



Messenger A messenger from the Lord Stanley.

[Enter HASTINGS]

HASTINGS What is't o'clock?

Messenger Upon the stroke of four.

HASTINGS Cannot thy master sleep these tedious nights?

Messenger So it should seem by that I have to say.
First, he commends him to your noble lordship.

HASTINGS And then?

Messenger And then he sends you word
He dreamt to-night the boar had razed his helm:
Besides, he says there are two councils held;
And that may be determined 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.

HASTINGS Go, fellow, go, return unto thy lord;
Bid him not fear the separated councils
His honour and myself are at the one,
And at the other is my servant Catesby
Where nothing can proceed that toucheth us
Whereof I shall not have intelligence.
Tell him his fears are shallow, wanting instance:
And for his dreams, I wonder he is 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.

Messenger My gracious lord, I'll tell him what you say.

[Exit]

[Enter CATESBY]

CATESBY Many good morrows to my noble lord!

HASTINGS Good morrow, Catesby; you are early stirring
What news, what news, in this our tottering state?

CATESBY It is a reeling world, indeed, my lord;
And I believe twill never stand upright
Tim Richard wear the garland of the realm.

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

CATESBY Ay, my good lord.

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

CATESBY Ay, on my life; and hopes to find 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.

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

CATESBY God keep your lordship in that gracious mind!

HASTINGS But I shall laugh at this a twelve-month hence,
That they who brought me in my master's hate
I live to look upon their tragedy.
I tell thee, Catesby--

CATESBY What, my lord?

HASTINGS Ere a fortnight make me elder,
I'll send some packing that yet think not on it.

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

HASTINGS 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.

CATESBY The princes both make high account of you;

[Aside]

For they account his head upon the bridge.

HASTINGS I know they do; and I have well deserved it.

[Enter STANLEY]

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

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

HASTINGS My lord,
I hold my life as dear as you do yours;
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?

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

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

LORD STANLEY They, for their truth, might better wear their heads
Than some that have accused them wear their hats.
But come, my lord, let us away.

[Enter a Pursuivant]

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

[Exeunt STANLEY and CATESBY]

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

Pursuivant The better that your lordship please to ask.

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

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

HASTINGS Gramercy, fellow: there, drink that for me.

[Throws him his purse]

Pursuivant God save your lordship!

[Exit]

[Enter a Priest]

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

HASTINGS I thank thee, good Sir John, with all my heart.
I am in your debt for your last exercise;
Come the next Sabbath, and I will content you.

[He whispers in his ear]

[Enter BUCKINGHAM]

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

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

BUCKINGHAM I do, my lord; but long I shall not stay
 I shall return before your lordship thence.

HASTINGS 'Tis like enough, for I stay dinner there.

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

HASTINGS I'll wait upon your lordship.

[Exeunt]

Scene III

Pomfret Castle.

[Enter RATCLIFF, with halberds, carrying RIVERS,
GREY, and VAUGHAN to death]

RATCLIFF Come, bring forth the prisoners.

RIVERS 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!

VAUGHAN You live that shall cry woe for this after.

RATCLIFF Dispatch; the limit of your lives is out.

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

GREY Now Margaret's curse is fall'n upon our heads,
 For standing by when Richard stabb'd her son.

RIVERS Then cursed she Hastings, then cursed she Buckingham,
 Then cursed 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 blood,
 Which, as thou know'st, unjustly must be spilt.

RATCLIFF Make haste; the hour of death is expiate.

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

[Exeunt]

Scene IV

The Tower of London.

[Enter BUCKINGHAM, DERBY, HASTINGS, the BISHOP OF ELY, RATCLIFF, LOVEL, with others, and take their seats at a table]

HASTINGS My lords, at once: the cause why we are met
Is, to determine of the coronation.
In God's name, speak: when is the royal day?

BUCKINGHAM Are all things fitting for that royal time?

DERBY It is, and wants but nomination.

BISHOP OF ELY To-morrow, then, I judge a happy day.

BUCKINGHAM Who knows the lord protector's mind herein?
Who is most inward with the royal duke?

BISHOP OF ELY Your grace, we think, should soonest know his mind.

BUCKINGHAM Who, I, my lord I we know each other's faces,
But for our hearts, he knows no more of mine,
Than I of yours;
Nor I no more of his, than you of mine.
Lord Hastings, you and he are near in love.

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

[Enter GLOUCESTER]

BISHOP OF ELY Now in good time, here comes the duke himself.

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

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

GLOUCESTER Than my Lord Hastings no man might be bolder;
His lordship knows me well, and loves me well.

HASTINGS I thank your grace.

GLOUCESTER My lord of Ely!

BISHOP OF ELY My lord?

GLOUCESTER When I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there
I do beseech you send for some of them.

BISHOP OF ELY Marry, and will, my lord, with all my heart.

[Exit]

GLOUCESTER Cousin of Buckingham, a word with you.

[Drawing him aside]

Catesby hath sounded Hastings in our business,
And finds the testy gentleman so hot,
As he will lose his head ere give consent
His master's son, as worshipful as he terms it,
Shall lose the royalty of England's throne.

BUCKINGHAM Withdraw you hence, my lord, I'll follow you.

[Exit GLOUCESTER, BUCKINGHAM following]

DERBY We have not yet set down this day of triumph.
To-morrow, in mine opinion, 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]

BISHOP OF ELY Where is my lord protector? I have sent for these
strawberries.

HASTINGS His grace looks cheerfully and smooth to-day;
There's some conceit or other likes him well,
When he doth bid good morrow with such a spirit.
I think there's never a man in Christendom
That can less hide his love or hate than he;
For by his face straight shall you know his heart.

DERBY What of his heart perceive you in his face
By any likelihood he show'd to-day?

HASTINGS Marry, that with no man here he is offended;
For, were he, he had shown it in his looks.

DERBY I pray God he be not, I say.

[Re-enter GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM]

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

HASTINGS The tender love I bear your grace, my lord,
Makes me most forward in this noble presence
To doom the offenders, whatsoever they be
I say, my lord, they have deserved death.

GLOUCESTER Then be your eyes the witness of this ill:

See how I am bewitch'd; behold mine arm
Is, like a blasted sapling, wither'd up:
And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch,
Consorted with that harlot strumpet Shore,
That by their witchcraft thus have marked me.

HASTINGS If they have done this thing, my gracious lord--

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

[Exeunt all but HASTINGS, RATCLIFF, and LOVEL]

HASTINGS Woe, woe for England! not a whit for me;
For I, too fond, might have prevented this.
Stanley did dream the boar did raze his helm;
But I disdain'd it, and did scorn to fly:
Three times to-day my foot-cloth horse did stumble,
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 'twere triumphing at mine enemies,
How they 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!

RATCLIFF Dispatch, my lord; the duke would be at dinner:
Make a short shrift; he longs to see your head.

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

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

HASTINGS 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 that shortly shall be dead.

[Exeunt]

Scene V

The Tower-walls.

[Enter GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM, in rotten armour,
marvellous ill-favoured]

GLOUCESTER Come, cousin, canst thou quake, and change thy colour,

Murder thy breath in the middle of a word,
And then begin again, and stop again,
As if thou wert distraught and mad with terror?

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

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

[Enter the Lord Mayor and CATESBY]

BUCKINGHAM Lord mayor,--

GLOUCESTER Look to the drawbridge there!

BUCKINGHAM Hark! a drum.

GLOUCESTER Catesby, o'erlook the walls.

BUCKINGHAM Lord mayor, the reason we have sent--

GLOUCESTER Look back, defend thee, here are enemies.

