

# Richard Duke of York

## 1.1

*A chair of state. Alarum. Enter Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, his two sons Edward, Earl of March, and Crookback Richard, the Duke of Norfolk, the Marquis of Montague, and the Earl of Warwick, [with drummers] and soldiers. [They all wear white roses in their hats]*

**WARWICK**

I wonder how the King escaped our hands?

**YORK**

While we pursued the horsemen of the north,  
He slyly stole away and left his men;  
Whereat the great lord of Northumberland,  
Whose warlike ears could never brook retreat, 5  
Cheered up the drooping army; and himself,  
Lord Clifford, and Lord Stafford, all abreast,  
Charged our main battle's front, and, breaking in,  
Were by the swords of common soldiers slain.

**EDWARD**

Lord Stafford's father, Duke of Buckingham, 10  
Is either slain or wounded dangerous.  
I cleft his beaver with a downright blow.  
That this is true, father, behold his blood.  
*He shows a bloody sword*

**MONTAGUE** *[to York]*

And, brother, here's the Earl of Wiltshire's blood,  
*He shows a bloody sword*  
Whom I encountered as the battles joined. 15

**RICHARD** *(to Somerset's head, which he shows)*

Speak thou for me, and tell them what I did.

**YORK**

Richard hath best deserved of all my sons.  
*(To the head)* But is your grace dead, my lord of  
Somerset?

**NORFOLK**

Such hap have all the line of John of Gaunt.

**RICHARD**

Thus do I hope to shake King Henry's head. 20

*[He holds aloft the head, then throws it down]*

**WARWICK**

And so do I, victorious prince of York.  
Before I see thee seated in that throne  
Which now the house of Lancaster usurps,  
I vow by heaven these eyes shall never close.  
This is the palace of the fearful King, 25  
And this *(pointing to the chair of state)* , the regal  
seat±±possess it, York,  
For this is thine, and not King Henry's heirs'.

**YORK**

Assist me then, sweet Warwick, and I will,  
For hither we have broken in by force.

**NORFOLK**

We'll all assist you±±he that flies shall die. 30

**YORK**

Thanks, gentle Norfolk. Stay by me, my lords  
And soldiers±±stay, and lodge by me this night.  
*They go up upon the state*

**WARWICK**

And when the King comes, offer him no violence  
Unless he seek to thrust you out perforce.  
*[The soldiers withdraw]*

**YORK**

The Queen this day here holds her Parliament, 35  
But little thinks we shall be of her council;  
By words or blows here let us win our right.

**RICHARD**

Armed as we are, let's stay within this house.

**WARWICK**

`The Bloody Parliament' shall this be called,  
Unless Plantagenet, Duke of York, be king, 40  
And bashful Henry deposed, whose cowardice  
Hath made us bywords to our enemies.

**YORK**

Then leave me not, my lords. Be resolute±±  
I mean to take possession of my right.

**WARWICK**

Neither the King nor he that loves him best±± 45  
The proudest he that holds up Lancaster±±  
Dares stir a wing if Warwick shake his bells.

I'll plant Plantagenet, root him up who dares.  
Resolve thee, Richard±±claim the English crown.

*[York sits in the chair.]*

*Flourish. Enter King Henry, Lord Clifford, the Earls  
of Northumberland and Westmorland, the Duke of  
Exeter, and the rest. [They all wear red roses in  
their hats]*

**KING HENRY**

My lords, look where the sturdy rebel sits±± 50  
Even in the chair of state! Belike he means,  
Backed by the power of Warwick, that false peer,  
To aspire unto the crown and reign as king.  
Earl of Northumberland, he slew thy father±±  
And thine, Lord Clifford±±and you both have vowed  
revenge 55

On him, his sons, his favourites, and his friends.

**NORTHUMBERLAND**

If I be not, heavens be revenged on me.

**CLIFFORD**

The hope thereof makes Clifford mourn in steel.

**WESTMORLAND**

What, shall we suffer this? Let's pluck him down.  
My heart for anger burns±±I cannot brook it. 60

**KING HENRY**

Be patient, gentle Earl of Westmorland.

