

CLARENCE My brother's love, the devil, and my rage.
 FIRST MURDERER Thy brother's love, our duty, and thy fault,
 Provoke us hither now to slaughter thee.
 CLARENCE Oh, if you love my brother, hate not me;
 I am his brother, and I love him well.
 If you be hired for meed, go back again,
 And I will send you to my brother Gloucester,
 Who shall reward you better for my life
 Than Edward will for tidings of my death.
 SECOND MURDERER You are deceived, your brother Gloucester hates you.
 CLARENCE O, no, he loves me, and he holds me dear:
 Go you to him from me.
 BOTH Ay, so we will.
 CLARENCE Tell him, when that our princely father York
 Bless'd his three sons with his victorious arm,
 And charged us from his soul to love each other,
 He little thought of this divided friendship:
 Bid Gloucester think of this, and he will weep.
 FIRST MURDERER Ay, millstones; as be lesson'd us to weep.
 CLARENCE O, do not slander him, for he is kind.
 FIRST MURDERER Right,
 As snow in harvest. Thou deceivest thyself:
 'Tis he that sent us hither now to slaughter thee.
 CLARENCE It cannot be; for when I parted with him,
 He hugg'd me in his arms, and swore, with sobs,
 That he would labour my delivery.
 SECOND MURDERER Why, so he doth, now he delivers thee
 From this world's thralldom to the joys of heaven.
 FIRST MURDERER Make peace with God, for you must die, my lord.
 CLARENCE Hast thou that holy feeling in thy soul,
 To counsel me to make my peace with God,
 And art thou yet to thy own soul so blind,
 That thou wilt war with God by murdering me?
 Ah, sirs, consider, he that set you on
 To do this deed will hate you for the deed.
 SECOND MURDERER What shall we do?
 CLARENCE Relent, and save your souls.
 FIRST MURDERER Relent! 'tis cowardly and

womanish.
 CLARENCE Not to relent is beastly, savage, devilish.
 Which of you, if you were a prince's son,
 Being pent from liberty, as I am now,
 if two such murderers as yourselves came to you,
 Would not entreat for life?
 My friend, I spy some pity in thy looks:
 O, if thine eye be not a flatterer,
 Come thou on my side, and entreat for me,
 As you would beg, were you in my distress
 A begging prince what beggar pities not?
 SECOND MURDERER Look behind you, my lord.
 FIRST MURDERER Take that, and that: if all this will not do,
 [Stabs him]
 I'll drown you in the malmsey-butt within.
 [Exit, with the body]
 SECOND MURDERER A bloody deed, and desperately dispatch'd!
 How fain, like Pilate, would I wash my hands
 Of this most grievous guilty murder done!
 [Re-enter FIRST MURDERER]
 FIRST MURDERER How now! what mean'st thou, that thou help'st me not?
 By heavens, the duke shall know how slack thou art!
 SECOND MURDERER I would he knew that I had saved his brother!
 Take thou the fee, and tell him what I say;
 For I repent me that the duke is slain.
 [Exit]
 FIRST MURDERER So do not I: go, coward as thou art.
 Now must I hide his body in some hole,
 Until the duke take order for his burial:
 And when I have my meed, I must away;
 For this will out, and here I must not stay.

ACT II SCENE I London. The palace.

[Flourish. Enter KING EDWARD IV sick, QUEEN ELIZABETH, DORSET, RIVERS, HASTINGS, BUCKINGHAM, GREY, and others]
 KING EDWARD IV Why, so: now have I done a good day's work:
 You peers, continue this united league:
 I every day expect an embassy
 From my Redeemer to redeem me hence;
 And now in peace my soul shall part to heaven,
 Since I have set my friends at peace on earth.

Rivers and Hastings, take each other's hand;
Dissemble not your hatred, swear your love.

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

HASTINGS So thrive I, as I truly swear the like!

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

HASTINGS So prosper I, as I swear perfect
love!

RIVERS And I, as I love Hastings with my
heart!

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

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

KING EDWARD IV Dorset, embrace him;
Hastings, love lord marquess.

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

HASTINGS And so swear I, my lord
[They embrace]

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

BUCKINGHAM Whenever Buckingham doth turn his
hate
On you or yours,
[To the Queen]
but with all duteous love
Doth cherish you and yours, God punish me
With hate in those where I expect most love!
When I have most need to employ a friend,
And most assured that he is a friend
Deep, hollow, treacherous, and full of guile,
Be he unto me! this do I beg of God,
When I am cold in zeal to yours.