BUCKINGHAM God and our innocency defend and guard us!

GLOUCESTER Be patient, they are friends, Ratcliff and Lovel.

[Enter LOVEL and RATCLIFF, with HASTINGS' head]

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

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

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

Lord Mayor What, had he so?

GLOUCESTER What, think You we are Turks or infidels?
Or that we would, against the form of law,

Proceed thus rashly to the villain's death,
But that the extreme peril of the case,
The peace of England and our persons' safety,
Enforced us to this execution?

Lord Mayor Now, fair befall you! he deserved his death;
And you my good lords, 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.

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

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

GLOUCESTER And to that end we wish'd your lord-ship here,
To avoid the carping censures of the world.

BUCKINGHAM But since you come too late of our intents,
Yet witness what you hear we did intend:
And so, my good lord mayor, we bid farewell.

[Exit Lord Mayor]

GLOUCESTER Go, after, after, cousin Buckingham.
The mayor towards Guildhall hies him in all post:
There, at your meet'st advantage of the time,
Infer the bastardy of Edward's children:
Tell them how Edward put to death a citizen,
Only for saying he would make his son
Heir to the crown; meaning indeed his house,
Which, by the sign thereof was termed so.
Moreover, urge his hateful luxury
And bestial appetite in change of lust;
Which stretched to their servants, daughters, wives,
Even where his lustful eye 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 unsatiate 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:
But touch this sparingly, as 'twere far off,
Because you know, my lord, my mother lives.

BUCKINGHAM Fear 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.

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

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

[Exit BUCKINGHAM]

GLOUCESTER Go, Lovel, with all speed to Doctor Shaw;

[To CATESBY]

Go thou to Friar Penker; bid them both
Meet me within this hour at Baynard's Castle.

[Exeunt all but GLOUCESTER]

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
At any time have recourse unto the princes.

[Exit]

Scene VI

The same.

[Enter a Scrivener, with a paper in his hand]

Scrivener This is the indictment of the good Lord Hastings;
Which in a set hand fairly is engross'd,
That it may be this day read over in Paul's.
And mark how well the sequel hangs together:
Eleven hours I spent to write it over,
For yesternight by Catesby was it brought me;
The precedent was full as long a-doing:
And yet within these five hours lived Lord Hastings,
Untainted, unexamined, free, at liberty
Here's a good world the while! Why who's so gross,
That seeth not this palpable device?
Yet who's so blind, 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.

[Exit]

Scene VII

Baynard's Castle.

[Enter GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM, at several doors]

GLOUCESTER How now, my lord, what say the citizens?

BUCKINGHAM Now, by the holy mother of our Lord,
The citizens are mum and speak not a word.

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

BUCKINGHAM 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,
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 dicipline in war, wisdom in peace,
Your bounty, virtue, fair humility:
Indeed, left nothing fitting for the purpose
Untouch'd, or slightly handled, in discourse
And when mine oratory grew to an end
I bid them that did love their country's good
Cry 'God save Richard, England's royal king!'

GLOUCESTER Ah! and did they so?

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

GLOUCESTER What tongueless blocks were they! would not they speak?

BUCKINGHAM No, by my troth, my lord.

GLOUCESTER Will not the mayor then and his brethren come?

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

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

BUCKINGHAM Go, go, up to the leads; the lord mayor knocks.

[Exit GLOUCESTER]

[Enter the Lord Mayor and Citizens]

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

[Enter CATESBY]

Here comes his servant: how now, Catesby,
What says he?

CATESBY My lord: he doth entreat your grace;
To visit him to-morrow or next day:
He is within, with two right reverend fathers,
Divinely bent to meditation;
And no worldly suit would he be moved,
To draw him from his holy exercise.

BUCKINGHAM Return, good Catesby, to thy lord again;
Tell him, myself, the mayor and citizens,
In deep designs and matters of great moment,
No less importing than our general good,
Are come to have some conference with his grace.

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

[Exit]

BUCKINGHAM Ah, ha, my lord, this prince is not an Edward!
He is not lolling on a lewd day-bed,
But on his knees at meditation;
Not dallying with a brace of courtezans,
But meditating with two deep divines;
Not sleeping, to engross his idle body,
But praying, to enrich his watchful soul:
Happy were England, would this gracious prince
Take on himself the sovereignty thereof:
But, sure, I fear, we shall ne'er win him to it.

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

BUCKINGHAM I fear he will.

[Re-enter CATESBY]

How now, Catesby, what says your lord?

CATESBY My lord,
He wonders to what end you have assembled
Such troops of citizens to speak with him,
His grace not being warn'd thereof before:
My lord, he fears you mean no good to him.

BUCKINGHAM Sorry I am my noble cousin should
Suspect me, that I mean no good to him:
By heaven, I come in perfect love to him;
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.

[Enter GLOUCESTER aloft, between two Bishops.
CATESBY returns]

Lord Mayor See, where he stands between two clergymen!

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

GLOUCESTER 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?

BUCKINGHAM Even that, I hope, which pleaseth God above,
And all good men of this ungovern'd isle.

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

BUCKINGHAM You have, my lord: would it might please your grace,
At our entreaties, to amend that fault!

GLOUCESTER Else wherefore breathe I in a Christian land?

BUCKINGHAM Then know, 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 blemished stock:
Whilst, in the mildness of your sleepy thoughts,
Which here we waken to our country's good,
This noble isle doth want her proper limbs;
Her face defaced with scars of infamy,
Her royal stock graft with ignoble plants,
And almost shoulder'd in the swallowing gulf
Of blind forgetfulness and dark oblivion.
Which to recure, we heartily solicit
Your gracious self to take on you the charge
And kingly government of this your land,
Not as protector, steward, substitute,

Or lowly factor for another's gain;
But as successively from blood to blood,
Your right of birth, your empery, your own.
For this, consorted with the citizens,
Your very worshipful and loving friends,
And by their vehement instigation,
In this just suit come I to move your grace.

GLoucester I know not whether 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 cheque'd my friends.
Therefore, to speak, and to avoid the first,
And then, in speaking, not to incur the last,
Definitively thus I answer you.
Your love deserves my thanks; but my desert
Unmeritable shuns your high request.
First if all obstacles were cut away,
And that my path were even to the crown,
As my ripe revenue and due by birth
Yet so much is my poverty of spirit,
So mighty and so many my defects,
As I had 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's no need of me,
And much I need to help you, 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!

BUCKINGHAM My lord, this argues conscience in your grace;
But the respects thereof are nice and trivial,
All circumstances well considered.
You say that Edward is your brother's son:
So say we too, but not by Edward's wife;
For first he was contract to Lady Lucy--
Your mother lives a witness to that vow--
And afterward by substitute betroth'd
To Bona, sister to the King of France.
These both put by a poor petitioner,
A care-crazed mother of a many children,
A beauty-waning and distressed widow,
Even in the afternoon of her best days,
Made prize and purchase of his lustful eye,
Seduced the pitch and height of all his thoughts
To base declension and loathed bigamy
By her, in his unlawful bed, he got
This Edward, whom our manners term 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 non to bless us and the land withal,
Yet to draw forth your noble ancestry
From the corruption of abusing times,
Unto a lineal true-derived course.

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

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

CATESBY O, make them joyful, grant their lawful suit!

GLOUCESTER Alas, why would you heap these 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.

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

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

[Exit BUCKINGHAM with the Citizens]

CATESBY Call them again, my lord, and accept their suit.

ANOTHER Do, good my lord, lest all the land do rue it.

