MARGARET. Richard!

GLOUCESTER. Ha?

QUEEN MARGARET. I call thee not.

GLOUCESTER. I cry thee mercy then, for I did think

That thou hadst call'd me all these bitter names.

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

O, let me make the period to my curse!

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH. Thus have you breath'd your curse against yourself.

QUEEN MARGARET. Poor painted queen, vain flourish of my fortune!

Why strew'st thou sugar on that bottled spider

Whose deadly web ensnareth thee about?

Fool, fool! thou whet'st a knife to kill thyself.

The day will come that thou shalt wish for me

To help thee curse this poisonous bunch-back'd toad.

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

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

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

QUEEN MARGARET. To serve me well you all should do me duty,

Teach me to be your queen and you my subjects.

O, serve me well, and teach yourselves that duty!

DORSET. Dispute not with her; she is lunatic.

QUEEN MARGARET. Peace, Master Marquis, you are malapert;

Your fire-new stamp of honour is scarce current.

O, that your young nobility could judge

What 'twere to lose it and be miserable!

They that stand high have many blasts to shake them,

And if they fall they dash themselves to pieces.

GLOUCESTER. Good counsel, marry; learn it, learn it,  
Marquis.

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

GLOUCESTER. 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.

QUEEN MARGARET. 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 is won with blood, lost be it so!

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

QUEEN MARGARET. 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!

BUCKINGHAM. Have done, have done.

QUEEN MARGARET. O princely Buckingham, I'll kiss  
thy

hand

In sign of league and amity with thee.

Now fair befall thee and thy noble house!

Thy garments are not spotted with our blood,

Nor thou within the compass of my curse.

BUCKINGHAM. Nor no one here; for curses never pass

The lips of those that breathe them in the air.

QUEEN MARGARET. I will not think but they ascend the  
sky

And there awake God's gentle-sleeping peace.

O Buckingham, take heed of yonder dog!

Look when he fawns, he bites; and when he bites,

His venom tooth will rankle to the death:

Have not to do with him, beware of him;

Sin, death, and hell, have set their marks on him,

And all their ministers attend on him.

GLOUCESTER. What doth she say, my Lord of  
Buckingham?

BUCKINGHAM. Nothing that I respect, my gracious lord.

QUEEN MARGARET. What, dost thou scorn me for my  
gentle

counsel,

And soothe the devil that I warn thee from?

O, but remember this another day,

When he shall split thy very heart with sorrow,

And say poor Margaret was a prophetess!

Live each of you the subjects to his hate,

And he to yours, and all of you to God's! Exit  
BUCKINGHAM. My hair doth stand an end to hear her  
curses.

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

GLOUCESTER. 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.

QUEEN ELIZABETH. I never did her any to my  
knowledge.

GLOUCESTER. 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 fattening for his pains;

God pardon them that are the cause thereof!

RIVERS. A virtuous and a Christian-like conclusion,

To pray for them that have done scathe to us!

GLOUCESTER. So do I ever- [Aside] being well advis'd;

For had I curs'd now, I had curs'd myself.

Enter CATESBY

CATESBY. Madam, his Majesty doth can for you,

And for your Grace, and you, my gracious lords.

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

RIVERS. We wait upon your Grace.

Exeunt all but GLOUCESTER

GLOUCESTER. I do the wrong, and first begin to brawl.

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

Enter two MURDERERS

But, soft, here come my executioners.

How now, my hardy stout resolved mates!

Are you now going to dispatch this thing?

FIRST MURDERER. We are, my lord, and come to have  
the  
warrant,

That we may be admitted where he is.

GLOUCESTER. 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 MURDERER. 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.

GLOUCESTER. Your eyes drop millstones when fools' eyes  
fall

tears.

I like you, lads; about your business straight;  
Go, go, dispatch.

FIRST MURDERER. We will, my noble lord. Exeunt

## SCENE 4

London. The Tower

Enter CLARENCE and KEEPER

KEEPER. Why looks your Grace so heavily to-day?

