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,
      YORK                      who told thee this?
       DUCHESS OF YORK    Grandam, his nurse.
      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 parous 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 faires 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     'Tis not known, my gracious lady.
      DUCHESS OF YORK  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 frastic outrage, end thy damned spleen;
Or let me die, to look on death no more!
      QUEEN ELIZABETH  Come, come, my boy; we
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
EWARD, 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 EWARD  No, uncle; but our crosses
on the way
Have made it tedious, weariesome, 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 EWARD  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
and happy days!

PRINCE EDWARD I thank you, good my lord, and thank you all.
I thought my mother, and my brother York,
Would long ere this have met us on the way.
Fie, what a slug is Hastings, that he comes not
To tell us whether they will come or no!

[Enter HASTINGS]

BUCKINGHAM And, in good time, here comes the sweating lord.

PRINCE EDWARD Welcome, my lord: what, will our mother come?

HASTINGS On what occasion, God he knows, not I.

The queen your mother, and your brother York,
Have taken sanctuary: the tender prince
Would fain have come with me to meet your grace,
But by his mother was perfere withheld.

BUCKINGHAM Fie, what an indirect and peevish course
Is this of hers! Lord cardinal, will your grace
Persuade the queen to send the Duke of York
Unto his princely brother presently?
If she deny, Lord Hastings, go with him,
And from her jealous arms pluck him perfere.

CARDINAL My Lord of Buckingham, if my weak oratory
Can from his mother win the Duke of York,
Anon expect him here; but if she be obdurate
To mild entreaties, God in heaven forbid
We should infringe the holy privilege
Of blessed sanctuary! not for all this land
Would I be guilty of so deep a sin.

BUCKINGHAM You are too senseless—obstinate, my lord,
Too ceremonious and traditional
Weigh it but with the grossness of this age,
You break not sanctuary in seizing him.
The benefit thereof is always granted
To those whose dealings have deserved the place,
And those who have the wit to claim the place:
This prince hath neither claim’d it nor deserved it;
And therefore, in mine opinion, cannot have it:
Then, taking him from thence that is not there,
You break no privilege nor charter there.
Oft have I heard of sanctuary men;
But sanctuary children ne’er till now.

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

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

HASTINGS I go, my lord.

PRINCE EDWARD Good lords, make all the speedy haste you may.

[Exeunt CARDINAL and HASTINGS]

Say, uncle Gloucester, if our brother come,
Where shall we sojourn till our coronation?

GLOUCESTER Where it seems best unto your royal self.

If I may counsel you, some day or two
Your highness shall repose you at the Tower: Then where you please, and shall be thought most fit
For your best health and recreation.

PRINCE EDWARD I do not like the Tower, of any place.

Did Julius Caesar build that place, my lord?

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

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

BUCKINGHAM Upon record, my gracious lord.

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

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

PRINCE EDWARD What say you, uncle?

GLOUCESTER I say, without characters, fame lives long.

[Aside]
Thus, like the formal vice, Iniquity,
I moralize two meanings in one word.

PRINCE EDWARD That Julius Caesar was a famous man;
With what his valour did enrich his wit,
His wit set down to make his valour live
Death makes no conquest of this conqueror;
For now he lives in fame, though not in life.
I’ll tell you what, my cousin Buckingham,—

BUCKINGHAM What, my gracious lord?

PRINCE EDWARD An if I live until I be a man,
I’ll win our ancient right in France again,
Or die a soldier, as I lived a king.

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

[Enter young YORK, HASTINGS, and the
CARDINAL
Buckingham: Now, in good time, here comes the Duke of York.
Prince Edward: Richard of York! how fares our loving brother?
York: Well, my dread lord; so must I call you now.
Prince Edward: Ay, brother, to our grief, as it is yours:
   Too late he died that might have kept that title,
   Which by his death hath lost much majesty.
Glooucester: How fares our cousin, noble Lord of York?
York: I thank you, gentle uncle. O, my lord,
   You said that idle weeds are fast in growth
   The prince my brother hath outgrown me far.
Glooucester: He hath, my lord.
York: And therefore is he idle?
Glooucester: O, my fair cousin, I must not say so.
York: Then is he more beholding to you than I.
Glooucester: He may command me as my sovereign;
   But you have power in me as in a kinsman.
York: I pray you, uncle, give me this dagger.
Glooucester: My dagger, little cousin? with all my heart.
Prince Edward: A beggar, brother?
York: Of my kind uncle, that I know will give;
   And being but a toy, which is no grief to give.
Glooucester: A greater gift than that I'll give my cousin.
York: A greater gift! O, that's the sword to it.
Glooucester: A gentle cousin, were it light enough.
York: O, then, I see, you will part but
   with light gifts;
   In weightier things you'll say a beggar nay.
Glooucester: It is too heavy for your grace to wear.
York: I weigh it lightly, were it heavier.
Glooucester: What, would you have my weapon, little lord?
York: I would, that I might thank you as you call me.
Glooucester: How?
York: Little.
Prince Edward: My Lord of York will still be cross in talk:
   Uncle, your grace knows how to bear with him.
York: You mean, to bear me, not to bear with me:
   Uncle, my brother mocks both you and me;
   Because that I am little, like an ape,
   He thinks that you should bear me on your shoulders.
Buckingham: With what a sharp-provided wit he reasons!
   To mitigate the scorn he gives his uncle,
   He prettily and aptly taunts himself:
   So cunning and so young is wonderful.
Glooucester: My lord, will't please you pass along?
   Myself and my good cousin Buckingham
   Will to your mother, to entreat of her
   To meet you at the Tower and welcome you.
York: What, will you go unto the Tower, my lord?
Prince Edward: My lord protector needs will have it so.
York: I shall not sleep in quiet at the Tower.
Glooucester: Why, what should you fear?
York: Marry, my uncle Clarence' angry ghost:
   My grandam told me he was murdered there.
Prince Edward: I fear no uncles dead.
Glooucester: Nor none that live, I hope.
Prince Edward: An if they live, I hope I need not fear.
   But come, my lord; and with a heavy heart,
   Thinking on them, go I unto the Tower.
   [A Sennet. Exeunt all but Gloeucster,
Buckingham
   and Catesby]
Buckingham: Think you, my lord, this little prating York
   Was not incensed by his subtle mother
   To taunt and scorn you thus opprobiously?
Glooucester: No doubt, no doubt; O, 'tis a parlous boy;
   Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, capable
   He is all the mother's, from the top to toe.
Buckingham: Well, let them rest. Come hither, Catesby.
   Thou art sworn as deeply to effect what we intend
As closely to conceal what we impart:
Thou know'st our reasons urged upon the way;
What think'st thou? is it not an easy matter
To make William Lord Hastings of our mind,
For the instalment of this noble duke
In the seat royal of this famous isle?