GLOUCESTER Would you enforce me to a world of care?
Well, call them again. I am not made of stone,
But penetrable to your kind entreats,
Albeit against my conscience and my soul.

[Re-enter BUCKINGHAM and the rest]

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

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

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

BUCKINGHAM Then I salute you with this kingly title:
Long live Richard, England's royal king!

Lord Mayor |
| Amen.
Citizens |

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

GLOUCESTER Even when you please, since you will have it so.

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

GLOUCESTER Come, let us to our holy task again.
Farewell, good cousin; farewell, gentle friends.

[Exeunt]

Act IV

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Scene I

Before the Tower.

[Enter, on one side, QUEEN ELIZABETH, DUCHESS OF YORK, and DORSET; on the other, ANNE, Duchess of Gloucester, leading Lady Margaret Plantagenet, CLARENCE's young Daughter]

DUCHESS OF YORK Who meets us here? my niece Plantagenet
Led in the hand of her kind aunt of Gloucester?
Now, for my life, she's wandering to the Tower,
On pure heart's love to greet the tender princes.
Daughter, well met.

LADY ANNE God give your graces both
A happy and a joyful time of day!

QUEEN ELIZABETH As much to you, good sister! Whither away?

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH 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?

BRAKENBURY Right well, dear madam. By your patience,
I may not suffer you to visit them;

The king hath straitly charged the contrary.

QUEEN ELIZABETH The king! why, who's that?

BRAKENBURY I cry you mercy: I mean the lord protector.

QUEEN ELIZABETH The Lord protect him from that kingly title!
Hath he set bounds betwixt their love and me?
I am their mother; who should keep me from them?

DUCHESS OF YORK I am their fathers mother; I will see them.

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

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

[Exit]

[Enter LORD STANLEY]

LORD STANLEY Let me but meet you, ladies, one hour hence,
And I'll salute your grace of York as mother,
And reverend looker on, of two fair queens.

[To LADY ANNE]

Come, madam, you must straight to Westminster,
There to be crowned Richard's royal queen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH O, cut my lace in sunder, that my pent heart
May have some scope to beat, or else I swoon
With this dead-killing news!

LADY ANNE Despiteful tidings! O unpleasing news!

DORSET Be of good cheer: mother, how fares your grace?

QUEEN ELIZABETH O Dorset, speak not to me, get thee hence!
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.

LORD STANLEY 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
To meet you on the way, and welcome you.
Be not ta'en tardy by unwise delay.

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

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

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH Go, go, poor soul, I envy not thy glory
To feed my humour, wish thyself no harm.

LADY ANNE No! why? When he that is my husband now
Came to me, as I follow'd Henry's corse,
When scarce the blood was well wash'd from his hands
Which issued 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, 'accursed,
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--
As miserable by the life of thee
As 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 proved the subject of my own soul's curse,
Which ever since hath kept my eyes from rest;
For never yet one hour in his bed
Have I enjoy'd the golden dew of sleep,
But have been waked by his timorous dreams.
Besides, he hates me for my father Warwick;
And will, no doubt, shortly be rid of me.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Poor heart, adieu! I pity thy complaining.

LADY ANNE No more than from my soul I mourn for yours.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Farewell, thou woful welcomer of glory!

LADY ANNE Adieu, poor soul, that takest thy leave of it!

DUCHESS OF YORK [To DORSET]

Go thou to Richmond, and good fortune guide thee!

[To LADY ANNE]

Go thou to Richard, and good angels guard thee!

[To QUEEN ELIZABETH]

Go thou to sanctuary, and good thoughts possess thee!
I to my grave, where peace and rest lie with me!
Eighty odd years of sorrow have I seen,
And each hour's joy wrecked with a week of teen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Stay, yet look back with me unto the Tower.

Pity, you ancient stones, those tender babes
Whom envy hath immured within your walls!
Rough cradle for such little pretty ones!
Rude ragged nurse, old sullen playfellow
For tender princes, use my babies well!
So foolish sorrow bids your stones farewell.

[Exeunt]

Scene II

London. The palace.

[Sennet. Enter KING RICHARD III, in pomp, crowned;
BUCKINGHAM, CATESBY, a page, and others]

KING RICHARD III Stand all apart Cousin of Buckingham!

BUCKINGHAM My gracious sovereign?

KING RICHARD III Give me thy hand.

[Here he ascendeth his throne]

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

BUCKINGHAM Still live they and for ever may they last!

KING RICHARD III O Buckingham, now do I play the touch,
To try if thou be current gold indeed
Young Edward lives: think now what I would say.

BUCKINGHAM Say on, my loving lord.

KING RICHARD III Why, Buckingham, I say, I would be king,

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

KING RICHARD III Ha! am I king? 'tis so: but Edward lives.

BUCKINGHAM True, noble prince.

KING RICHARD III O bitter consequence,
That Edward still should live! 'True, noble prince!'
Cousin, thou wert not wont to be so dull:
Shall I be plain? I wish the bastards dead;
And I would have it suddenly perform'd.
What sayest thou? speak suddenly; be brief.

BUCKINGHAM Your grace may do your pleasure.

KING RICHARD III Tut, tut, thou art all ice, thy kindness freezeth:
Say, have I thy consent that they shall die?

BUCKINGHAM Give me some breath, some little pause, my lord
Before I positively herein:
I will resolve your grace immediately.

[Exit]

CATESBY [Aside to a stander by]

The king is angry: see, he bites the lip.

KING RICHARD III I will converse with iron-witted fools
And unrespective boys: none are for me
That look into me with considerate eyes:
High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspect.
Boy!

Page My lord?

KING RICHARD III Know'st thou not any whom corrupting gold
Would tempt unto a close exploit of death?

Page My lord, 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.

KING RICHARD III What is his name?

Page His name, my lord, is Tyrrel.

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

[Exit Page]

The deep-revolving witty Buckingham
No more shall be the neighbour to my counsel:
Hath he so long held out with me untired,
And stops he now for breath?

[Enter STANLEY]

How now! what news with you?

STANLEY My lord, I hear the Marquis Dorset's fled
To Richmond, in those parts beyond the sea
Where he abides.

[Stands apart]

KING RICHARD III Catesby!

CATESBY My lord?

KING RICHARD III Rumour it abroad
That Anne, my wife, is sick and like to die:
I will take order for her keeping close.
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 wife is sick and like to die:
About it; for it stands me much upon,
To stop all hopes whose growth may damage me.

[Exit CATESBY]

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

[Re-enter Page, with TYRREL]

Is thy name Tyrrel?

TYRREL James Tyrrel, and your most obedient subject.

KING RICHARD III Art thou, indeed?

TYRREL Prove me, my gracious sovereign.

KING RICHARD III Darest thou resolve to kill a friend of mine?

TYRREL Ay, my lord;
But I had rather kill two enemies.

KING RICHARD III Why, there thou hast it: two deep enemies,
Foes to my rest and my sweet sleep's disturbers
Are they that I would have thee deal upon:
Tyrrel, I mean those bastards in the Tower.

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

KING RICHARD III 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 too.

TYRREL 'Tis done, my gracious lord.

KING RICHARD III Shall we hear from thee, Tyrrel, ere we sleep?

TYRREL Ye shall, my Lord.

[Exit]

[Re-enter BUCKINGHAM]

BUCKINGHAM My Lord, I have consider'd in my mind
The late demand that you did sound me in.

KING RICHARD III Well, let that pass. Dorset is fled to Richmond.

BUCKINGHAM I hear that news, my lord.

KING RICHARD III Stanley, he is your wife's son well, look to it.