**CLIFFORD**

Patience is for poltroons, such as he *(indicating York)* .  
He durst not sit there had your father lived.  
My gracious lord, here in the Parliament  
Let us assail the family of York. 65

**NORTHUMBERLAND**

Well hast thou spoken, cousin, be it so.

**KING HENRY**

Ah, know you not the city favours them,  
And they have troops of soldiers at their beck?

**EXETER**

But when the Duke is slain, they'll quickly fly.

**KING HENRY**

Far be the thought of this from Henry's heart, 70  
To make a shambles of the Parliament House.  
Cousin of Exeter, frowns, words, and threats

Shall be the war that Henry means to use.  
(*To York*) Thou factious Duke of York, descend my  
throne  
And kneel for grace and mercy at my feet. 75  
I am thy sovereign.

**YORK** I am thine.

**EXETER**  
For shame, come down±±he made thee Duke of York.

**YORK**  
It was mine inheritance, as the earldom was.

**EXETER**  
Thy father was a traitor to the crown.

**WARWICK**  
Exeter, thou art a traitor to the crown 80  
In following this usurping Henry.

**CLIFFORD**  
Whom should he follow but his natural king?

**WARWICK**  
True, Clifford, and that's Richard Duke of York.

**KING HENRY** (*to York*)  
And shall I stand and thou sit in my throne?

**YORK**  
It must and shall be so±±content thyself. 85

**WARWICK** (*to King Henry*)  
Be Duke of Lancaster, let him be king.

**WESTMORLAND**  
He is both king and Duke of Lancaster±±  
And that, the Lord of Westmorland shall maintain.

**WARWICK**  
And Warwick shall disprove it. You forget  
That we are those which chased you from the field, 90  
And slew your fathers, and, with colours spread,  
Marched through the city to the palace gates.

**NORTHUMBERLAND**  
Yes, Warwick, I remember it to my grief,  
And, by his soul, thou and thy house shall rue it.

**WESTMORLAND** (*to York*)  
Plantagenet, of thee, and these thy sons, 95  
Thy kinsmen, and thy friends, I'll have more lives  
Than drops of blood were in my father's veins.

**CLIFFORD** (*to Warwick*)

Urge it no more, lest that, instead of words,  
I send thee, Warwick, such a messenger  
As shall revenge his death before I stir. 100

**WARWICK** *[to York]*

Poor Clifford, how I scorn his worthless threats.

**YORK** *[to King Henry]*

Will you we show our title to the crown?  
If not, our swords shall plead it in the field.

**KING HENRY**

What title hast thou, traitor, to the crown?  
Thy father was, as thou art, Duke of York; 105  
Thy grandfather, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March.  
I am the son of Henry the Fifth,  
Who made the Dauphin and the French to stoop  
And seized upon their towns and provinces.

**WARWICK**

Talk not of France, sith thou hast lost it all. 110

**KING HENRY**

The Lord Protector lost it, and not I.  
When I was crowned, I was but nine months old.

**RICHARD**

You are old enough now, and yet, methinks, you lose.  
*(To York)* Father, tear the crown from the usurper's  
head.

**EDWARD** *(to York)*

Sweet father, do so±±set it on your head. 115

**MONTAGUE** *(to York)*

Good brother, as thou lov'st and honour'st arms,  
Let's fight it out and not stand cavilling thus.

**RICHARD**

Sound drums and trumpets, and the King will fly.

**YORK** Sons, peace!

**[NORTHUMBERLAND]**

Peace, thou±±and give King Henry leave to speak. 120

**KING HENRY**

Ah, York, why seekest thou to depose me?  
Are we not both Plantagenets by birth,  
And from two brothers lineally descent?  
Suppose by right and equity thou be king±±  
Think'st thou that I will leave my kingly throne, 125  
Wherein my grandsire and my father sat?

No<sup>±±</sup>first shall war unpeople this my realm;  
Ay, and their colours, often borne in France,  
And now in England to our heart's great sorrow,  
Shall be my winding-sheet. Why faint you, lords? 130  
My title's good, and better far than his.

**WARWICK**

Prove it, Henry, and thou shalt be king.

**KING HENRY**

Henry the Fourth by conquest got the crown.

**YORK**

'Twas by rebellion against his king.

**KING HENRY** *[aside]*

I know not what to say<sup>±±</sup>my title's weak. 135  
(*To York*) Tell me, may not a king adopt an heir?