KING EDWARD IV A pleasing cordial, princely
Buckingham,
is this thy vow unto my sickly heart.
There wanteth now our brother Gloucester here,

To make the perfect period of this peace.

BUCKINGHAM And, in good time, here comes the
noble duke.
[Enter Gloucester]

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

KING EDWARD IV Happy, indeed, as we have
spent the day.
Brother, we done deeds of charity;
Made peace enmity, fair love of hate,
Between these swelling wrong-incensed peers.

GLOUCESTER A blessed labour, my most
sovereign liege:
Amongst this princely heap, if any here,
By false intelligence, or wrong surmise,
Hold me a foe;
If I unwittingly, or in my rage,
Have aught committed that is hardly borne
By any in this presence, I desire
To reconcile me to his friendly peace:
'Tis death to me to be at enmity;
I hate it, and desire all good men's love.
First, madam, I entreat true peace of you,
Which I will purchase with my duteous service;
Of you, my noble cousin Buckingham,
If ever any grudge were lodged between us;
Of you, Lord Rivers, and, Lord Grey, of you;
That without desert have frown'd on me;
Dukes, earls, lords, gentlemen; indeed, of all.
I do not know that Englishman alive
With whom my soul is any jot at odds
More than the infant that is born to-night
I thank my God for my humility.

QUEEN ELIZABETH A holy day shall this be
kept hereafter:
I would to God all strifes were well compounded.
My sovereign liege, I do beseech your majesty
To take our brother Clarence to your grace.

GLOUCESTER Why, madam, have I offer'd love
for this
To be so bouted in this royal presence?
Who knows not that the noble duke is dead?
[They all start]
You do him injury to scorn his corpse.

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

QUEEN ELIZABETH All seeing heaven, what a
world is this!

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

DORSET Ay, my good lord; and no one in this presence
 But his red colour hath forsook his cheeks.

KING EDWARD IV Is Clarence dead? the order was reversed.

GLOUCESTER But he, poor soul, by your first order died,
 And that a winged Mercury did bear:
 Some tardy cripple bore the countermand,
 That came too lag to see him buried.
 God grant that some, less noble and less loyal,
 Nearer in bloody thoughts, but not in blood,
 Deserve not worse than wretched Clarence did,
 And yet go current from suspicion!
 [Enter **DERBY**]

DORSET A boon, my sovereign, for my service done!

KING EDWARD IV I pray thee, peace: my soul is full of sorrow.

DORSET I will not rise, unless your highness grant.

KING EDWARD IV Then speak at once what is it thou demand'st.

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

KING EDWARD IV Have a tongue to doom my brother's death,
 And shall the same give pardon to a slave?
 My brother slew no man; his fault was thought,
 And yet his punishment was cruel death.
 Who sued to me for him? who, in my rage,
 Kneel'd at my feet, and bade me be advised
 Who spake of brotherhood? who spake of love?
 Who told me how the poor soul did forsake
 The mighty Warwick, and did fight for me?
 Who told me, in the field by Tewksbury
 When Oxford had me down, he rescued me,
 And said, 'Dear brother, live, and be a king'?
 Who told me, when we both lay in the field
 Frozen almost to death, how he did lap me
 Even in his own garments, and gave himself,
 All thin and naked, to the numb cold night?
 All this from my remembrance brutish wrath
 Sinfully pluck'd, and not a man of you
 Had so much grace to put it in my mind.
 But when your carters or your waiting-vassals
 Have done a drunken slaughter, and defaced
 The precious image of our dear Redeemer,
 You straight are on your knees for pardon, pardon;

And I unjustly too, must grant it you
 But for my brother not a man would speak,
 Nor I, ungracious, speak unto myself
 For him, poor soul. The proudest of you all
 Have been beholding to him in his life;
 Yet none of you would once plead for his life.
 O God, I fear thy justice will take hold
 On me, and you, and mine, and yours for this!
 Come, Hastings, help me to my closet.
 Oh, poor Clarence!

[Exeunt some with **KING EDWARD IV** and **QUEEN MARGARET**]

GLOUCESTER This is the fruit of rashness! Mark'd you not

How that the guilty kindred of the queen
 Look'd pale when they did hear of Clarence' death?
 O, they did urge it still unto the king!
 God will revenge it. But come, let us in,
 To comfort Edward with our company.