BUCKINGHAM My lord, I claim your gift, my due by promise,
For which your honour and your faith is pawn'd;
The earldom of Hereford and the moveables
The which you promised I should possess.

KING RICHARD III Stanley, look to your wife; if she convey
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

BUCKINGHAM What says your highness to my just demand?

KING RICHARD III As I remember, Henry the Sixth
Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,
When Richmond was a little peevish boy.
A king, perhaps, perhaps,--

BUCKINGHAM My lord!

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

BUCKINGHAM My lord, your promise for the earldom,--

KING RICHARD III Richmond! When last I was at Exeter,
The mayor in courtesy show'd me the castle,
And call'd it Rougemont: at which name I started,
Because a bard of Ireland told me once
I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

BUCKINGHAM My Lord!

KING RICHARD III Ay, what's o'clock?

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

KING RICHARD III Well, but what's o'clock?

BUCKINGHAM Upon the stroke of ten.

KING RICHARD III Well, let it strike.

BUCKINGHAM Why let it strike?

KING RICHARD III Because that, like a Jack, thou keep'st the stroke
Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.
I am not in the giving vein to-day.

BUCKINGHAM Why, then resolve me whether you will or no.

KING RICHARD III Tut, tut,
Thou troublest me; am not in the vein.

[Exeunt all but BUCKINGHAM]

BUCKINGHAM Is it even so? rewards he my true service
With such deep contempt made I him king for this?
O, let me think on Hastings, and be gone
To Brecknock, while my fearful head is on!

[Exit]

Scene III

The same.

[Enter TYRREL]

TYRREL The tyrannous and bloody deed is done.
The most arch of piteous massacre
That ever yet this land was guilty of.
Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborn
To do this ruthless piece of butchery,
Although they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,
Melting with tenderness and kind compassion
Wept like two children in their deaths' sad stories.
'Lo, thus' quoth Dighton, 'lay those tender babes:'
'Thus, thus,' quoth Forrest, 'girdling one another
Within their innocent alabaster 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 changed my mind;
But O! the devil'--there the villain stopp'd
Whilst Dighton thus told on: 'We smothered
The most replenished sweet work of nature,
That from the prime creation e'er she framed.'
Thus both are gone with conscience and remorse;
They could not speak; and so I left them both,
To bring this tidings to the bloody king.
And here he comes.

[Enter KING RICHARD III]

All hail, my sovereign liege!

KING RICHARD III Kind Tyrrel, am I happy in thy news?

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

KING RICHARD III But didst thou see them dead?

TYRREL I did, my lord.

KING RICHARD III And buried, gentle Tyrrel?

TYRREL The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them;
But how or in what place I do not know.

KING RICHARD III Come to me, Tyrrel, soon at after supper,
And thou shalt tell the process of their death.
Meantime, but think how I may do thee good,
And be inheritor of thy desire.
Farewell till soon.

[Exit TYRREL]

The son of Clarence have I pent up close;
His daughter meanly have I match'd in marriage;

The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom,
And Anne my wife hath bid the world good night.
Now, for I know the Breton Richmond aims
At young Elizabeth, my brother's daughter,
And, by that knot, looks proudly o'er the crown,
To her I go, a jolly thriving wooer.

[Enter CATESBY]

CATESBY My lord!

KING RICHARD III Good news or bad, that thou comest in so bluntly?

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

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

[Exeunt]

Scene IV

Before the palace.

[Enter QUEEN MARGARET]

QUEEN MARGARET So, now prosperity begins to mellow
And drop into the rotten mouth of death.
Here in these confines slily have I lurk'd,
To watch the waning of mine adversaries.
A dire induction am I witness to,
And will to France, hoping the consequence
Will prove as bitter, black, and tragical.
Withdraw thee, wretched Margaret: who comes here?

[Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH and the DUCHESS OF YORK]

QUEEN ELIZABETH Ah, my young 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!

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

DUCHESS OF YORK So many miseries have crazed my voice,
That my woe-wearied tongue is mute and dumb,
Edward Plantagenet, why art thou dead?

QUEEN MARGARET Plantagenet doth quit Plantagenet.
Edward for Edward pays a dying debt.

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

QUEEN MARGARET When holy Harry died, and my sweet son.

DUCHESS OF YORK Blind sight, dead life, 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 innocents' blood!

QUEEN ELIZABETH O, that thou wouldst as well afford a grave
As thou canst yield a melancholy seat!
Then would I hide my bones, not rest them here.
O, who hath any cause to mourn but I?

[Sitting down by her]

QUEEN MARGARET If ancient sorrow be most reverend,
Give mine the benefit of seniory,
And let my woes frown on the upper hand.
If sorrow can admit society,

[Sitting down with them]

Tell o'er your woes again by viewing mine:
I had an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;
I had a Harry, till a Richard kill'd him:
Thou hadst an Edward, till a Richard kill'd him;
Thou hadst a Richard, till a Richard killed him;

DUCHESS OF YORK I had a Richard too, and thou didst kill him;
I had a Rutland too, thou help'st to kill him.

QUEEN MARGARET 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 handiwork,
That excellent grand tyrant of the earth,
That reigns in galled eyes of weeping souls,
Thy womb let loose, to chase us to our graves.
O upright, just, and true-disposing God,
How do I thank thee, that this carnal cur
Preys on the issue of his mother's body,
And makes her pew-fellow with others' moan!

DUCHESS OF YORK O Harry's wife, triumph not in my woes!
God witness with me, I have wept for thine.

QUEEN MARGARET Bear with me; I am hungry for revenge,
And now I cloy me with beholding it.

Thy Edward he is dead, that stabb'd my Edward:
Thy other Edward dead, to quit my Edward;
Young York he is but boot, because both they
Match not the high perfection of my loss:
Thy Clarence he is dead that kill'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 reserved their factor, to buy souls
And send them thither: but at hand, at hand,
Ensues his piteous and unpitied end:
Earth gapes, hell burns, fiends roar, saints pray.
To have him suddenly convey'd away.
Cancel his bond of life, dear God, I prey,
That I may live to say, The dog is dead!

QUEEN ELIZABETH O, thou didst prophesy the time would come
That I should wish for thee to help me curse
That bottled spider, that foul bunch-back'd toad!

QUEEN MARGARET I call'd thee then vain flourish of my fortune;
I call'd thee then poor shadow, painted queen;
The presentation of but what I was;
The flattering index of a direful pageant;
One heaved a-high, to be hurl'd down below;
A mother only mock'd with two sweet babes;
A dream of what thou wert, a breath, a bubble,
A sign of dignity, a garish flag,
To be the aim of every dangerous shot,
A queen in jest, only to fill the scene.
Where is thy husband now? where be thy brothers?
Where are thy children? wherein dost thou, joy?
Who sues to thee and cries 'God save the queen'?
Where be the bending peers that flatter'd thee?
Where be the thronging troops that follow'd thee?
Decline all this, and see what now thou art:
For happy wife, a most distressed widow;
For joyful mother, one that wails the name;
For queen, a very caitiff crown'd with care;
For one being sued to, one that humbly sues;
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 burthen'd yoke;
From which even here I slip my weary neck,
And leave the burthen of it all on thee.
Farewell, York's wife, and queen of sad mischance:
These English woes will make me smile in France.

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

QUEEN MARGARET Forbear to sleep the nights, and fast the days;

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.

QUEEN ELIZABETH My words are dull; O, quicken them with thine!

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

[Exit]

DUCHESS OF YORK Why should calamity be full of words?

QUEEN ELIZABETH 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 not all, yet do they ease the heart.

