

# Richard III

## 4.2

*Sound a sennet. Enter King Richard in pomp, the Duke of Buckingham, Sir William Catesby, [other nobles], and a Page*

**KING RICHARD**

Stand all apart.±±Cousin of Buckingham.

**BUCKINGHAM** My gracious sovereign?

**KING RICHARD** Give me thy hand.

*Sound [a sennet]. Here Richard ascendeth the throne*

Thus high by thy advice

And thy assistance is King Richard seated.

5

But shall we wear these glories for a day?

Or shall they last, and we rejoice in them?

**BUCKINGHAM**

Still live they, and for ever let them last.

**KING RICHARD**

Ah, Buckingham, now do I play the touch,

To try if thou be current gold indeed.

10

Young Edward lives. Think now what I would speak.

**BUCKINGHAM** Say on, my loving lord.

**KING RICHARD**

Why, Buckingham, I say I would be king.

**BUCKINGHAM**

Why, so you are, my thrice-renowneÁd liege.

**KING RICHARD**

Ha? Am I king? 'Tis so. But Edward lives.

15

**BUCKINGHAM**

True, noble prince.

**KING RICHARD** O bitter consequence,

That Edward still should live `true noble prince'.

Cousin, thou wast not wont to be so dull.

Shall I be plain? I wish the bastards dead,

And I would have it immediately performed.

20

What sayst thou now? Speak suddenly, be brief.

**BUCKINGHAM** Your grace may do your pleasure.

**KING RICHARD**

Tut, tut, thou art all ice. Thy kindness freezes.

Say, have I thy consent that they shall die?

**BUCKINGHAM**

Give me some little breath, some pause, dear lord, 25

Before I positively speak in this.

I will resolve you herein presently.

*Exit*

**CATESBY** *(to another, aside)*

The King is angry. See, he gnaws his lip.

**KING RICHARD** *(aside)*

I will converse with iron-witted fools

And unrespective boys. None are for me 30

That look into me with considerate eyes.

High-reaching Buckingham grows circumspect.±±

Boy.

**PAGE** My lord?

**KING RICHARD**

Know'st thou not any whom corrupting gold 35

Will tempt unto a close exploit of death?

**PAGE**

I know a discontented gentleman

Whose humble means match not his haughty spirit.

Gold were as good as twenty orators,

And will no doubt tempt him to anything. 40

**KING RICHARD**

What is his name?

**PAGE** His name, my lord, is Tyrrell.

**KING RICHARD**

I partly know the man. Go call him hither, boy.

*Exit Page*

*[Aside]* The deep-revolving, witty Buckingham

No more shall be the neighbour to my counsels.

Hath he so long held out with me untired, 45

And stops he now for breath? Well, be it so.

*Enter Lord Stanley Earl of Derby*

How now, Lord Stanley? What's the news?

**STANLEY** Know, my loving lord,

The Marquis Dorset, as I hear, is fled

To Richmond, in those parts beyond the seas 50

Where he abides.

**KING RICHARD**

Come hither, Catesby. *(Aside to Catesby)* Rumour it

abroad

That Anne, my wife, is very grievous sick.  
I will take order for her keeping close.  
Enquire me out some mean-born gentleman, 55  
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 queen, is sick, and like to die.  
About it, for it stands me much upon 60  
To stop all hopes whose growth may damage me.

*[Exit Catesby]*

*(Aside)* 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 65  
So far in blood that sin will pluck on sin.  
Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye.±±

*Enter Sir James Tyrrell; [he kneels]*

Is thy name Tyrrell?

**TYRRELL**

James Tyrrell, and your most obedient subject.

**KING RICHARD**

Art thou indeed?

**TYRRELL** Prove me, my gracious lord. 70

**KING RICHARD**

Dar'st thou resolve to kill a friend of mine?

**TYRRELL**

Please you, but I had rather kill two enemies.

**KING RICHARD**

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. 75  
Tyrrell, I mean those bastards in the Tower.

**TYRRELL**

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

**KING RICHARD**

Thou sing'st sweet music. Hark, come hither, Tyrrell.  
Go, by this token. Rise, and lend thine ear. 80

*Richard whispers in his ear*

'Tis no more but so. Say it is done,

And I will love thee, and prefer thee for it.

**TYRRELL** I will dispatch it straight.

**[KING RICHARD]**

Shall we hear from thee, Tyrrell, ere we sleep?

*Enter Buckingham*

**[TYRRELL]** Ye shall, my lord.

85

*Exit*

**BUCKINGHAM**

My lord, I have considered in my mind  
The late request that you did sound me in.

**KING RICHARD**

Well, let that rest. Dorset is fled to Richmond.

**BUCKINGHAM** I hear the news, my lord.

**KING RICHARD**

Stanley, he is your wife's son. Well, look to it. 90

**BUCKINGHAM**

My lord, I claim the gift, my due by promise,  
For which your honour and your faith is pawned:  
Th'earldom of Hereford, and the movables  
Which you have promiseÁd I shall possess.

**KING RICHARD**

Stanley, look to your wife. If she convey 95  
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

**BUCKINGHAM**

What says your highness to my just request?

**KING RICHARD**

I do remember me, Henry the Sixth  
Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,  
When Richmond was a little peevish boy. 100  
A king...perhaps...perhaps.

**BUCKINGHAM**

My lord?

**KING RICHARD**

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**

Richmond? When last I was at Exeter, 105  
The Mayor in courtesy showed me the castle,  
And called it `Ruge-mount'±±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? 110

**KING RICHARD** Ay? What's o'clock?

**BUCKINGHAM**

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

**KING RICHARD** But what's o'clock?

**BUCKINGHAM** Upon the stroke of ten.

**KING RICHARD** Well, let it strike! 115

**BUCKINGHAM** Why `let it strike'?

**KING RICHARD**

Because that, like a jack, thou keep'st the stroke  
Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.

I am not in the giving vein today.

**BUCKINGHAM**

Why then resolve me, whe'er you will or no? 120

**KING RICHARD**

Thou troublest me. I am not in the vein.

*Exit Richard, followed by all but Buckingham*

**BUCKINGHAM**

And is it thus? Repays he my deep service  
With such contempt? Made I him king for this?  
O let me think on Hastings, and be gone  
To Brecon, while my fearful head is on. 125

*Exit [at another door]*