

XXIV.
KING RICHARD III.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

King EDWARD the Fourth.
EDWARD Prince of Wales, afterwards K. Edward V. } Sons to the King.
RICHARD, Duke of York. }
GEORGE, Duke of Clarence, } Brothers to the
RICHARD, Duke of Gloster, afterwards King Richard III. } King.
A young Son of Clarence.
HENRY, Earl of Richmond, afterwards K. Henry VII.
Cardinal BOURCHIER, Archbishop of Canterbury.
THOMAS ROTHERAM, 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 STANLEY.
Lord LOVELL.
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.
CHRISTOPHER URSWICK, a Priest.
Another Priest.
Lord Mayor of London.
Sheriff of Wiltshire.
ELIZABETH, Queen of King Edward IV.
MARGARET, Widow of King Henry VI.
Duchess of YORK, Mother to King Edward IV.,
Clarence, and Gloster.
Lady ANNE, Widow of Edward Prince of Wales,
Son to King Henry VI.; afterwards married
to the Duke of Gloster.
A young Daughter of Clarence.
Lords, and other Attendants; two Gentlemen, a
Pursuivant, Scrivener, Citizens, Murderers,
Messengers, Ghosts, Soldiers, &c.

SCENE — England.

ACT I.

SCENE I. London. A Street.

Enter GLOSTER.

Gloster.

Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this sun of York; ¹⁾
And all the clouds, that lowr'd upon our house,
In the deep bosom of the ocean bury'd.
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. ²⁾
Grim-visag'd war hath smooth'd his wrinkled front;
And now, — instead of mounting barbed steeds, ³⁾
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries, —
He capers ⁴⁾ 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, ⁵⁾
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, ⁶⁾
To entertain these fair well-spoken days, —
I am determin'd to prove a villain,
And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous, ⁷⁾
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;

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He should, for that, commit your godfathers: —
O, belike, his majesty hath some intent,
That you shall 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 ⁸⁾ as these,
Have mov'd his highness to commit me now.
Glo. Why, this it is, when men are rul'd by wo-
men: —

'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 an 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, ⁹⁾
Since that our brother dubb'd them gentlewomen,
Are mighty gossips in this 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 his brother.

Glo. Even so? an 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;
¹⁰⁾ And the queen's kindred are made gentlefolks:
How say you, sir? can you deny all this?

Brak. With this, my lord, myself have naught 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: — Would'st thou be-
tray 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, ¹¹⁾ 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.
Mean time, 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: ¹²⁾
Mean time, have patience.

Clar. I must perforce; farewell.

[Exit 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 eagle should be mew'd, ¹³⁾
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 ¹⁴⁾ 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 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 II.

The same. 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 ¹⁵⁾
The untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster. —
Poor key-cold ¹⁶⁾ 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,

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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!¹⁷⁾
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 GLOSTER.

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.

1 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. —
Avant, thou dreadful minister of hell!

Thou had'st 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 exclams.
If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,
Behold this pattern of thy butcheries!¹⁸⁾

O, gentlemen, see, see! dead Henry's wounds
Open their congeal'd mouths, and bleed afresh!¹⁹⁾
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,²⁰⁾
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, shalt thou stand excus'd;
For doing worthy vengeance on thyself,
That didst unworthy slaughter upon others.

Glo. Say, that I slew them not?

Anne. Why then, they are not dead;
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 soul's throat²¹⁾ thou liest; queen
Margaret saw

Thy murderous faulchion 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 guilt²²⁾ 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 may'st 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 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 hear 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; —²³⁾

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, which 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.

Glo. 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!

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 you 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 spits 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, —
²⁴⁾ Not, 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 su'd to friend, nor enemy;

My tongue could never learn sweet soothing 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 beauty²⁵⁾ that provoked me.

Nay, now despatch; '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 man

Was never true.²⁶⁾

Anne. Well, well, put up your sword.

Glo. Say then, my peace is made.

Anne. That shall you 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 this 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 more cause to be a mourner,

And presently repair to Crosby-place:²⁷⁾

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 Berkley, 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.

[Exit Lady ANNE, TRESSSEL, and BERKLEY.

Glo. Take up the corse, sirs.²⁸⁾

Gent. Towards Chertsey, noble lord?

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

[Exit the rest, with the Corse.

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;

With God, her conscience, and these bars against me,
And I no friends to back my suit withal,

But the plain devil, and dissembling looks,
And yet to win her, — all the world to nothing!
Ha!²⁹⁾

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 debase her eyes on me,
That cropp'd the golden prime of this sweet prince,
And made her widow to a woful bed?
On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety?
On me, that halt, and am mis-shapen thus?
My dukedom to a beggarly denier,³⁰⁾
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 you 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 III.

The same. A Room in the Palace.

Enter Queen ELIZABETH, Lord RIVERS, and Lord GREY.

Riv. Have patience, madam; there's no doubt, thy 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 of 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 unto the trust of Richard Gloster, 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 Gloster and your brothers,

And between them and my lord chamberlain; And sent to warn them³¹⁾ to his royal presence.

Q. Eliz. 'Would all were well! — But that will never be; —

I fear, our happiness is at the height.

Enter GLOSTER, 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,³²⁾

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 grace, — Whom God preserve better than you would wish! —

Cannot be quiet scarce a breathing-while, But you must trouble him with lewd complaints.³³⁾

Q. Eliz. Brother of Gloster, you mistake the matter: The king, of his own royal disposition,

And not provok'd by any suitor else; Aiming, belike, at your interior hatred,

That in your outward actions 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 may prey where eagles dare not perch:

Since every Jack became a gentleman,³⁴⁾ There's many a gentle person made a Jack.

Q. Eliz. Come, come, we know your meaning, brother Gloster;

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 promotions³⁵⁾

Are daily given, to ennoble those That scarce, some two days since, were worth a noble.

Q. Eliz. By Him, that raised 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 cause

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 desert.

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 Gloster, I have too long borne Your blunt upbraidings, and your bitter scoffs:

By heaven, I will acquaint his majesty, Of those gross taunts I often 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 storm'd at:³⁶⁾ Small joy have I in being England's queen.

Enter Queen MARGARET, behind.

Q. Mar. And lessen'd be that small, God I beseech thee!

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 pains³⁷⁾ are quite forgot.

Q. Mar. Out, devil! I remember them too well: Thou kill'dst my husband 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 royalize³⁸⁾ his blood, I spilt mine own.