**YORK** What then?

**KING HENRY**

An if he may, then am I lawful king<sup>±±</sup>  
For Richard, in the view of many lords,  
Resigned the crown to Henry the Fourth, 140  
Whose heir my father was, and I am his.

**YORK**

He rose against him, being his sovereign,  
And made him to resign his crown perforce.

**WARWICK**

Suppose, my lords, he did it unconstrained<sup>±±</sup>  
Think you 'twere prejudicial to his crown? 145

**EXETER**

No, for he could not so resign his crown  
But that the next heir should succeed and reign.

**KING HENRY**

Art thou against us, Duke of Exeter?

**EXETER**

His is the right, and therefore pardon me.

**YORK**

Why whisper you, my lords, and answer not? 150

**EXETER** *[to King Henry]*

My conscience tells me he is lawful king.

**KING HENRY** *[aside]*

All will revolt from me and turn to him.

**NORTHUMBERLAND** (*to York*)

Plantagenet, for all the claim thou lay'st,

Think not that Henry shall be so deposed.

**WARWICK**  
 Deposed he shall be, in despite of all. 155

**NORTHUMBERLAND**  
 Thou art deceived±±'tis not thy southern power  
 Of Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, nor of Kent,  
 Which makes thee thus presumptuous and proud,  
 Can set the Duke up in despite of me.

**CLIFFORD**  
 King Henry, be thy title right or wrong, 160  
 Lord Clifford vows to fight in thy defence.  
 May that ground gape and swallow me alive  
 Where I shall kneel to him that slew my father.

**KING HENRY**  
 O, Clifford, how thy words revive my heart!

**YORK**  
 Henry of Lancaster, resign thy crown. 165  
 What mutter you, or what conspire you, lords?

**WARWICK**  
 Do right unto this princely Duke of York,  
 Or I will fill the house with armeÁd men  
 And over the chair of state, where now he sits,  
 Write up his title with usurping blood. 170  
*He stamps with his foot and the soldiers show themselves*

**KING HENRY**  
 My lord of Warwick, hear me but one word±±  
 Let me for this my lifetime reign as king.

**YORK**  
 Confirm the crown to me and to mine heirs,  
 And thou shalt reign in quiet while thou liv'st.

**KING HENRY**  
 I am content. Richard Plantagenet, 175  
 Enjoy the kingdom after my decease.

**CLIFFORD**  
 What wrong is this unto the prince your son?

**WARWICK**  
 What good is this to England and himself?

**WESTMORLAND**  
 Base, fearful, and despairing Henry.

**CLIFFORD**  
 How hast thou injured both thyself and us? 180

**WESTMORLAND**

I cannot stay to hear these articles.

**NORTHUMBERLAND** Nor I.

**CLIFFORD**

Come, cousin, let us tell the Queen these news.

**WESTMORLAND** *(to King Henry)*

Farewell, faint-hearted and degenerate king,  
In whose cold blood no spark of honour bides.

185

*[Exit with his soldiers]*

**NORTHUMBERLAND** *(to King Henry)*

Be thou a prey unto the house of York,  
And die in bands for this unmanly deed.

*[Exit with his soldiers]*

**CLIFFORD** *(to King Henry)*

In dreadful war mayst thou be overcome,  
Or live in peace, abandoned and despised.

*Exit [with his soldiers]*

**WARWICK** *(to King Henry)*

Turn this way, Henry, and regard them not.

190

**EXETER** *(to King Henry)*

They seek revenge and therefore will not yield.

**KING HENRY**

Ah, Exeter.

**WARWICK** Why should you sigh, my lord?

**KING HENRY**

Not for myself, Lord Warwick, but my son,  
Whom I unnaturally shall disinherit.

But be it as it may. *(To York)* I here entail

195

The crown to thee and to thine heirs for ever,

Conditionally, that here thou take thine oath

To cease this civil war, and whilst I live

To honour me as thy king and sovereign,

And nor by treason nor hostility

200

To seek to put me down and reign thyself.

**YORK**

This oath I willingly take and will perform.

**WARWICK**

Long live King Henry. *(To York)* Plantagenet, embrace  
him.

