

# Richard III

## 4.3

*Enter Sir James Tyrrell*

**TYRRELL**

The tyrannous and bloody act is done±±  
The most arch deed of piteous massacre  
That ever yet this land was guilty of.  
Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborn  
To do this piece of ruthless butchery, 5  
Albeit they were fleshed villains, bloody dogs,  
Melted with tenderness and mild compassion,  
Wept like two children in their deaths' sad story.  
`O thus', quoth Dighton, `lay the gentle babes';  
`Thus, thus', quoth Forrest, `girdling one another 10  
Within their alabaster innocent arms.  
Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,  
And in their summer beauty kissed each other.  
A book of prayers on their pillow lay,  
`Which once', quoth Forrest, `almost changed my mind. 15  
But O, the devil'±±there the villain stopped,  
When Dighton thus told on, `We smothereÁd  
The most replenisheÁd sweet work of nature,  
That from the prime creation e'er she framed.'  
Hence both are gone, with conscience and remorse. 20  
They could not speak, and so I left them both,  
To bear this tidings to the bloody king.

*Enter King Richard*

And here he comes.±±All health, my sovereign lord.

**KING RICHARD**

Kind Tyrrell, am I happy in thy news?

**TYRRELL**

If to have done the thing you gave in charge 25  
Beget your happiness, be happy then,  
For it is done.

**KING RICHARD** But didst thou see them dead?

**TYRRELL**

I did, my lord.

**KING RICHARD** And buried, gentle Tyrrell?

**TYRRELL**

The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them;  
But where, to say the truth, I do not know. 30

**KING RICHARD**

Come to me, Tyrrell, soon, at after-supper,  
When 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 then.

**TYRRELL** I humbly take my leave. 35

*Exit*

**KING RICHARD**

The son of Clarence have I pent up close.  
His daughter meanly have I matched in marriage.  
The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom,  
And Anne, my wife, hath bid this world goodnight.  
Now, for I know the Breton Richmond aims 40  
At young Elizabeth, my brother's daughter,  
And by that knot looks proudly o'er the crown,  
To her go I, a jolly thriving wooer±±

*Enter Sir Richard Ratcliffe, [running]*

**RATCLIFFE** My lord.

**KING RICHARD**

Good news or bad, that thou com'st in so bluntly? 45

**RATCLIFFE**

Bad news, my lord. Ely is fled to Richmond,  
And Buckingham, backed with the hardy Welshmen,  
Is in the field, and still his power increaseth.

**KING RICHARD**

Ely with Richmond troubles me more near  
Than Buckingham and his rash-levied strength. 50  
Come, I have learned 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, an herald for a king. 55

Go, muster men. My counsel is my shield.  
We must be brief, when traitors brave the field.

*Exeunt*