BUCKINGHAM We wait upon your grace.
 [Exeunt]

ACT II SCENE II The palace.

[Enter the **DUCHESS OF YORK**, with the two children of **CLARENCE**]

BOY Tell me, good grandam, is our father dead?

DUCHESS OF YORK No, boy.

BOY Why do you wring your hands, and beat your breast,

And cry 'O Clarence, my unhappy son!'

GIRL Why do you look on us, and shake your head,

And call us wretches, orphans, castaways
 If that our noble father be alive?

DUCHESS OF YORK My pretty cousins, you mistake me much;

I do lament the sickness of the king.

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

BOY Then, grandam, you conclude that he is dead.

The king my uncle is to blame for this:

God will revenge it; whom I will importune
 With daily prayers all to that effect.

GIRL And so will I.

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

Incapable and shallow innocents,

You cannot guess who caused your father's death.

BOY Grandam, we can; for my good
uncle Gloucester
Told me, the king, provoked by the queen,
Devised impeachments to imprison him :
And when my uncle told me so, he wept,
And hugg'd me in his arm, and kindly kiss'd my
cheek;
Bade me rely on him as on my father,
And he would love me dearly as his child.

DUCHESS OF YORK Oh, that deceit should steal
such gentle shapes,
And with a virtuous vizard hide foul guile!
He is my son; yea, and therein my shame;
Yet from my dugs he drew not this deceit.

BOY Think you my uncle did dissemble,
grandam?

DUCHESS OF YORK Ay, boy.

BOY I cannot think it. Hark! what noise
is this?
[Enter **QUEEN ELIZABETH**, with her hair about her
ears; **RIVERS**, and **DORSET** after her]

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

DUCHESS OF YORK What means this scene of
rude impatience?

QUEEN ELIZABETH To make an act of tragic
violence:
Edward, my lord, your son, our king, is dead.
Why grow the branches now the root is wither'd?
Why wither not the leaves the sap being gone?
If you will live, lament; if die, be brief,
That our swift-winged souls may catch the king's;
Or, like obedient subjects, follow him
To his new kingdom of perpetual rest.

DUCHESS OF YORK Ah, so much interest have I
in thy sorrow
As I had title in thy noble husband!
I have bewept a worthy husband's death,
And lived by looking on his images:
But now two mirrors of his princely semblance
Are crack'd in pieces by malignant death,
And I for comfort have but one false glass,
Which grieves me when I see my shame in him.
Thou art a widow; yet thou art a mother,
And hast the comfort of thy children left thee:
But death hath snatch'd my husband from mine
arms,
And pluck'd two crutches from my feeble limbs,

Edward and Clarence. O, what cause have I,
Thine being but a moiety of my grief,
To overgo thy plaints and drown thy cries!

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

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

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

CHILDREN Oh for our father, for our dear lord
Clarence!

DUCHESS OF YORK Alas for both, both mine,
Edward and Clarence!

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

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

DUCHESS OF YORK What stays had I but they?
and they are gone.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Was never widow had so
dear a loss!

CHILDREN Were never orphans had so dear a
loss!

DUCHESS OF YORK Was never mother had so
dear a loss!
Alas, I am the mother of these moans!
Their woes are parcell'd, mine are general.
She for an Edward weeps, and so do I;
I for a Clarence weep, so doth not she:
These babes for Clarence weep and so do I;
I for an Edward weep, so do not they:
Alas, you three, on me, threefold distress'd,
Pour all your tears! I am your sorrow's nurse,
And I will pamper it with lamentations.

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

RIVERS Madam, bethink you, like a careful
mother,

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

[Enter GLOUCESTER, BUCKINGHAM, DERBY,
 HASTINGS, and RATCLIFF]

GLOUCESTER Madam, have comfort: all of us
 have cause

To wail the dimming of our shining star;
 But none can cure their harms by wailing them.
 Madam, my mother, I do cry you mercy;
 I did not see your grace: humbly on my knee
 I crave your blessing.

DUCHESS OF YORK God bless thee; and put
 meekness in thy mind,

Love, charity, obedience, and true duty!

GLOUCESTER [Aside] Amen; and make me die a
 good old man!

That is the butt-end of a mother's blessing:
 I marvel why her grace did leave it out.

