

Richard III

2.3

Enter one Citizen at one door and another at the other

FIRST CITIZEN

Good morrow, neighbour. Whither away so fast?

SECOND CITIZEN

I promise you, I scarcely know myself.

Hear you the news abroad?

FIRST CITIZEN

Yes, that the King is dead.

SECOND CITIZEN

Ill news, by'r Lady; seldom comes the better.

I fear, I fear, 'twill prove a giddy world. 5

Enter another Citizen

THIRD CITIZEN

Neighbours, God speed.

FIRST CITIZEN

Give you good morrow, sir.

THIRD CITIZEN

Doth the 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 troublous world.

FIRST CITIZEN

No, no, by God's good grace his son shall reign. 10

THIRD CITIZEN

Woe to that land that's governed by a child.

SECOND CITIZEN

In him there is a hope of government,
Which in his nonage council under him,
And in his full and ripened years himself,
No doubt shall then, and till then, govern well. 15

FIRST CITIZEN

So stood the state when Henry the Sixth
Was crowned 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 enriched
With politic, grave counsel; then the King 20

Had virtuous uncles to protect his grace.

FIRST CITIZEN

Why, so hath this, both by his father and mother.

THIRD CITIZEN

Better it were they all came by his father,
Or by his father there were none at all.
For emulation who shall now be near'st 25
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. 30

FIRST CITIZEN

Come, come, we fear the worst. All will be well.

THIRD CITIZEN

When clouds are seen, wise men put on their cloaks;
When great leaves fall, then winter is at hand;
When the sun sets, who doth not look for night?
Untimely storms make men expect a dearth. 35
All may be well, but if God sort it so
'Tis more than we deserve, or I expect.

SECOND CITIZEN

Truly the hearts of men are full of fear.
You cannot reason almost with a man
That looks not heavily and full of dread. 40

THIRD CITIZEN

Before the days of change still is it so.
By a divine instinct men's minds mistrust
Ensuing danger, as by proof we see
The water swell before a boist'rous storm.
But leave it all to God. Whither away? 45

SECOND CITIZEN

Marry, we were sent for to the justices.

THIRD CITIZEN

And so was I. I'll bear you company.

Exeunt