DUCHESS OF YORK If so, then be not tongue-tied: go with me.
And in the breath of bitter words let's smother
My damned son, which thy two sweet sons smother'd.
I hear his drum: be copious in exclams.

[Enter KING RICHARD III, marching, with drums and trumpets]

KING RICHARD III Who intercepts my expedition?

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH Hidest thou that forehead with a golden crown,
Where should be graven, if that right were right,
The slaughter of the prince that owed that crown,
And the dire death of my two sons and brothers?
Tell me, thou villain slave, where are my children?

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH Where is kind Hastings, Rivers, Vaughan, Grey?

KING RICHARD III A flourish, trumpets! strike alarum, drums!
Let not the heavens hear these tell-tale women
Rail on the Lord's enointed: strike, I say!

[Flourish. Alarums]

Either be patient, and entreat me fair,
Or with the clamorous report of war
Thus will I drown your exclamations.

DUCHESS OF YORK Art thou my son?

KING RICHARD III Ay, I thank God, my father, and yourself.

DUCHESS OF YORK Then patiently hear my impatience.

KING RICHARD III Madam, I have a touch of your condition,
Which cannot brook the accent of reproof.

DUCHESS OF YORK O, let me speak!

KING RICHARD III Do then: but I'll not hear.

DUCHESS OF YORK I will be mild and gentle in my speech.

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

DUCHESS OF YORK Art thou so hasty? I have stay'd for thee,
God knows, in anguish, pain and agony.

KING RICHARD III And came I not at last to comfort you?

DUCHESS OF YORK No, by the holy rood, thou know'st it well,
Thou camest on earth to make the earth my hell.
A grievous burthen was thy birth to me;
Tetchy and wayward was thy infancy;
Thy school-days frightful, desperate, wild, and furious,
Thy prime of manhood daring, bold, and venturous,
Thy age confirm'd, proud, subdued, bloody,
treacherous,
More mild, but yet more harmful, kind in hatred:
What comfortable hour canst thou name,
That ever graced me in thy company?

KING RICHARD III Faith, none, but Humphrey Hour, 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 your grace.
Strike the drum.

DUCHESS OF YORK I prithee, hear me speak.

KING RICHARD III You speak too bitterly.

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

KING RICHARD III So.

DUCHESS OF YORK 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, tire thee more
Than all the complete armour that thou wear'st!
My prayers on the adverse party fight;
And there the little souls of Edward's children
Whisper the spirits of thine enemies
And promise them success and victory.
Bloody thou art, bloody will be thy end;
Shame serves thy life and doth thy death attend.

[Exit]

QUEEN ELIZABETH Though far more cause, yet much less spirit to curse
Abides in me; I say amen to all.

KING RICHARD III Stay, madam; I must speak a word with you.

QUEEN ELIZABETH 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.

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH And must she die for this? O, let her live,
And I'll corrupt her manners, stain her beauty;
Slander myself as false to Edward's bed;
Throw over her the veil of infamy:
So she may live unscarr'd of bleeding slaughter,
I will confess she was not Edward's daughter.

KING RICHARD III Wrong not her birth, she is of royal blood.

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

KING RICHARD III Her life is only safest in her birth.

QUEEN ELIZABETH And only in that safety died her brothers.

KING RICHARD III Lo, at their births good stars were opposite.

QUEEN ELIZABETH No, to their lives bad friends were contrary.

KING RICHARD III All unavoided is the doom of destiny.

QUEEN ELIZABETH True, when avoided grace makes destiny:
My babes were destined to a fairer death,
If grace had bless'd thee with a fairer life.

KING RICHARD III You speak as if that I had slain my cousins.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Cousins, indeed; and by their uncle cozen'd
Of comfort, kingdom, kindred, freedom, life.
Whose hand soever lanced their tender hearts,
Thy head, all indirectly, gave direction:
No doubt the murderous knife was dull and blunt
Till it was whetted on thy stone-hard heart,
To revel in the entrails of my lambs.
But that still use of grief makes wild grief tame,
My tongue should to thy ears not name my boys
Till that my nails were anchor'd in thine eyes;
And I, in such a desperate bay of death,
Like a poor bark, of sails and tackling reft,
Rush all to pieces on thy rocky bosom.

KING RICHARD III Madam, so thrive I in my enterprise
And dangerous success of bloody wars,
As I intend more good to you and yours,
Than ever you or yours were by me wrong'd!

QUEEN ELIZABETH What good is cover'd with the face of heaven,

To be discover'd, that can do me good?

KING RICHARD III The advancement of your children, gentle lady.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Up to some scaffold, there to lose their heads?

KING RICHARD III No, to the dignity and height of honour
The high imperial type of this earth's glory.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Flatter my sorrows with report of it;
Tell me what state, what dignity, what honour,
Canst thou demise to any child of mine?

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH Be brief, lest that be process of thy kindness
Last longer telling than thy kindness' date.

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH My daughter's mother thinks it with her soul.

KING RICHARD III What do you think?

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

KING RICHARD III Be not so hasty to confound my meaning:
I mean, that with my soul I love thy daughter,
And mean to make her queen of England.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Say then, who dost thou mean shall be her king?

KING RICHARD III Even he that makes her queen who should be else?

QUEEN ELIZABETH What, thou?

KING RICHARD III I, even I: what think you of it, madam?

QUEEN ELIZABETH How canst thou woo her?

KING RICHARD III That would I learn of you,
As one that are best acquainted with her humour.

QUEEN ELIZABETH And wilt thou learn of me?

KING RICHARD III Madam, with all my heart.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Send to her, by the man that slew her brothers,
A pair of bleeding-hearts; thereon engrave
Edward and York; then haply she will weep:
Therefore present to her--as sometime Margaret
Did to thy father, steep'd in Rutland's blood,--
A handkerchief; which, say to her, did drain
The purple sap from her sweet brother's body

And bid her dry her weeping eyes therewith.
If this inducement force her not to love,
Send her a story of thy noble acts;
Tell her thou madest away her uncle Clarence,
Her uncle Rivers; yea, and, for her sake,
Madest quick conveyance with her good aunt Anne.

KING RICHARD III Come, come, you mock me; this is not the way
To win our daughter.

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

KING RICHARD III Say that I did all this for love of her.

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

KING RICHARD III 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, Ill give it to your daughter.
If I have kill'd the issue of your womb,
To quicken your increase, I will beget
Mine issue of your blood upon your daughter
A grandam's name is little less in love
Than is the doting title of a mother;
They are as children but one step below,
Even of your mettle, of your very blood;
Of an one pain, save for a night of groans
Endured of her, for whom you bid like sorrow.
Your children were vexation to your youth,
But mine shall be a comfort to your age.
The loss you have is but a son being king,
And by that loss your daughter is made queen.
I cannot make you what amends I would,
Therefore accept such kindness as I can.
Dorset your son, that with a fearful soul
Leads discontented steps in foreign soil,
This fair alliance quickly shall call home
To high promotions and great dignity:
The king, that calls your beauteous daughter wife.
Familiarly shall call thy Dorset brother;
Again shall you be mother to a king,
And all the ruins of distressful times
Repair'd with double riches of content.
What! we have many goodly days to see:
The liquid drops of tears that you have shed
Shall come again, transform'd to orient pearl,
Advantaging their loan with interest
Of ten times double gain of happiness.
Go, then my mother, to thy daughter go
Make bold her bashful years with your experience;
Prepare her ears to hear a wooer's tale
Put in her tender heart the aspiring flame
Of golden sovereignty; acquaint the princess
With the sweet silent hours of marriage joys
And when this arm of mine hath chastised

The petty rebel, dull-brain'd Buckingham,
Bound with triumphant garlands will I come
And lead thy daughter to a conqueror's bed;
To whom I will retail my conquest won,
And she shall be sole victress, Caesar's Caesar.