Q. Mar. Ay,³⁹⁾ 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 battle⁴⁰⁾ 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 murd'rous 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 cacodæmon! there thy kingdom is. Riv. My lord of Gloster, 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. A 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:⁴¹⁾

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,⁴²⁾ do not turn away!

Glo. Foul wrinkled witch, what mak'st thou in my sight?⁴³⁾

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 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 fallen upon thee;

And God, not we, hath plagu'd thy bloody deed.⁴⁴⁾ Q. Mar. 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. Dor. No man but prophes'd 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 woful banishment,

Could 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!⁴⁵⁾

As ours by murder, to make him a king! Edward, thy son, that now is prince of Wales,

For Edward, my 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 may'st 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 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,⁴⁶⁾ abortive, rooting hog!⁴⁷⁾

Thou that wast seal'd in thy nativity The slave of nature,⁴⁸⁾ 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! Ha? Glo. I call thee not.

Q. Mar. I cry thee mercy then; for I did think, That thou had'st 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 curse against

yourself. Q. Mar. Poor painted queen, vain flourish of my

fortune! Why strew'st thou sugar on that bottled spider,⁴⁹⁾

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 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.
Glo. Good counsel, marry; learn it, learn it, marquiss.
Dor. It touches you, my lord, as much as me.
Glo. Ay, and much more: But I was born so high,
Our airy 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: ⁵⁰)
Whose bright out-shining beams thy cloudy wrath
Hath in eternal darkness folded up.

Your airy buildeth in our airy's nest: — ⁵¹)
O God, that see'st 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 by you my hopes are butcher'd.
My charity is outrage, life my shame, —
And in my shame still live my sorrow's rage!

Buck. Have done, have done.
Q. Mar. O princely Buckingham, I 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'll not believe but they ascend the sky,
And there awake God's gentle-sleeping peace.
O Buckingham, beware of yonder dog;
Look, when he favours, 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 does 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 sooth 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.]*

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 some body 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; — ⁵²)
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. ⁵³)

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

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. Madam, we will attend upon ⁵⁴) your grace.
[Exeunt all but GLOSTER.]

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 laid in darkness, —
I do beweepe 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 villainy
With old odd 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?

1 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.

1 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 mill-stones, when fools' eyes
drop tears: ⁵⁵)

I like you, lads; — about your business straight;

Go, go, despatch.
1 Murd. We will, my noble lord. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV.

The same. A Room in 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 fearful dreams, of ugly sights,
That, as I am a christian faithful man, ⁵⁶)
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 Gloster:
Who from my cabin tempted me to walk
Upon the hatches; thence we look'd towards 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 Gloster stumbled; and, in falling,
Struck me, that thought to stay him, over-board,
Into the tumbling billows of the main.

O 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 wrecks;
A thousand men, that fishes gnaw'd upon;
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,

Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels, ⁵⁷)

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 these secrets of the deep?

Clar. Methought, I had; and often did I strive
To yield the ghost: but still the envious flood
Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth
To seek the empty, vast, and wand'ring air;
But smother'd it within my panting bulk, ⁵⁸)
Which almost burst to belch it in the sea.

Brak. Awak'd you not with this sore agony?

Clar. O, 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 cry'd 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, perjur'd Cla-
rence, —*

*That stab'd me in the field by Tewksbury; —
Seize on him, furies, take him to your torments!* —

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, iord, 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! — *[CLARENCE reposes himself on a Chair.]*

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 name,
There's nothing differs but the outward fame.

Enter the two Murderers.

1 Murd. Ho! who's here?

Brak. What would'st thou, fellow? and how cam'st
thou hither?

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

Brak. What, so brief?
2 Murd. O, sir, 'tis better to be brief than tedious: —
Let him see our commission; ⁵⁹) 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.

Here are the keys: — there sits the duke asleep:
I'll to the king; and signify to him,
That thus I have resign'd to you my charge. ⁶⁰)

1 Murd. You may, sir; 'tis a point of wisdom:
Fare you well. *[Exit BRAKENBURY.]*

2 Murd. What, shall we stab him as he sleeps?
1 Murd. No; he'll say, 'twas done cowardly, when
he wakes.

2 Murd. When he wakes! why, fool, he shall never
wake until the great judgment day.

1 Murd. Why, then he'll say, we stab'd him
sleeping.

2 Murd. The urging of that word, judgment, hath
bred a kind of remorse in me.

1 Murd. What? art thou afraid?

2 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.

1 Murd. I thought, thou had'st been resolute.

2 Murd. So I am, to let him live.

1 Murd. I'll back to the duke of Gloster, and tell
him so.

2 Murd. Nay, I pr'ythee, stay a little: I hope, ⁶¹)
this holy humour of mine will change; it was wont
to hold me but while one would tell twenty.

1 Murd. How dost thou feel thyself now?

2 Murd. 'Faith, some certain dregs of conscience
are yet within me.

1 Murd. Remember our reward, when the deed's
done.

2 Murd. Come, he dies; I had forgot the reward.

1 Murd. Where's thy conscience now?

2 Murd. In the duke of Gloster's purse.

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

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

1 Murd. What, if it come to thee again?

2 Murd. I'll not meddle with it, it is a dangerous
thing, 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 shame-
faced spirit, that mutinies in a man's bosom; it fills
one full of obstacles: it made me once restore a
purse of gold, that by chance I found; it beggars
any man that keeps it: it is turned out of all towns
and cities for a dangerous thing; and every man,
that means to live well, endeavours to trust to him-
self, and live without it.

1 Murd. 'Zounds, it is even now at my elbow, per-
suading me not to kill the duke.

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

1 Murd. I am strong-fram'd, he cannot prevail
with me.

2 Murd. Spoke like a tall fellow, ⁶²) that respects
his reputation. Come, shall we fall to work?

1 Murd. Take him over the costard ⁶³) with the
hilts of thy sword, and then throw him into the
malmsey-butt, in the next room.

2 Murd. O excellent device! and make a sop of him.

1 Murd. Soft! he wakes.

2 Murd. Strike.

1 Murd. No, we'll reason ⁶⁴) with him.

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

1 Murd. You shall have wine enough, my lord, anon.

Clar. In God's name, what art thou?

1 Murd. A man, as you are.

Clar. But not, as I am, royal.