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

BUCKINGHAM What think'st thou, then, of Stanley?
What will he?

CATESBY He will do all in all as Hastings doth.

BUCKINGHAM Well, then, no more but this: go, gentle Catesby,
And, as it were far off sound thou Lord Hastings,
How doth he stand affected to our purpose;
And summon him to-morrow to the Tower,
To sit about the coronation.
If thou dost find him tractable to us,
Encourage him, and show him all our reasons:
If he be leaden, icy-cold, unwilling,
Be thou so too; and so break off your talk,
And give us notice of his inclination:
For we to-morrow hold divided councils,
Wherein thyself shalt highly be employ'd.

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

BUCKINGHAM Good Catesby, go, effect this business soundly.

CATESBY My good lords both, with all the heed I may.

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

CATESBY You shall, my lord.

GLoucester At Crosby Place, there shall you find us both.

[Exit CATESBY]

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

GLoucester Chop off his head, man; somewhat we will do:
And, look, when I am king, claim thou of me
The earldom of Hereford, and the moveables
Whereof the king my brother stood possess'd.

BUCKINGHAM I'll claim that promise at your grace's hands.

GLoucester And look to have it yielded with all willingness.
Come, let us sup betimes, that afterwards
We may digest our complots in some form.

[Exeunt]

KING RICHARD III
ACT III SCENE II Before Lord Hastings' house.

[Enter a Messenger]

Mesenger What, ho! my lord!

HASTINGS [Within] Who knocks at the door?

Mesenger A messenger from the Lord Stanley.

[Enter HASTINGS]

HASTINGS What is't o'clock?

Mesenger Upon the stroke of four.

HASTINGS Cannot thy master sleep these tedious nights?

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

HASTINGS And then?

Mesenger 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.

Mesenger 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 day your enemies,
The kindred of the queen, must die at Pomfret.
HASTINGS Indeed, I am no mourners 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?
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'er cast.
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, ey, 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 PURSIVANT]
HASTINGS Go on before; I'll talk with this good fellow.
[Exeunt STANLEY and CATESBY]
How now, sirrah! how goes the world with thee?
PURSIVANT 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.
PURSIVANT 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]
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 Pomefret, 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]

KING RICHARD III
ACT III  SCENE III  Pomefret Castle.

[Enter RATCLIFF, with halberds, carrying RIVERS, GREY, and VAUGHAN to death]
RATCLIFF  Come, bring forth the prisoners.
RIVERS  Sir Richard Racliff, 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 Pomefret, Pomefret! 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]

KING RICHARD III
ACT III  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 at it be done:
The rest, that love me, rise and follow me.
[Exeunt all but HASTINGS, RATCLIFFE, 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]

KING RICHARD III
ACT III 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: ghostly 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,
Wert 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 timorous confess
The manner and the purpose of his treason;
That you might well have signified the same
Unto the citizens, who haply may
Misanthropy 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 dueous 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 bides him in all post:
There, at your meet’st advantage of the time,
Infer the bastardy of Edward’s children:
Tell them bow 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 were 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, Love, 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]

KING RICHARD III

ACT III 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]

KING RICHARD III

ACT III 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,
As being not like the duke;
Withal I did infer your lineaments,
Being the right idea of your father,
Both in your form and nobleness of mind;
Laid open all your victories in Scotland,
Your discipline in war, wisdom in peace,
Your bounty, virtue, fair humility:
Indeed, left nothing fitting for 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 infer'red;'
But nothing spake in warrant from himself.
When he had done, some followers of mine own,
At the lower end of the hall, hurst'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 wisdom 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 with.

[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 import 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 entertainies, 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 majestical,
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 infancy,
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 empire, 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 chequed 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 equally 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 blot 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 Amen.
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]

KING RICHARD III
ACT IV SCENE I Before the Tower.

[Enter, on one side, QUEEN ELIZABETH, DUCHESS