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

KING RICHARD III Infer fair England's peace by this alliance.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Which she shall purchase with still lasting war.

KING RICHARD III Say that the king, which may command, entreats.

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

KING RICHARD III Say, she shall be a high and mighty queen.

QUEEN ELIZABETH To wail the tide, as her mother doth.

KING RICHARD III Say, I will love her everlastingly.

QUEEN ELIZABETH But how long shall that title 'ever' last?

KING RICHARD III Sweetly in force unto her fair life's end.

QUEEN ELIZABETH But how long fairly shall her sweet lie last?

KING RICHARD III So long as heaven and nature lengthens it.

QUEEN ELIZABETH So long as hell and Richard likes of it.

KING RICHARD III Say, I, her sovereign, am her subject love.

QUEEN ELIZABETH But she, your subject, loathes such sovereignty.

KING RICHARD III Be eloquent in my behalf to her.

QUEEN ELIZABETH An honest tale speeds best being plainly told.

KING RICHARD III Then in plain terms tell her my loving tale.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Plain and not honest is too harsh a style.

KING RICHARD III Your reasons are too shallow and too quick.

QUEEN ELIZABETH O no, my reasons are too deep and dead;
Too deep and dead, poor infants, in their grave.

KING RICHARD III Harp not on that string, madam; that is past.

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

KING RICHARD III Now, by my George, my garter, and my crown,--

QUEEN ELIZABETH Profaned, dishonour'd, and the third usurp'd.

KING RICHARD III I swear--

QUEEN ELIZABETH By nothing; for this is no oath:
The George, profaned, hath lost his holy honour;
The garter, blemish'd, pawn'd his knightly virtue;
The crown, usurp'd, disgraced his kingly glory.
if something thou wilt swear to be believed,
Swear then by something that thou hast not wrong'd.

KING RICHARD III Now, by the world--

QUEEN ELIZABETH 'Tis full of thy foul wrongs.

KING RICHARD III My father's death--

QUEEN ELIZABETH Thy life hath that dishonour'd.

KING RICHARD III Then, by myself--

QUEEN ELIZABETH Thyself thyself misusest.

KING RICHARD III Why then, by God--

QUEEN ELIZABETH God's wrong is most of all.
If thou hadst 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 hadst fear'd to break an oath by Him,
The imperial metal, circling now thy brow,
Had graced the tender temples of my child,
And both the princes had been breathing here,
Which now, two tender playfellows to dust,
Thy broken faith hath made a prey for worms.
What canst thou swear by now?

KING RICHARD III The time to come.

QUEEN ELIZABETH 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 wither'd plants, to wail it with their age.
Swear not by time to come; for that thou hast
Misused ere used, by time misused o'erpast.

KING RICHARD III 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 proceedings, 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 this land and me,
To thee, herself, 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, good mother,--I must can you so--
Be the attorney of my love to her:
Plead what I will be, not what I have been;
Not my deserts, but what I will deserve:
Urge the necessity and state of times,
And be not peevish-fond in great designs.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Shall I be tempted of the devil thus?

KING RICHARD III Ay, if the devil tempt thee to do good.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Shall I forget myself to be myself?

KING RICHARD III Ay, if yourself's remembrance wrong yourself.

QUEEN ELIZABETH But thou didst kill my children.

KING RICHARD III But in your daughter's womb I bury them:
Where in that nest of spicery they shall breed
Selves of themselves, to your recomforture.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Shall I go win my daughter to thy will?

KING RICHARD III And be a happy mother by the deed.

QUEEN ELIZABETH I go. Write to me very shortly.
And you shall understand from me her mind.

KING RICHARD III Bear her my true love's kiss; and so, farewell.

[Exit QUEEN ELIZABETH]

Relenting fool, and shallow, changing woman!

[Enter RATCLIFF; CATESBY following]

How now! what news?

RATCLIFF My gracious sovereign, on the western coast
Rideth a puissant navy; to the shore
Throng many doubtful hollow-hearted friends,
Unarm'd, and unresolved to beat them back:
'Tis thought that Richmond is their admiral;
And there they hull, expecting but the aid
Of Buckingham to welcome them ashore.

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

CATESBY Here, my lord.

KING RICHARD III Fly to the duke:

[To RATCLIFF]

Post thou to Salisbury
When thou comest thither--

[To CATESBY]

Dull, unmindful villain,
Why stand'st thou still, and go'st not to the duke?

CATESBY First, mighty sovereign, let me know your mind,
What from your grace I shall deliver to him.

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

CATESBY I go.

[Exit]

RATCLIFF What is't your highness' pleasure I shall do at
Salisbury?

KING RICHARD III Why, what wouldst thou do there before I go?

RATCLIFF Your highness told me I should post before.

KING RICHARD III My mind is changed, sir, my mind is changed.

[Enter STANLEY]

How now, what news with you?

STANLEY None good, my lord, to please you with the hearing;
Nor none so bad, but it may well be told.

KING RICHARD III Hoyday, a riddle! neither good nor bad!
Why dost thou run so many mile about,
When thou mayst tell thy tale a nearer way?
Once more, what news?

STANLEY Richmond is on the seas.

KING RICHARD III There let him sink, and be the seas on him!
White-liver'd runagate, what doth he there?

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

KING RICHARD III Well, sir, as you guess, as you guess?

STANLEY Stirr'd up by Dorset, Buckingham, and Ely,
He makes for England, there to claim the crown.

KING RICHARD III Is the chair empty? is the sword unsway'd?
Is the king dead? the empire unpossess'd?
What heir of York is there alive but we?
And who is England's king but great York's heir?
Then, tell me, what doth he upon the sea?

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

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

STANLEY No, mighty liege; therefore mistrust me not.

KING RICHARD III Where is thy power, then, to beat him back?
Where are thy tenants and thy followers?
Are they not now upon the western shore.
Safe-conducting the rebels from their ships!

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

KING RICHARD III Cold friends to Richard: what do they in the north,
When they should serve their sovereign in the west?

STANLEY They have not been commanded, mighty sovereign:
Please it your majesty to give me leave,
I'll muster up my friends, and meet your grace
Where and what time your majesty shall please.

KING RICHARD III Ay, ay. thou wouldst be gone to join with Richmond:
I will not trust you, sir.

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

KING RICHARD III Well,
Go muster men; but, hear you, leave behind
Your son, George Stanley: look your faith be firm.
Or else his head's assurance is but frail.

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

[Exit]

[Enter a Messenger]

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

[Enter another Messenger]

Second Messenger My liege, in Kent the Guildfords are in arms;
And every hour more competitors
Flock to their aid, and still their power increaseth.

[Enter another Messenger]

Third Messenger My lord, the army of the Duke of Buckingham--

KING RICHARD III Out on you, owls! nothing but songs of death?

[He striketh him]

Take that, until thou bring me better news.

Third Messenger The news I have to tell your majesty
Is, that by sudden floods and fall of waters,
Buckingham's army is dispersed and scatter'd;
And he himself wander'd away alone,
No man knows whither.

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

Third Messenger Such proclamation hath been made, my liege.

[Enter another Messenger]

Fourth Messenger Sir Thomas Lovel and Lord Marquis Dorset,
'Tis said, my liege, in Yorkshire are in arms.
Yet this good comfort bring I to your grace,
The Breton navy is dispersed by tempest:
Richmond, in Yorkshire, 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,
Hoisted sail and made away for Brittany.