1 *Murd.* Nor you, as we are, loyal.
Clar. Thy voice is thunder, but thy looks are humble.
 1 *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?
 1 *Murd.* Offended us you have not, but the king.
Clar. I shall be reconcil'd to him again.
 2 *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 quest⁶⁵) have given their verdict up Unto the frowning judge? or who pronounc'd The bitter sentence of poor Clarence's death? Before I be convict by course of law, To threaten me with death, is most unlawful. I charge you, as you hope for any goodness,⁶⁶) 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.
 1 *Murd.* What we will do, we do upon command.
 2 *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; Wilt thou 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.
 2 *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.
 1 *Murd.* And, like a traitor to the name of God, Didst break that vow: and, with thy treacherous blade, Unrip'dst the bowels of thy soveraign's son.
 2 *Murd.* Whom thou wast sworn to cherish and defend.
 1 *Murd.* How canst thou urge God's dreadful law to us,
 When thou hast broke it in such dear⁶⁷) degree?
Clar. Alas! for whose sake did I that ill deed? For Edward, for my brother, for his sake:
⁶⁸) He sends you not to murder me for this; For in that sin⁶⁹) he is as deep as I. If God will be avenged for the deed, O, know you, that he doth it publicly; Take not the quarrel from his powerful arm; He needs no indirect nor lawless course, To cut off those that have offended him.
 1 *Murd.* Who made thee then a bloody minister, When gallant-springing, brave Plantagenet,⁷⁰) That princely novice,⁷¹) was struck dead by thee?
Clar. My brother's love, the devil, and my rage.
 1 *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 need, 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.
 2 *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.
 1 *Murd.* Ay, mill-stones; as he lesson'd us to weep.
Clar. O, do not slander him, for he is kind.
 1 *Murd.* Right, as snow in harvest. — Come, you deceive yourself;
 '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.
 1 *Murd.* Why, so he doth, when he delivers you From this earth's thralldom to the joys of heaven.
 2 *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: — Ah, sirs, consider, he, that set you on To do this deed, will hate you for the deed.
 2 *Murd.* What shall we do?
Clar. Relent, and save your souls.
 1 *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 murderers 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?
 2 *Murd.* Look behind you, my lord.
 1 *Murd.* Take that, and that; if all this will not do,
 [Stabs him.]
 I'll drown you in the malmsey-butt within.
 [Exit, with the Body.]
 2 *Murd.* A bloody deed, and desperately despatch'd! How fain, like Pilate, would I wash my hands Of this most grievous guilty murder done!
 Re-enter first Murderer.
 1 *Murd.* How now? what mean'st thou, that thou help'st me not?
 By heaven, the duke shall know how slack you have been.
 2 *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.]
 1 *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 then I must not stay. [Exit.]

ACT II.

SCENE I. *The same. A Room in the Palace.*

Enter King EDWARD, (led in sick,) 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; ¹) 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, ²) 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 your 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 marquis.
Dor. This interchange of love, I here protest, Upon my part shall be inviolable.
Hast. And so swear I. [Embraces DORSET.]
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. Whenever Buckingham doth turn his hate Upon your grace, [to the QUEEN] but with all dutious 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 heaven, When I am cold in love to you, or yours.
 [Embracing RIVERS, &c.]
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 GLOSTER.
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: — Brother, 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 liege. — 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 ought committed that is hardly borne By any in this presence, I desire To reconcile me to his friendly peace: 'Tis death to me, to be at enmity; I hate it, and desire all good men's love, — First, madam, I entreat true peace of you, Which I will purchase with my duteous service; — Of you, my noble cousin Buckingham, If ever any grudge were lodged between us; —

Of you, lord Rivers, — and, lord Grey, of you, — That all without desert have frown'd on me; — Dukes, earls, lords, gentlemen; indeed, of all. I do not know that Englishman alive, With whom my soul is any jot at odds, More than the infant that is born 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 sovereign 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 corpse.
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 forsok 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,³) Deserve not worse than wretched Clarence did, And yet go current from suspicion!

Enter STANLEY.

Stan. A boon, my sovereign, for my service done!
K. Edw. I pr'ythee, 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, ⁴) 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, ⁵)
 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 sued 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 rescued me, And said, *Dear brother, live, and be a king?* Who told me, when we both lay in the field, Frozen almost to death, how he did lap me Even in his garments; and did give himself, All thin and naked, to the numb-cold night? All this from my remembrance brutish wrath Sinfully 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 beholden to him in his life; Yet none of you would once plead 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, 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.

SCENE II.

The same.

*Enter the Duchess of YORK, with a Son and
Daughter of CLARENCE.*

Son. Good grandam, tell us, is our father dead?
Duch. No, boy.

Daugh. Why do you weep so oft? and beat your
breast;

And cry — O Clarence, my unhappy son!

Son. Why do you look on us, and shake your head,
And call us — orphans, wretches, cast-aways,
If that our noble father be alive?

Duch. My pretty cousins, you mistake me both;
I do lament the sickness of the king.

As loath to lose him, not your father's death;
It were lost sorrow, to wail one that's lost.

Son. Then, grandam, you conclude that he is dead.
The king my uncle is to blame for this:

God will revenge it; whom I will imp'rtune
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, 7)

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

Son. Grandam, we can: for my good uncle Gloster
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
shapes,

And with a virtuous visor hide deep vice!

He is my son, ay, and therein my shame,
Yet from my dugs he drew not this deceit.

Son. Think you, my uncle did dissemble, grandam?

Duch. Ay, boy.

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

Enter Queen ELIZABETH, *distractedly*; RIVERS,
and DORSET *following her.*

Q. Eliz. Ah! who shall hinder me to wail and weep?
To chide my fortune, and torment myself?
I'll join with black despair against my soul,
And to myself become an enemy.

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, when the root is gone?
Why wither not the leaves, that want their sap? —
If you will live, lament; if die, be brief;
That our swift-winged souls may catch the king's;
Or, like obedient subjects, follow him
To his new kingdom of 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 by looking on his images: 8)

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 my arms,
And pluck'd two crutches from my feeble hands,
Clarence and Edward. O, what cause have I,
(Thine being but a moiety of my grief,)
To over-go thy plaints, and drown thy cries?

Son. 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 laments:

All springs reduce their currents to mine eyes,
That I, being governed 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 lamentations.