BUCKINGHAM You cloudy princes and
 heart-sorrowing peers,

That bear this mutual heavy load of moan,
 Now cheer each other in each other's love
 Though we have spent our harvest of this king,
 We are to reap the harvest of his son.
 The broken rancour of your high-swoln hearts,
 But lately splinter'd, knit, and join'd together,
 Must gently be preserved, cherish'd, and kept:
 Me seemeth good, that, with some little train,
 Forthwith from Ludlow the young prince be fetch'd
 Hither to London, to be crown'd our king.

RIVERS Why with some little train, my Lord
 of Buckingham?

BUCKINGHAM Marry, my lord, lest, by a
 multitude,

The new-heal'd wound of malice should break out,
 Which would be so much the more dangerous
 By how much the estate is green and yet
 ungovern'd:

Where every horse bears his commanding rein,
 And may direct his course as please himself,
 As well the fear of harm, as harm apparent,
 In my opinion, ought to be prevented.

GLOUCESTER I hope the king made peace with all
 of us

And the compact is firm and true in me.

RIVERS And so in me; and so, I think, in
 all:

Yet, since it is but green, it should be put
 To no apparent likelihood of breach,

Which haply by much company might be urged:
 Therefore I say with noble Buckingham,
 That it is meet so few should fetch the prince.

HASTINGS And so say I.

GLOUCESTER Then be it so; and go we to
 determine

Who they shall be that straight shall post to
 Ludlow.

Madam, and you, my mother, will you go
 To give your censures in this weighty business?

QUEEN ELIZABETH |
 | With all our harts.

DUCHESS OF YORK |

[Exeunt all but BUCKINGHAM and GLOUCESTER]

BUCKINGHAM My lord, whoever journeys to the
 Prince,

For God's sake, let not us two be behind;
 For, by the way, I'll sort occasion,

As index to the story we late talk'd of,
 To part the queen's proud kindred from the king.

GLOUCESTER My other self, my counsel's
 consistency,

My oracle, my prophet! My dear cousin,
 I, like a child, will go by thy direction.
 Towards Ludlow then, for we'll not stay behind.
 [Exeunt]

KING RICHARD III

ACT II SCENE III London. A street.

[Enter two CITIZENS meeting]

FIRST CITIZEN Neighbour, well met: whither away
 so fast?

SECOND CITIZEN I promise you, I scarcely
 know myself:

Hear you the news abroad?

FIRST CITIZEN Ay, that the king is dead.

SECOND CITIZEN Bad news, by'r lady;
 seldom comes the better:

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

[Enter ANOTHER CITIZEN]

THIRD CITIZEN Neighbours, God speed!

FIRST CITIZEN Give you good morrow, sir.

THIRD CITIZEN Doth this news hold of good King
 Edward's death?

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

THIRD CITIZEN Then, masters, look to see a

troubled world.

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

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

SECOND CITIZEN In him there is a hope of government,

That in his nonage council under him,
And in his full and ripen'd years himself,
No doubt, shall then and till then govern well.

FIRST CITIZEN So stood the state when Henry the Sixth

Was crown'd in Paris but at nine months old.

THIRD CITIZEN Stood the state so? No, no, good friends, God wot;

For then this land was famously enrich'd
With politic grave counsel; then the king
Had virtuous uncles to protect his grace.

FIRST CITIZEN Why, so hath this, both by the father and mother.

THIRD CITIZEN Better it were they all came by the father,

Or by the father there were none at all;
For emulation now, who shall be nearest,
Will touch us all too near, if God prevent not.
O, full of danger is the Duke of Gloucester!
And the queen's sons and brothers haught and proud:

And were they to be ruled, and not to rule,
This sickly land might solace as before.

FIRST CITIZEN Come, come, we fear the worst; all shall be well.

THIRD CITIZEN When clouds appear, wise men put on their cloaks;

When great leaves fall, the winter is at hand;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?
Untimely storms make men expect a dearth.
All may be well; but, if God sort it so,
'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.

SECOND CITIZEN Truly, the souls of men are full of dread:

Ye cannot reason almost with a man
That looks not heavily and full of fear.

THIRD CITIZEN Before the times of change, still is it so:

By a divine instinct men's minds mistrust
Ensuing dangers; as by proof, we see
The waters swell before a boisterous storm.
But leave it all to God. whither away?

SECOND CITIZEN Marry, we were sent for to the justices.

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

[Exeunt]

KING RICHARD III

ACT II SCENE IV London. The palace.