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

[Re-enter CATESBY]

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

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

[Flourish. Exeunt]

Scene V

Lord Derby's house.

[Enter DERBY and SIR CHRISTOPHER URSWICK]

DERBY 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?

CHRISTOPHER At Pembroke, or at Harford-west, in Wales.

DERBY What men of name resort to him?

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

DERBY Return unto 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.

[Exeunt]

Act V

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Scene I

Salisbury. An open place.

[Enter the Sheriff, and BUCKINGHAM, with halberds,
led to execution]

BUCKINGHAM Will not King Richard let me speak with him?

Sheriff No, my good lord; therefore be patient.

BUCKINGHAM 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?

Sheriff It is, my lord.

BUCKINGHAM Why, then All-Souls' day is my body's doomsday.
This is the day that, in King Edward's time,
I wish't 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 I trusted most;
This, this All-Souls' day to my fearful soul
Is the determined respite of my wrongs:
That high All-Seer that I dallied with
Hath turn'd my feigned prayer on my head
And given in earnest what I begg'd in jest.
Thus doth he force the swords of wicked men
To turn their own points on their masters' bosoms:
Now Margaret's curse is fallen upon my head;
'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]

Scene II

The camp near Tamworth.

[Enter RICHMOND, OXFORD, BLUNT, HERBERT, and others,
with drum and colours]

RICHMOND Fellows in arms, and my most loving friends,
Bruised underneath the yoke of tyranny,
Thus far into the bowels of the land
Have we 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 even in the centre of this isle,
Near to the town of Leicester, as we learn
From Tamworth thither is but one day's march.
In God's name, cheerly on, courageous friends,
To reap the harvest of perpetual peace
By this one bloody trial of sharp war.

OXFORD Every man's conscience is a thousand swords,
To fight against that bloody homicide.

HERBERT I doubt not but his friends will fly to us.

BLUNT He hath no friends but who are friends for fear.
Which in his greatest need will shrink from him.

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

[Exeunt]

Scene III

Bosworth Field.

[Enter KING RICHARD III in arms, with NORFOLK,
SURREY, and others]

KING RICHARD III Here pitch our tents, even here in Bosworth field.
My Lord of Surrey, why look you so sad?

SURREY My heart is ten times lighter than my looks.

KING RICHARD III My Lord of Norfolk,--

NORFOLK Here, most gracious liege.

KING RICHARD III Norfolk, we must have knocks; ha! must we not?

NORFOLK We must both give and take, my gracious lord.

KING RICHARD III Up with my tent there! here will I lie tonight;
But where to-morrow? Well, all's one for that.
Who hath descried the number of the foe?

NORFOLK Six or seven thousand is their utmost power.

KING RICHARD III Why, our battalion trebles that account:
Besides, the king's name is a tower of strength,
Which they upon the adverse party want.
Up with my tent there! Valiant gentlemen,
Let us survey the vantage of the field
Call for some men of sound direction
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 others. Some of
the Soldiers pitch RICHMOND's tent]

RICHMOND The weary sun hath made a golden set,
And by the bright track of his fiery car,
Gives signal, of a goodly day to-morrow.
Sir William Brandon, you shall bear my standard.
Give me some ink and paper in my tent
I'll draw the form and model of our battle,
Limit each leader to his several charge,
And part in just proportion our small strength.
My Lord of Oxford, you, Sir William Brandon,
And you, Sir Walter Herbert, stay with me.
The Earl of Pembroke keeps his regiment:
Good Captain Blunt, bear my good night to him
And by the second hour in the morning
Desire the earl to see me in my tent:
Yet one thing more, good Blunt, before thou go'st,
Where is Lord Stanley quarter'd, dost thou know?

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

RICHMOND If without peril it be possible,
Good Captain Blunt, bear my good-night to him,
And give him from me this most needful scroll.

BLUNT Upon my life, my lord, I'll under-take it;
And so, God give you quiet rest to-night!

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

[They withdraw into the tent]

[Enter, to his tent, KING RICHARD III, NORFOLK,
RATCLIFF, CATESBY, and others]

KING RICHARD III What is't o'clock?

CATESBY It's supper-time, my lord;
It's nine o'clock.

KING RICHARD III 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?

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

KING RICHARD III Good Norfolk, hie thee to thy charge;
Use careful watch, choose trusty sentinels.

NORFOLK I go, my lord.

KING RICHARD III Stir with the lark to-morrow, gentle Norfolk.

NORFOLK I warrant you, my lord.

[Exit]

KING RICHARD III Catesby!

CATESBY My lord?

KING RICHARD III Send out a pursuivant at arms
To Stanley's regiment; bid him bring his power
Before sunrising, lest his son George fall
Into the blind cave of eternal night.

[Exit CATESBY]

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

RATCLIFF My lord?

KING RICHARD III Saw'st thou the melancholy Lord Northumberland?

RATCLIFF Thomas the Earl of Surrey, and himself,
Much about cock-shut time, from troop to troop
Went through the army, cheering up the soldiers.

KING RICHARD III So, I am satisfied. Give me a bowl of wine:
I have not that alacrity of spirit,
Nor cheer of mind, that I was wont to have.
Set it down. Is ink and paper ready?

RATCLIFF It is, my lord.

KING RICHARD III Bid my guard watch; leave me.
Ratcliff, about the mid of night come to my tent
And help to arm me. Leave me, I say.

[Exeunt RATCLIFF and the other Attendants]

[Enter DERBY to RICHMOND in his tent, Lords and others attending]

DERBY Fortune and victory sit on thy helm!

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

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

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

[Exeunt all but RICHMOND]

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

[Sleeps]

[Enter the Ghost of Prince Edward, son to King Henry VI]

Ghost
of Prince Edward [To KING RICHARD III]

Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow!
Think, how thou stab'dst me in my prime of youth
At Tewksbury: despair, therefore, and die!

[To RICHMOND]

Be cheerful, Richmond; for the wronged souls
Of butcher'd princes fight in thy behalf
King Henry's issue, Richmond, comforts thee.

[Enter the Ghost of King Henry VI]

Ghost
of King Henry VI [To KING RICHARD III]

When I was mortal, my anointed body
By thee was punched full of deadly holes
Think on the Tower and me: despair, and die!
Harry the Sixth bids thee despair, and die!

[To RICHMOND]

Virtuous and holy, be thou conqueror!
Harry, that prophesied thou shouldst be king,
Doth comfort thee in thy sleep: live, and flourish!

[Enter the Ghost of CLARENCE]

Ghost of CLARENCE [To KING RICHARD III]

Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow!
I, that was wash'd to death with fulsome wine,
Poor Clarence, by thy guile betrayed to death!
To-morrow in the battle think on me,
And fall thy edgeless sword: despair, and die!--

[To RICHMOND]

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

[Enter the Ghosts of RIVERS, GRAY, and VAUGHAN]

Ghost of RIVERS [To KING RICHARD III]

Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow,
Rivers. that died at Pomfret! despair, and die!

Ghost of GREY [To KING RICHARD III]

Think upon Grey, and let thy soul despair!

Ghost of VAUGHAN [To KING RICHARD III]

Think upon Vaughan, and, with guilty fear,
Let fall thy lance: despair, and die!

All [To RICHMOND]

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

[Enter the Ghost of HASTINGS]

Ghost of HASTINGS [To KING RICHARD III]

Bloody and guilty, guiltily awake,
And in a bloody battle end thy days!
Think on Lord Hastings: despair, and die!