Dor. Comfort, dear mother: God is much displeas'd,
That you take with unthankfulness his doing;

In common worldly things, 'tis called — ungrateful,
With dull unwillingness to repay a debt,
Which with a bounteous hand was kindly lent;

Much more to be thus opposite with heaven,
For it requires 9) 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 GLOSTER, BUCKINGHAM, STANLEY, HASTINGS,
RATCLIFFE, 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
breast,
Love, charity, obedience, and true duty!

Glo. Amen; 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. [*Aside.* 10)

Buck. You cloudy princes, and heart-sorrowing peers,
That bear this mutual heavy 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 splinted, 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 Buck-
ingham?

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 ungo-
vern'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 11) in this weighty business?

[*Exeunt all but* BUCKINGHAM and GLOSTER.]

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 12) 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.*]

SCENE III.

The same. A Street.

Enter two Citizens, meeting.

1 *Cit.* Good morrow, neighbour: Whither away
so fast?

2 *Cit.* I promise you, I scarcely know myself:
Hear you the news abroad?

1 *Cit.* Yes; the king's dead. 13)

2 *Cit.* Ill news, by'r lady; seldom comes the better:
I fear, I fear, 'twill prove a giddy world.

Enter another Citizen.

3 *Cit.* Neighbours, God speed!
1 *Cit.* Give you good morrow, sir.

3 *Cit.* Doth the news hold of good king Edward's
death?

2 *Cit.* Ay, sir, it is too true; God help, the while!

3 *Cit.* Then, masters, look to see a troublous world.

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

3 *Cit.* Woe to that land, that's govern'd by a child!

2 *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.

1 *Cit.* So stood the state, when Henry the sixth
Was crown'd in Paris but at nine months old.

3 *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.

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

3 *Cit.* Better it were, they all came by his father;
Or, by his father, there were none at all:

For emulation now, who shall be nearest,
Will touch us all too near, if God prevent not.

O, full of danger is the duke of Gloster;
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.

1 *Cit.* Come, come, we fear the worst; all will be well.

3 *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.

2 *Cit.* Truly, the hearts of men are full of fear:
You cannot reason almost 14) with a man
That looks not heavily, and full of dread.

3 *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 water swell before a boist'rous storm.

But leave it all to God. Whither away?

2 *Cit.* Marry, we were sent for to the justices.

3 *Cit.* And so was I; I'll bear you company.

[*Exeunt.*]

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 heard, they lay at Stony-
Stratford;

And at Northampton they do rest to-night: 15)
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 over-ta'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 Gloster,
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 remem-
ber'd, 16)

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 pr'ythee, 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 pr'ythee, 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: ¹⁷⁾ 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 unfold.

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,
Gloster and Buckingham.

Q. Eliz. 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 lady.

Q. Eliz. Ah me, I see the ruin of my house!
The tiger now hath seiz'd the gentle hind;

Insulting tyranny begins to jut

Upon the innocent and awless ¹⁸⁾ throne: —

Welcome, destruction, blood, 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 tost,

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 'gainst self: — O, preposterous

And frantic courage, 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. My gracious lady, go, [to the QUEEN.

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. [Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I. The same. A Street.

The Trumpets sound. Enter the Prince of WALES,
GLOSTER, BUCKINGHAM, Cardinal BOURCHIER,
and others.

Buck. Welcome, sweet prince, to London, to your chamber. ¹⁾

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. — [Exit Mayor, &c.]

I thought my mother, and my brother York,

Would long ere this have met us on the way:

Fye, 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. Fye! 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 deep a sin.

Buck. You are too senseless-obstinate, my lord,

Too ceremonious, and traditional: ²⁾

Weigh it but with the grossness of this age, ³⁾

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. [Exit CARDINAL and HASTINGS.]

Say, uncle Gloster, 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.

RRIV.

Prince. I do not like the Tower, of any place: —
Did Julius Cæsar build that place, my lord?

Glo. 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, ⁴⁾

Even to the general all-ending day.

Glo. So wise so young, they say, do ne'er live long.

[Aside.]

Prince. What say you, uncle?

Glo. I say, without characters, fame lives long.

Thus, like the formal vice, Iniquity, } [Aside.]

I moralize two meanings in one word. ⁵⁾ }

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. Short summers lightly ⁶⁾ have a forward spring.

[Aside.]

Enter YORK, HASTINGS, and the CARDINAL.

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; ⁷⁾ so must I call you now.

Prince. Ay, brother; to our grief, as it is yours;

Too late he died, ⁸⁾ 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 is he more beholden 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, then, give me this dagger. ⁹⁾

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, ¹⁰⁾ 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 wit 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 gracious lord, will't please you pass

along? ¹¹⁾

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. ¹²⁾ Why, sir, what should 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.

[Exit PRINCE, YORK, HASTINGS, CARDINAL,

and Attendants.]

Buck. Think you, my lord, this little prating York

Was not incensed ¹³⁾ 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; ¹⁴⁾

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

Buck. Well, let them rest. —

Come hither, gentle Catesby, ¹⁵⁾ 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? will

not 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, ¹⁶⁾

Wherein thyself shalt highly be employed.

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 friend, 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.

<

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.]*

SCENE II.

Before Lord Hastings' House.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, my lord, —

Hast. *[Within.]* Who knocks? *[Knocking.]*

Mess. One from lord Stanley. ¹⁷⁾

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

Mess. Upon the stroke of four.

Enter HASTINGS.

Hast. Cannot thy master sleep the tedious ¹⁸⁾ nights?

Mess. So it should seem by that I have to say.

First, he commends him to your noble lordship.

Hast. And then, —

Mess. And then he sends you word, he dreamt

To-night the boar had rased off his helm: ¹⁹⁾

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, presently, you will take horse with him,

And with all speed post with him toward 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, ²⁰⁾ 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: ²¹⁾

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 twelvemonth

hence, —

That they, who 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, —

For they account his head upon the bridge. *[Aside.]*

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; and good morrow, ²²⁾

Catesby: —

You may jest on, but, by the holy rood, ²³⁾

I do not like these several councils, I.

Hast. My lord, I hold my life as dear as yours; ²⁴⁾

And never, in my life, I do protest,

Was it more precious to me than '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 states were sure,

And they, indeed, had no cause to mistrust;

But yet, you see, how soon the day o'er-cast.

This sudden stab of rancour I misdoubt; ²⁵⁾

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, ²⁶⁾ 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 STAN. 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 thou met'st me 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 ere I was.

Purs. God hold it, to your honour's good content!