[Enter the **ARCHBISHOP OF YORK**, young **YORK**, **QUEEN ELIZABETH**, and the **DUCHESS OF YORK**]

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK Last night, I hear, they lay at Northampton;

At Stony-Stratford will they be to-night:

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

DUCHESS OF YORK I long with all my heart to see the prince:

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

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

Hath almost overta'en him in his growth.

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

DUCHESS OF YORK Why, my young cousin, it is good to grow.

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

My uncle Rivers talk'd how I did grow

More than my brother: 'Ay,' quoth my uncle Gloucester,

'Small herbs have grace, great weeds do grow apace:'

And since, methinks, I would not grow so fast,
Because sweet flowers are slow and weeds make haste.

DUCHESS OF YORK Good faith, good faith, the saying did not hold

In him that did object the same to thee;

He was the wretched'st thing when he was young,
So long a-growing and so leisurely,

That, if this rule were true, he should be gracious.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK Why, madam, so, no doubt, he is.

DUCHESS OF YORK I hope he is; but yet let mothers doubt.

YORK Now, by my troth, if I had been remember'd,

I could have given my uncle's grace a flout,

To touch his growth nearer than he touch'd mine.

DUCHESS OF YORK How, my pretty York? I pray thee, let me hear it.

YORK Marry, they say my uncle grew so

fast

That he could gnaw a crust at two hours old
'Twas full two years ere I could get a tooth.

Grandam, this would have been a biting jest.

DUCHESS OF YORK I pray thee, pretty York,
who told thee this?

YORK Grandam, his nurse.

DUCHESS OF YORK His nurse! why, she was
dead ere thou wert born.

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

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

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK Good madam, be not angry
with the child.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Pitchers have ears.

[Enter a Messenger]

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK Here comes a messenger.
What news?

Messenger Such news, my lord, as grieves me
to unfold.

QUEEN ELIZABETH How fares the prince?

Messenger Well, madam, and in health.

DUCHESS OF YORK What is thy news then?

Messenger Lord Rivers and Lord Grey are sent
to Pomfret,

With them Sir Thomas Vaughan, prisoners.

DUCHESS OF YORK Who hath committed them?

Messenger The mighty dukes

Gloucester and Buckingham.

QUEEN ELIZABETH For what offence?

Messenger The sum of all I can, I have
disclosed;

Why or for what these nobles were committed

Is all unknown to me, my gracious lady.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Ay me, I see the downfall
of our house!

The tiger now hath seized the gentle hind;

Insulting tyranny begins to jet

Upon the innocent and aweless throne:

Welcome, destruction, death, and massacre!

I see, as in a map, the end of all.

DUCHESS OF YORK Accursed and unquiet
wrangling days,

How many of you have mine eyes beheld!

My husband lost his life to get the crown;

And often up and down my sons were toss'd,

For me to joy and weep their gain and loss:

And being seated, and domestic broils

Clean over-blown, themselves, the conquerors.

Make war upon themselves; blood against blood,

Self against self: O, preposterous

And frantic outrage, end thy damned spleen;

Or let me die, to look on death no more!

QUEEN ELIZABETH Come, come, my boy; he
will to sanctuary.

Madam, farewell.

DUCHESS OF YORK I'll go along
with you.

QUEEN ELIZABETH You have no cause.

ARCHBISHOP OF YORK My gracious
lady, go;

And thither bear your treasure and your goods.

For my part, I'll resign unto your grace

The seal I keep: and so betide to me

As well I tender you and all of yours!

Come, I'll conduct you to the sanctuary.

[Exeunt]

KING RICHARD III

ACT III SCENE I London. A street.

[The trumpets sound. Enter the young **PRINCE EDWARD, GLOUCESTER, BUCKINGHAM, CARDINAL, CATESBY, and others]**

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

GLOUCESTER Welcome, dear cousin, my thoughts'
sovereign

The weary way hath made you melancholy.

PRINCE EDWARD No, uncle; but our crosses
on the way

Have made it tedious, wearisome, and heavy

I want more uncles here to welcome me.

GLOUCESTER Sweet prince, the untainted virtue of
your years

Hath not yet dived into the world's deceit

Nor more can you distinguish of a man

Than of his outward show; which, God he knows,

Seldom or never jumpeth with the heart.

Those uncles which you want were dangerous;

Your grace attended to their sugar'd words,

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

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

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

GLOUCESTER My lord, the mayor of London
comes to greet you.

[Enter the **LORD MAYOR** and his train]

LORD MAYOR God bless your grace with health