[To RICHMOND]

Quiet untroubled soul, awake, awake!
Arm, fight, and conquer, for fair England's sake!

[Enter the Ghosts of the two young Princes]

Ghosts
of young Princes [To KING RICHARD III]

Dream on thy cousins smother'd in the Tower:
Let us be led within thy bosom, Richard,
And weigh thee down to ruin, shame, and death!
Thy nephews' souls bid thee despair and die!

[To RICHMOND]

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

[Enter the Ghost of LADY ANNE]

Ghost of LADY ANNE [To KING RICHARD III]

Richard, thy wife, that wretched Anne thy wife,
That never slept a quiet hour with thee,
Now fills thy sleep with perturbations
To-morrow in the battle think on me,
And fall thy edgeless sword: despair, and die!

[To RICHMOND]

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

[Enter the Ghost of BUCKINGHAM]

Ghost
of BUCKINGHAM [To KING RICHARD III]

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

[To RICHMOND]

I died for hope ere I could lend thee aid:

But cheer thy heart, and be thou not dismay'd:
God and good angel fight on Richmond's side;
And Richard falls in height of all his pride.

[The Ghosts vanish]

[KING RICHARD III starts out of his dream]

KING RICHARD III Give me another horse: bind up my wounds.
Have mercy, Jesu!--Soft! I did but dream.
O coward conscience, how dost thou afflict me!
The lights burn blue. It is now dead midnight.
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh.
What do I fear? myself? there's none else by:
Richard loves Richard; that is, I am I.
Is there a murderer here? No. Yes, I am:
Then fly. What, from myself? Great reason why:
Lest I revenge. What, myself upon myself?
Alack. I love myself. Wherefore? for any good
That I myself have done unto myself?
O, no! alas, I rather hate myself
For hateful deeds committed by myself!
I am a villain: yet I lie. I am not.
Fool, of thyself speak well: fool, do not flatter.
My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree
Murder, stem murder, in the direst degree;
All several sins, all used in each degree,
Throng to the bar, crying all, Guilty! guilty!
I shall despair. There is no creature loves me;
And if I die, no soul shall 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]

RATCLIFF My lord!

KING RICHARD III 'Zounds! who is there?

RATCLIFF 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.

KING RICHARD III O Ratcliff, I have dream'd a fearful dream!
What thinkest thou, will our friends prove all true?

RATCLIFF No doubt, my lord.

KING RICHARD III O Ratcliff, I fear, I fear,--

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

KING RICHARD III 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 see if any mean to shrink from me.

[Exeunt]

[Enter the Lords to RICHMOND, sitting in his tent]

LORDS Good morrow, Richmond!

RICHMOND Cry mercy, lords and watchful gentlemen,
That you have ta'en a tardy sluggard here.

LORDS How have you slept, my lord?

RICHMOND 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 murder'd,
Came to my tent, and cried on victory:
I promise you, my soul is very jocund
In the remembrance of so fair a dream.
How far into the morning is it, lords?

LORDS Upon the stroke of four.

RICHMOND Why, then 'tis time to arm and give direction.

[His oration to his soldiers]

More than I have said, loving countrymen,
The leisure and enforcement of the time
Forbids to dwell upon: yet remember this,
God and our good cause fight upon our side;
The prayers of holy saints and wronged souls,
Like high-rear'd bulwarks, stand before our faces;
Richard except, those whom we fight against
Had rather have us win than him they follow:
For what is he they follow? truly, gentlemen,
A bloody tyrant and a homicide;
One raised 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;
Abase foul stone, made precious by the foil
Of England's chair, where he is falsely set;
One that hath ever been God's enemy:
Then, if you fight against God's enemy,
God will in justice ward you as his soldiers;
If you do sweat to put a tyrant down,
You sleep in peace, the tyrant being slain;
If you do fight against your country's foes,
Your country's fat shall pay your pains the hire;
If you do fight in safeguard of your wives,
Your wives shall welcome home the conquerors;
If you do free your children from the sword,
Your children's children quit it in your age.
Then, in the name of God and all these rights,
Advance your standards, draw your willing swords.

For me, the ransom of my bold attempt
Shall be this cold 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! Richmond and victory!

[Exeunt]

[Re-enter KING RICHARD, RATCLIFF, Attendants
and Forces]

KING RICHARD III What said Northumberland as touching Richmond?

RATCLIFF That he was never trained up in arms.

KING RICHARD III He said the truth: and what said Surrey then?

RATCLIFF He smiled and said 'The better for our purpose.'

KING RICHARD III He was in the right; and so indeed it is.

[Clock striketh]

Ten the clock there. Give me a calendar.
Who saw the sun to-day?

RATCLIFF Not I, my lord.

KING RICHARD III Then he disdains to shine; for by the book
He should have braved the east an hour ago
A black day will it be to somebody. Ratcliff!

RATCLIFF My lord?

KING RICHARD III 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 selfsame heaven
That frowns on me looks sadly upon him.

[Enter NORFOLK]

NORFOLK Arm, arm, my lord; the foe vaunts in the field.

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

NORFOLK A good direction, warlike sovereign.
This found I on my tent this morning.

[He sheweth him a paper]

KING RICHARD III [Reads]

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

[His oration to his Army]

What shall I say more than I have inferr'd?
Remember whom you are to cope withal;
A sort of vagabonds, rascals, and runaways,
A scum of Bretons, and base lackey peasants,
Whom their o'er-cloyed country vomits forth
To desperate ventures and assured destruction.
You sleeping safe, they bring to you unrest;
You having lands, and blest 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 overweening rags of France,
These famish'd beggars, weary of their lives;
Who, but for dreaming on this fond exploit,
For want of means, poor rats, had hang'd themselves:
If we be conquer'd, let men conquer us,
And not these bastard Bretons; whom our fathers
Have in their own land beaten, bobb'd, and thump'd,
And in record, left them the heirs of shame.
Shall these enjoy our lands? lie with our wives?
Ravish our daughters?

[Drum afar off]

Hark! I hear their drum.
Fight, gentlemen of England! fight, bold yoemen!
Draw, archers, draw your arrows to the head!
Spur your proud horses hard, and ride in blood;
Amaze the welkin with your broken staves!

[Enter a Messenger]

What says Lord Stanley? will he bring his power?

Messenger My lord, he doth deny to come.

KING RICHARD III Off with his son George's head!

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

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

[Exeunt]

Scene IV

Another part of the field.

[Alarum: excursions. Enter NORFOLK and forces
fighting; to him CATESBY]

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

[Alarums. Enter KING RICHARD III]

KING RICHARD III A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

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

KING RICHARD III 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]

Scene V

Another part of the field.

[Alarum. Enter KING RICHARD III and RICHMOND; they
fight. KING RICHARD III is slain. Retreat and
flourish. Re-enter RICHMOND, DERBY bearing the
crown, with divers other Lords]

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

DERBY 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.

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

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

RICHMOND What men of name are slain on either side?

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

RICHMOND Inter their bodies as becomes their births:
Proclaim a pardon to the soldiers fled
That in submission will return to us:
And then, as we have ta'en the sacrament,
We will unite the white rose and the red:
Smile heaven upon this fair conjunction,
That long have 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-faced peace,
With smiling plenty and fair prosperous days!
Abate the edge of traitors, gracious Lord,
That would reduce these bloody days again,
And make poor England weep in streams of blood!
Let them not live to taste this land's increase
That would with treason wound this fair land's peace!
Now civil wounds are stopp'd, peace lives again:
That she may long live here, God say amen!

[Exeunt]