Hast. Gramercy, fellow: There, drink that for me.

Purs. I thank your honour. *[Throwing him his Purse.]*

[Exit Pursuivant.]

Enter a Priest.

Priest. 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; ²⁷⁾

Come the next Sabbath, and I will content you.

Enter BUCKINGHAM.

Buck. What, talking with a priest, lord chamber-

lain?

Your friends at Pomfret, they do need the priest;

Your honour hath no shriving work in hand. ²⁸⁾

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 cannot stay there:

I shall return before your lordship thence.

Hast. Nay, like enough, for I stay dinner there.

Buck. And supper too, although thou know'st it

not. *[Aside.]*

Come, will you go?

Hast. I'll wait upon your lordship. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE III.

Pomfret. Before the Castle.

Enter RATCLIFF, with a Guard, conducting RIVERS,

GREY, and VAUGHAN, to Execution.

Rat. Come, bring forth the prisoners.

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 keep 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 here-

after.

Rat. Despatch; 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 fallen 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 Hastings, then curs'd she

Buckingham,

Then curs'd she Richard: — O, remember, God,

To hear her prayers for them, as now for us!

And for my sister, and her princely sons, —

Be satisfied, dear God, with our true bloods,

Which, as thou know'st, unjustly must be spilt!

Rat. Make haste, the hour of death is expiate. ²⁹⁾

Riv. Come, Grey, — come, Vaughan, — let us here

embrace:

Farewell, until we meet again in heaven. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE IV.

London. A Room in the Tower.

BUCKINGHAM, STANLEY, HASTINGS, the Bishop of

ELY, CATESBY, LOVELL, and others, sitting at a

Table: Officers of the Council attending.

Hast. Now, noble peers, the cause why we are met

is — to determine of the coronation:

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

Buck. Are all things ready for that royal time?

Stan. They are; and wants but nomination. ³⁰⁾

Ely. To-morrow, then, I judge a happy day.

Buck. Who knows the lord protector's mind herein?

Who is most inward ³¹⁾ 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 lord, 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 GLOSTER.

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, ³²⁾ 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. — ³³⁾

My lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn,

I saw good strawberries ³⁴⁾ in your garden there;

I do beseech you, send for some of them.

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

[Exit Ely.]

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 awhile, I'll go with you.

[Exeunt GLOSTER 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 protector? I have sent

For these strawberries.

Hast. His grace looks cheerfully and smooth this

morning;

There's some conceit or other ³⁵⁾ likes him well,

When he doth bid good-morrow with such spirit.

I think, there's ne'er a man in Christendom,

Can lesser hide his love, or hate, than he;

For by his face straight shall you know his heart.

Stan. What of his heart perceive you in his face,

By any likelihood 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. ³⁶⁾

Re-enter GLOSTER and BUCKINGHAM.

Glo. I pray you all, tell me what they deserve,

That do conspire my death

Hast. Woe, woe, for England! not a whit for me; For I, too fond, might have prevented this: Stanley did dream, the boar did raise his helm: But I disdain'd it, and did scorn to fly. Three times to-day my foot-cloth horse did stumble,³⁷⁾ And startled, when he look'd upon the Tower, As loath to bear me to the slaughter-house. O, now I want 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.

Cate. Despatch, my lord, the duke would be at dinner;

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

Hast. O momentary grace of mortal men, Which we more hunt for than the grace of God! Who builds his hope in air of your fair 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, despatch; 'tis bootless to exclaim.

Hast. O, bloody Richard! — miserable England! I prophesy the fearful'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. [Exit.]

SCENE V.

The same. The Tower Walls.

Enter GLOSTER and BUCKINGHAM, in rusty 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:³⁸⁾ 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. Let me alone to entertain him. — Lord mayor, —

Glo. Look to the draw-bridge there.

Buck. Hark! hark! a drum.

Glo. Catesby, o'erlook the walls.

Buck. Lord mayor, the reason we have sent for you, —

Glo. Look back, defend thee, here are enemies.

Buck. God and our innocence defend and guard us!

Enter LOVEL and RATCLIFF, with HASTINGS's 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 harmless³⁹⁾ 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 conversation⁴⁰⁾ 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. — Look you, my lord mayor,

Would you imagine, or almost believe,

(Were't not, that by great preservation

We live to tell it you,) the subtle traitor

This day had plotted, in the council-house,

To murder me, and my good lord of Gloster?

May. What! had he 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 persons' 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,

Somewhat 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 treasons;

That you might well have signified the same

Unto the citizens, who, haply, may

Misconstrue 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 case.

Glo. And to that end we wish'd your lordship here,

To avoid the censures of the carping world.

Buck. But since you came 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,⁴¹⁾ or savage heart,

Without control, listed to make his 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 just 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;⁴²⁾

HHIV.

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 Guild-hall affords.

[Exit BUCKINGHAM.]

Glo. Go, Lovel, with all speed to doctor Shaw. —⁴³⁾ Go thou [to CAT.] to friar Penker; — bid them both Meet me, within this hour, at Baynard's castle.

[Exit LOVEL and 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 of person

Have, any time, recourse unto the princes. [Exit.]

SCENE VI.

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 precedent⁴⁴⁾ was full as long a doing:

And yet within these five hours Hastings liv'd,

Untainted, unexamn'd, 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 nought,

When such bad dealings must be seen in thought.⁴⁵⁾

[Exit.]

SCENE VII.

The same. Court of Baynard's Castle.

Enter GLOSTER 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 grew to an 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 statues, or breathless stones,⁴⁶⁾

Star'd on each 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 us'd

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 o'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;⁴⁷⁾

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 descent;

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'll bring it to a happy issue.⁴⁸⁾

Buck. Go, go, up to the leads; the lord mayor knocks. [Exit GLOSTER.]

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 wordly 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,⁴⁹⁾

But on his knees at meditation;

Not dallying with a brace of courtezans,

But meditating with two deep divines;

Not sleeping, to engross⁵⁰⁾ his idle body,

But praying, to enrich his watchful soul:

Happy were England, would this virtuous prince

Take on himself the sovereignty thereof:

But, sure, I fear, we shall ne'er win him to it.

May. Marry, God defend, his grace should say us nay!⁵¹⁾

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,

He fears, my lord, 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 hard to draw them thence;

So sweet is zealous contemplation.

HHIV.

Enter GLOSTER in a Gallery above, between two Bishops. CATESBY returns.