*[York descends.] Henry and York embrace*

**KING HENRY** *(to York)*



And long live thou, and these thy forward sons.

**YORK**

Now York and Lancaster are reconciled.

205

**EXETER**

Accursed be he that seeks to make them foes.

*Sennet. Here York's train comes down from the state*

**YORK** *(to King Henry)*

Farewell, my gracious lord, I'll to my castle.

*Exeunt York, Edward, and Richard, [with soldiers]*

**WARWICK**

And I'll keep London with my soldiers.

*Exit [with soldiers]*

**NORFOLK**

And I to Norfolk with my followers.

*Exit [with soldiers]*

**MONTAGUE**

And I unto the sea from whence I came.

210

*Exit [with soldiers]*

**KING HENRY**

And I with grief and sorrow to the court.

*[King Henry and Exeter turn to leave.]*

*Enter Queen Margaret and Prince Edward*

**EXETER**

Here comes the Queen, whose looks bewray her anger.

I'll steal away.

**KING HENRY** Exeter, so will I.

**QUEEN MARGARET**

Nay, go not from me±±I will follow thee.

**KING HENRY**

Be patient, gentle Queen, and I will stay.

215

**QUEEN MARGARET**

Who can be patient in such extremes?

Ah, wretched man, would I had died a maid

And never seen thee, never borne thee son,

Seeing thou hast proved so unnatural a father.

Hath he deserved to lose his birthright thus?

220

Hadst thou but loved him half so well as I,

Or felt that pain which I did for him once,

Or nourished him as I did with my blood,

Thou wouldst have left thy dearest heart-blood there  
Rather than have made that savage Duke thine heir 225  
And disinherited thine only son.

**PRINCE EDWARD**

Father, you cannot disinherit me.  
If you be king, why should not I succeed?

**KING HENRY**

Pardon me, Margaret; pardon me, sweet son±±  
The Earl of Warwick and the Duke enforced me. 230

**QUEEN MARGARET**

Enforced thee? Art thou king, and wilt be forced?  
I shame to hear thee speak! Ah, timorous wretch,  
Thou hast undone thyself, thy son, and me,  
And giv'n unto the house of York such head  
As thou shalt reign but by their sufferance. 235

To entail him and his heirs unto the crown±±  
What is it, but to make thy sepulchre  
And creep into it far before thy time?  
Warwick is Chancellor and the Lord of Calais;  
Stern Falconbridge commands the narrow seas; 240  
The Duke is made Protector of the Realm;  
And yet shalt thou be safe? Such safety finds  
The trembling lamb environed with wolves.

Had I been there, which am a seely woman,  
The soldiers should have tossed me on their pikes 245  
Before I would have granted to that act.

But thou prefer'st thy life before thine honour.  
And seeing thou dost, I here divorce myself  
Both from thy table, Henry, and thy bed,  
Until that act of Parliament be repealed 250  
Whereby my son is disinherited.

The northern lords that have forsworn thy colours  
Will follow mine, if once they see them spread±±  
And spread they shall be, to thy foul disgrace  
And the utter ruin of the house of York. 255  
Thus do I leave thee. (*To Prince Edward*) Come, son,  
let's away.

Our army is ready±±come, we'll after them.

**KING HENRY**

Stay, gentle Margaret, and hear me speak.

**QUEEN MARGARET**

Thou hast spoke too much already.

*[To Prince Edward]*

Get thee gone.

**KING HENRY**

Gentle son Edward, thou wilt stay with me?

260

**QUEEN MARGARET**

Ay, to be murdered by his enemies.

**PRINCE EDWARD** *(to King Henry)*

When I return with victory from the field,

I'll see your grace. Till then, I'll follow her.

**QUEEN MARGARET**

Come, son, away±±we may not linger thus.

*Exit with Prince Edward*

**KING HENRY**

Poor Queen, how love to me and to her son

265

Hath made her break out into terms of rage.

Revenged may she be on that hateful Duke,

Whose haughty spirit, winged with desire,

Will coast my crown, and, like an empty eagle,

Tire on the flesh of me and of my son.

270

The loss of those three lords torments my heart.

I'll write unto them and entreat them fair.

Come, cousin, you shall be the messenger.

**EXETER**

And I, I hope, shall reconcile them all.

*Flourish. Exeunt*