CLARENCE. O, I have pass'd a miserable night,

So full of fearful dreams, of ugly sights,

That, as I am a Christian faithful man,

I would not spend another such a night

Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days-

So full of dismal terror was the time!

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

CLARENCE. Methoughts that I had broken from the Tower  
And was 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.

O Lord, methought what pain it was to drown,  
What dreadful noise of waters in my ears,  
What sights of ugly death within my eyes!  
Methoughts I saw a thousand fearful wrecks,  
A thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon,  
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,  
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,  
All scatt'red in the bottom of the sea;  
Some lay in dead men's skulls, and in the holes  
Where eyes did once inhabit there were crept,  
As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems,  
That woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep  
And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatt'red by.

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

CLARENCE. Methought I had; and often did I strive  
To yield the ghost, but still the envious flood

Stopp'd in my soul and would not let it forth  
To find the empty, vast, and wand'ring air;  
But smother'd it within my panting bulk,  
Who almost burst to belch it in the sea.

KEEPER. Awak'd you not in this sore agony?

CLARENCE. 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 sour ferryman which poets write of,  
Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.

The first that there did greet my stranger soul  
Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick,  
Who spake aloud 'What scourge for perjury  
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?'

And so he vanish'd. Then came wand'ring by  
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair  
Dabbled in blood, and he shriek'd out aloud  
'Clarence is come-false, fleeting, perjurd Clarence,  
That stabb'd me in the field by Tewksbury.

Seize on him, Furies, take him unto torment!  
With that, methoughts, 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.

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

CLARENCE. Ah, Keeper, Keeper, I have done these things

That now give evidence against my soul  
For Edward's sake, and see how he requites me!  
O God! If my deep prayers cannot appease Thee,  
But Thou wilt be aveng'd on my misdeeds,  
Yet execute Thy wrath in me alone;  
O, spare my guiltless wife and my poor children!  
Keeper, I prithee sit by me awhile;  
My soul is heavy, and I fain would sleep.  
KEEPER. I will, my lord. God give your Grace good rest.  
[CLARENCE sleeps]

Enter BRAKENBURY the Lieutenant

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

Enter the two MURDERERS

FIRST MURDERER. Ho! who's here?

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

FIRST MURDERER. I would speak with Clarence, and I came

hither on my legs.

BRAKENBURY. What, so brief?

SECOND MURDERER. 'Tis better, sir, than to be tedious.  
Let

him see our commission and talk no more.

[BRAKENBURY reads it]

BRAKENBURY. 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 from the meaning.

There lies the Duke asleep; and there the keys.

I'll to the King and signify to him

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

FIRST MURDERER. You may, sir; 'tis a point of wisdom.  
Fare

you well. Exeunt BRAKENBURY and KEEPER

SECOND MURDERER. What, shall I stab him as he sleeps?

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

he wakes.

SECOND MURDERER. Why, he shall never wake until the great

judgment-day.

FIRST MURDERER. Why, then he'll say we stabb'd him sleeping.

SECOND MURDERER. The urging of that word judgment

hath

bred a kind of remorse in me.

FIRST MURDERER. What, art thou afraid?

SECOND MURDERER. Not to kill him, having a warrant;  
but to

be damn'd for killing him, from the which no warrant can  
defend me.

FIRST MURDERER. I thought thou hadst been resolute.

SECOND MURDERER. So I am, to let him live.

FIRST MURDERER. I'll back to the Duke of Gloucester  
and

tell him so.

SECOND MURDERER. Nay, I prithee, stay a little. I hope  
this

passionate humour of mine will change; it was wont to  
hold me but while one tells twenty.

FIRST MURDERER. How dost thou feel thyself now?

SECOND MURDERER. Faith, some certain dregs of  
conscience

are yet within me.

FIRST MURDERER. Remember our reward, when the  
deed's

done.

SECOND MURDERER. Zounds, he dies; I had forgot the  
reward.

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