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 ornaments to know a holy man. — Famous Plantagenet, most gracious prince, Lend favourable ear to our requests; And pardon us the interruption Of thy devotion, and right christian zeal.

Glo. My lord, there needs no such apology; I rather do beseech you pardon me, Who, earnest in the service of my God, Neglect 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 scepter'd 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:

Whilst, in the mildness of your sleepy thoughts, (Which here we waken to our country's good,) The 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 gulf⁵²)

Of dark forgetfulness and deep oblivion. Which to recure,⁵³) 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 suit 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 sovereignty, 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, — Definitely 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,⁵⁴) if need were;)

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 what 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,⁵⁵) 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 he was contract to lady Lucy, Your mother lives a witness to his vow;

And afterwards 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 all his thoughts

To base declension and loath'd bigamy;⁵⁶) 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 time, 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,⁵⁷) Which we have noted in you to your kindred,

And equally, indeed, to all estates, — Yet know, wher you accept our suit or no,

Your brother's son shall never reign our king; But we will plant some other in your 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?

Well, call them again; I am not made of stone, But penetrable to your kind entreaties, [Exit CATESBY.]

Albeit against my conscience and my soul. —

Re-enter BUCKINGHAM, and the rest. Cousin of Buckingham, — and sage,⁵⁸) grave men, —

Since you will buckle fortune on my back, To bear her burthen, wher 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 he knows, 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, since you will have it so.

Buck. To-morrow then we will attend your grace; And so, most joyfully, we take our leave.

Glo. Come, let us to our holy work again; — [To the Bishops.] Farewell, good cousin! — farewell, gentle friends! [Exit.]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. Before the Tower.

Enter, on one side, Queen ELIZABETH, Duchess of YORK, and Marquis of DORSET; on the other, ANNE, Duchess of GLOSTER, 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 Gloster?

Now, for my life, she's wand'ring to the Tower, On pure heart's love, to greet the tender prince. — 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 my 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 BRAKENBURY.]

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. — Come, madam, you must straight to Westminster,

[To the Duchess of GLOSTER.] 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. Despitiful 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: —

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! ¹) 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 wed'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, Even in so short a space, my woman's heart

Grossly grew captive to his honey words, And prov'd the subject of mine own soul's curse:

Which ever since 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 ²) 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.

Dor. Farewell, thou woful welcomer of glory! Anne. Adieu, poor soul, that tak'st thy leave of it!

Duch. Go thou to Richmond, and good fortune guide thee; — [To DORSET.] Go thou to Richard, and good angels tend thee! —

[To ANNE.] Go thou to sanctuary, and good thoughts possess thee! [To Q. ELIZABETH.]

I to my grave, where peace and rest lie with me! Eighty odd years of sorrow have I seen,

And each hour's joy wreck'd with a week of teen. ³) 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 play-fellow

For tender princes, use my babies well! So foolish sorrow bids your stones farewell. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

A Room of State in the Palace.

Flourish of Trumpets. RICHARD, as King upon his Throne; BUCKINGHAM, CATESBY, a Page, and others.

K. Rich. Stand all apart. — Cousin of Buckingham, —

Buck. My gracious sovereign.

K. Rich. Give me thy hand. 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,⁴⁾

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 say'st 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 breath, some little pause, dear lord,

Before I positively speak in this:

I will resolve your grace immediately.

[Exit BUCKINGHAM. Cate. The king is angry; see, he gnaws his lip.⁵⁾

K. Rich. I will converse with iron-witted fools,
[Aside. Descends from his Throne.]

And unrespective boys; ⁶⁾ 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 would tempt into a close exploit ⁷⁾ of death?

Page. I know a discontented gentleman,

Whose humble means match not his haughty mind:

Gold were as good as twenty orators,

And will, no doubt, tempt him to any thing.

K. Rich. What is his name?

Page. His name, my lord, is — Tyrrel.

K. Rich. I partly know the man; Go, call him hither, boy. — *[Exit Page.]*

The deep revolving witty ⁸⁾ Buckingham
No more shall be the neighbour to my counsels:

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 marquis 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, ⁹⁾

Inquire me out some mean-born 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, ¹⁰⁾
To stop all hopes, whose growth may damage me. —

[Exit CATESBY.]

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

Re-enter Page, with TYRREL.

Is thy name — Tyrrel?

Tyr. James Tyrrel, 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: ¹¹⁾

Tyrrel, 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, Tyrrel;

Go, by this token: — Rise, and lend thine ear.

[Whispers.]

There is no more but so: — Say, it is done,

And I will love thee, and prefer thee for it.

Tyr. I will despatch 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's 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 — Rouge-mont: 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. ¹²⁾

Buck. Why, let it strike?
K. Rich. Because that, like a Jack, ¹³⁾ thou keep'st
the stroke

Between 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.

[Exit 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, ¹⁴⁾ while my fearful head is on. *[Exit.]*

SCENE III.

The same.

Enter TYRREL.

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 surn

To do this piece of ruthless butchery,

Albeit they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,

Melting with tenderness and mild compassion,

Wept like two children, in their death's sad story.

O thus, quoth Dighton, lay the gentle babes,

Thus, thus, quoth Forrest, girding 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 smother'd

The most replenish'd 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.

Enter King RICHARD.

And here he comes: — All health, my sovereign lord!

K. Rich. Kind Tyrrel! 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 Tyrrel?

Tyr. The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them;

But where, to say the truth, I do not know.

K. Rich. Come to me, Tyrrel, soon, at after supper,

When thou shalt tell the process of their death.

Mean time, 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 penn'd 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 Bretagne Richmond ¹⁵⁾ 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 news or bad, that thou com'st in

so bluntly?

Cate. Bad news, my lord; Morton is fled to Rich-

mond;

And Buckingham, back'd with the hardy Welchmen,
Is in the field, and still his power encreaseth.

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 ¹⁶⁾ 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. *[Exit.]*

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 ¹⁷⁾ 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 ¹⁸⁾

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, ¹⁹⁾ 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 would'st as soon afford a grave,

As thou canst yield a melancholy seat;

Then would I hide my bones, not rest them here!

Ah, who hath any cause to mourn, but we? *[Sitting down by her.]*

Q. Mar. If ancient sorrow be most reverent,

Give mine the benefit of seniority, ²⁰⁾

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;

²¹⁾ I had a husband, 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 hell-hound, 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 handy-work;
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-fellow²²⁾ 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,²³⁾ because both they
Match not the high perfection of my loss.
Thy Clarence he is dead, that stab'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 bunch-back'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,²⁴⁾
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 wast; a garish flag,
To be the aim of every dangerous shot;²⁵⁾
A sign of dignity, a breath, a bubble;
A queen in jest, only to fill the scene.
Where is thy husband now? where be thy brothers?
Where be thy two sons? wherein dost thou joy?
Who sues, and kneels, and says — 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,²⁶⁾ and see what now thou art.
For happy wife, a most distressed widow;
For joyful mother, one that wails the name;
For one being sued to, one that humbly sues;
For queen, a very caitiff 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 wheel'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 mis-
chance, —
These English woes shall make me smile in France.

Q. Eliz. O thou well skill'd in curses, stay a while,
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 Q. MARGARET.]*
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-ty'd; go with me,
And in the breath of bitter words let's smother
My damned son, that thy two sweet sons smother'd.
[Drum, within.]
I hear his drum, — 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,²⁷⁾
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,²⁸⁾
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 staid 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 knowest it well,
Thou cam'st on earth to make the earth my hell.
A grievous burden was thy birth to me;
Tetchy²⁹⁾ 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 me³⁰⁾ in thy company?
K. Rich. 'Faith, none, but Humphrey Hour,³¹⁾ that
call'd your grace
To breakfast once, forth of my company.

If I be so disgracious in your sight,
Let me march on, and not offend you, madam. —
Strike up the drum.
Duch. I pry'thee, 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 heavy curse;
Which, in the day of battle, fire 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,³²⁾ 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,³³⁾ I must speak a word
with you.
Q. Eliz. I have no more sons of the royal blood,
For thee to murder: 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 bad friends were contrary.
K. Rich. All unavoided³⁴⁾ is the doom of destiny.
Q. Eliz. True, when avoided 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, 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 use³⁵⁾ 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 rest,
Rush all to pieces on thy rocky bosom.
K. Rich. Madam, so thrive I in my enterprize,
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 type³⁶⁾ of this earth's glory.
Q. Eliz. Flatter my sorrows with report of it;
Tell me, what state, what dignity, what honour,
Canst thou demise³⁷⁾ 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 supposist, 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 so hasty to confound my meaning:
I mean, that with my soul I love thy daughter,
And do intend to make her queen of England.
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!³⁸⁾ What think you
of it, madam?
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 sometimes 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 could'st 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
have thee,³⁹⁾
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 doating 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.⁴⁰⁾
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 sov'reignty; 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,⁴¹⁾
And she shall be sole victress, Caesar's Caesar.
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.⁴²⁾
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, loaths such sov'reignty.
K. Rich. Be eloquent in my behalf to her.
Q. Eliz. An honest tale speeds best, being plainly told.
K. Rich. Then, in plain terms tell her 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 would'st 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-mis-us'd.
K. Rich. Why then, by God, —⁴³⁾
Q. Eliz. God's wrong is most of all.
If thou had'st fear'd to break an oath by him,
The unity, the king thy brother made,
Had not been broken, nor my brother slain.
If thou had'st 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, two tender bed-fellows for dust,
Thy broken faith hath made a prey for worms.
What canst thou swear by now?
K. Rich. By 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
Mis-us'd ere used, by times ill-us'd o'er past.
K. Rich. As I intend to prosper, and repent!
So thrive I in my dangerous attempt
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 found 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. But 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 fare-
well. [*Kissing her. Exit Q. ELIZABETH.*]
Relenting fool, and shallow, changing — woman!⁴⁴⁾
How now? what news?

Enter RATCLIFF; CATESBY following.

Rat. Most mighty sovereign, on the western coast
Rideth a puissant navy; to the shore
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 duke⁴⁵⁾
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, — 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 Salis-
bury?
K. Rich. Why, what would'st thou do there, be-
fore 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. Heyday, a riddle! neither good nor bad!
What need'st thou run so many miles about,
When thou may'st 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?
Theu, 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 Welchman comes.
Thou wilt revolt, and fly to him, I fear.
Stan. No, mighty liege, 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 would'st be gone to join
with Richmond:
I will not trust you, sir.
Stan. Most mighty sovereign,
You have no cause to hold my friendship doubtful;
I never was, nor never will be false.
K. Rich. Well, go, muster men. But, hear you,
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 STANLEY.*]

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 elder brother,
With many more confederates, are in arms.

Enter another Messenger.

2 Mess. In Kent, my liege, the Guildfords are in
arms;
And every hour more competitors⁴⁶⁾
Flock to the rebels, and their power grows strong.

Enter another Messenger.

3 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.
3 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. O, I cry you 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?
3 Mess. Such proclamation hath been made, my liege.

Enter another Messenger.

4 Mess. Sir Thomas Lovel, and lord Marquis Dorset,
'Tis said, my liege, in Yorkshire are in arms.
But this good comfort bring I to your highness, —
The Bretagne 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 his course again for Bretagne.
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.

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.⁴⁷⁾
K. Rich. Away towards Salisbury; while we rea-
son here,⁴⁸⁾
A royal battle might be won and lost: —
Some one take order, Buckingham be brought
To Salisbury; — the rest march on with me.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

A Room in Lord STANLEY's House.

Enter STANLEY and Sir CHRISTOPHER URSWICK. ⁴⁾

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 withholds my present aid.

But, tell me, where is princely Richmond now?
Christ. At Pembroke, or at Harford-west, in Wales.

Stan. What men of name resort to him?

Christ. 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 fame and worth:
And towards London do they bend their course,
If by the way they be not fought withal.

Stan. Well, hie thee to thy lord; commend me to him;

Tell him the queen hath heartily consented
He shall espouse Elizabeth her daughter.
These letters will resolve him of my mind.

Farewell. [*Gives Papers to Sir CHRISTOPHER.*
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I. Salisbury. *An open Place.*

Enter the Sheriff, and Guards, 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, Rivers, Grey,

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 dooms-day.

This is the day, which, 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. ¹⁾

That high All-seer which I dallied with,
Hath turned 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, sirs, convey me to the block of shame;
Wrong hath but wrong, and blame the due of blame.

[*Exeunt BUCKINGHAM, &c.*

XXIV.

SCENE II.

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
Lies now ²⁾ even in the center 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 swords,
To fight against that bloody homicide.

Herb. I doubt not, but his friends will turn to us.

Blunt. He hath no friends, but who 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.*

SCENE III.

Bosworth Field.

Enter King RICHARD, and Forces; the Duke of NORFOLK, Earl of SURREY, and others.

K. Rich. Here pitch our tents, 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:— ³⁾

Let's want 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 Lords. 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 ⁴⁾ 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;— ⁵⁾

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,
Sweet Blunt, make some good means ⁶⁾ to speak with him,

And give him from me this most needful note.

Blunt. Upon my life, my lord, I'll undertake it;
And so, God give you quiet rest 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. ⁷⁾

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:— ⁸⁾

Saddle white Surrey for the field to-morrow.—
Look that my staves ⁹⁾ be sound, and not too heavy.

Ratcliff.—

Rat. My lord?

K. Rich. Saw'st thou the melancholy lord Northumberland? ¹⁰⁾

Rat. Thomas the earl of Surrey, and himself,
Much about cock-shut time, ¹¹⁾ from troop to troop,
Went through the army, cheering up the soldiers.

K. Rich. I am satisfied. ¹²⁾ Give me a bowl of wine:

I have not that alacrity of spirit,
Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have.—

So, set it down.— ¹³⁾ Is ink and paper ready?

Rat. It is, my lord.

K. Rich. Bid my guard watch; ¹⁴⁾ leave me.
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 Tent 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, ¹⁵⁾ 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-starting war. ¹⁶⁾

I, as I may, (that which I would, I cannot,) ¹⁷⁾
With best advantage will deceive the time, ¹⁷⁾

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, ¹⁸⁾

When I should mount with wings of victory:
Once more, good night, kind lords and gentlemen.

[*Exeunt Lords, &c. with STANLEY.*

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! [*Steeps.*

The Ghost of Prince EDWARD, Son to HENRY the Sixth, rises between the two Tents.

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

Think, how thou stab'dst 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. When I was mortal, my anointed body
[*To King RICHARD.*

By thee was punched full of deadly holes:
Think on the Tower, and me; Despair, and die;
Harry the sixth bids thee despair and die.—

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

Harry, that prophecy'd thou should'st be king, ¹⁹⁾
Doth comfort thee in thy sleep; Live, and flourish!

The Ghost of CLARENCE rises.

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

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; ²⁰⁾ Despair, and die!

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Thou offspring of the house of Lancaster,
The wronged heirs of York do pray for thee;
Good angels guard thy battle! Live, and flourish!

[To RICHMOND.]

The Ghosts of RIVERS, GREY, and VAUGHAN, rise.

Riv. Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow!

[To King RICHARD.]

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

Grey. Think upon Grey, and let thy soul despair!

[To King RICHARD.]

Vaugh. Think upon Vaughan; and with guilty fear,
Let fall thy lance! Despair, and die!

[To King RICHARD.]

All. Awake! and think, our wrongs in Richard's
bosom
Will conquer him; — awake, and win the day!

[To RICHMOND.]

The Ghost of HASTINGS rises.

Ghost. Bloody and guilty, guiltily awake,

[To King RICHARD.]

And in a bloody battle end thy days!
Think on lord Hastings; and despair, and die! —
Quiet untroubled soul, awake, awake!

[To RICHMOND.]

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

The Ghosts of the two young Princes rise.

Ghosts. 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. —

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 Queen ANNE rises.

Ghost. 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! —

Thou, quiet soul, sleep thou a quiet sleep;

[To RICHMOND.]

Dream of success and happy victory;
Thy adversary's wife doth pray for thee.

The Ghost of BUCKINGHAM rises.

Ghost. The first was I, that help'd thee to the crown;

[To King RICHARD.]

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! —
I died for hope, ere I could lead thee aid:

[To RICHMOND.]

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 on myself?
I love myself. ²³⁾ 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. 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. 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.

[Exit King RICHARD and RATCLIFF.]

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, and 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 mur-
der'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.

Rich. Why then 'tis time to arm, and give direc-
tion.

[He advances to the Troops.]
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,

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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, ²⁴⁾ 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 ²⁵⁾ 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 ²⁶⁾
Shall be this cold corpse on the earth's cold face;
But if I thrive, the gain of my attempt
The least of you shall share his part thereof.
Sound, drums and trumpets, boldly and cheerfully;
God, and Saint George! ²⁷⁾ Richmond and victory!

[Exit.]

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 Sur-
rey 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 disdain to shine; for, by the book,
He should have brav'd the east ²⁸⁾ 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 lour 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 forward 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 ourself will follow ²⁹⁾

In the main battle; whose puissance on either side
Shall be well winged with our chiefest horse.

This, and Saint George to boot! — ³⁰⁾ What think'st
thou, Norfolk?

Nor. A good direction, warlike sovereign.
This found I on my tent this morning.

[Giving a Scroll.]

K. Rich. Jockey of Norfolk, be not too bold, [Reads.]
For Dickon ³¹⁾ thy master is bought and sold.

A thing devised by the enemy. —

Go, gentlemen, every man unto his charge:
Let not our babbling dreams affright our souls;
Conscience is but a word that cowards use,
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. —

What shall I say more than I have inferr'd?
Remember whom you are to cope withal; —

A sort of vagabonds, ³²⁾ rascals, and run-aways,
A scum of Breagnes, and base lackey peasants,
Whom their o'er-cloy'd country vomits forth
To desperate ventures ³³⁾ and assur'd destruction.

You sleeping safe, they bring you to unrest; ³⁴⁾
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 Bretagne at our mother's cost?
A milk-sop, one that never in his life
Felt so much cold as over shoes in snow?

Let's whip these stragglers o'er the seas again;
Lash hence these over-weening 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 Breagnes, whom our fathers
Have in their own land beaten, bob'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? — Hark, I hear their drum.

[Drum afar off.]

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! — ³⁵⁾

Enter a Messenger.

What says lord Stanley? will he bring his power?
Mess. My lord, he doth deny to come.

K. Rich. Off instantly with his son George's head. ³⁶⁾
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 on our helmets. [Exit.]

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.

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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 King RICHARD and RICHMOND;
and exeunt, fighting. Retreat, and flourish. Then
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 first, ³⁷⁾ is young George Stanley living?

Stan. He is, my lord, and safe in Leicester town;
Whither, if it please you, we may now 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 with 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 ³⁸⁾ of traitors, gracious Lord,
That would reduce ³⁹⁾ 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.*]