

Gloucester Dreams...

SCENE 2

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Now is the winter of our discontent
Made glorious summer by this sun of York;
And all the clouds that lour'd upon our house
In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths;
Our bruised arms hung up for monuments;
Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.
Grim-visaged war hath smooth'd his wrinkled front;
And now, instead of mounting barded steeds
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.
But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;
I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty
To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;
I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,
Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
Deformed, unfinish'd, sent before my time
Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
And that so lamely and unfashionable
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;
Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
Have no delight to pass away the time,
Unless to spy my shadow in the sun
And descant on mine own deformity:
And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
I am determin'd to prove a villain

And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
By drunken prophecies, libels and dreams,
To set my brother Clarence and the king
In deadly hate the one against the other:
And if King Edward be as true and just
As I am subtle, false and treacherous,
This day should Clarence closely be mew'd up,
About a prophecy, which says that 'G'
Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be.
Dive, thoughts, down to my soul: here
Lady Anne comes.

SCENE 4

LADY ANNE

Poor key-cold figure of a holy king!
Pale ashes of the house of Lancaster!
Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood!
Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost,
To hear the lamentations of Poor Anne,
Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughter'd son,
Stabb'd by the selfsame hand that made these wounds!
Lo, in these windows that let forth thy life,
I pour the helpless balm of my poor eyes.
Cursed be the hand that made these fatal holes!
Cursed be the heart that had the heart to do it!
Cursed the blood that let this blood from hence!
Enter RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

LADY ANNE

What black magician conjures up this fiend,
To stop devoted charitable deeds?

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Sweet saint, for charity, be not so curst.

LADY ANNE

Foul devil, for God's sake, hence, and trouble us not;
For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,

O, see, see! dead Henry's wounds

Open their congeal'd mouths and bleed afresh!

Blush, Blush, thou lump of foul deformity;

For 'tis thy presence that exhales this blood

From cold and empty veins, where no blood dwells;

O God, which this blood madest, revenge his death!

O earth, which this blood drink'st revenge his death!

Either heaven with lightning strike the
murderer dead,

Or earth, gape open wide and eat him quick.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Lady, you know no rules of charity,

Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

LADY ANNE

Villain, thou know'st no law of God nor man:

No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

But I know none, and therefore am no beast.

LADY ANNE

O wonderful, when devils tell the truth!

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

More wonderful, when angels are so angry.

(Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,

Of these supposed-evils, to give me leave,

By circumstance, but to acquit myself.)

LADY ANNE

Vouchsafe, defused infection of a man,

For these known evils, but to give me leave,

By circumstance, to curse thy cursed self.)

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have
Some patient leisure to excuse myself. I did not kill
your husband

LADY ANNE

In thy foul throat thou liest: Queen Margaret saw
Thy murderous falchion smoking in his blood

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

I was provoked by her slanderous tongue,
which laid their guilt upon my guiltless shoulders.

LADY ANNE

Thou wast provoked by thy bloody mind.
Which never dreamt on aught but butcheries:
Didst thou not kill this king?

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

I grant ye.

LADY ANNE

Dost grant me, hedgehog? then, God grant me too
Thou mayst be damned for that wicked deed!
O, he was gentle, mild, and virtuous!

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

The fitter for the King of heaven, that hath him.

LADY ANNE

He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Let him thank me, that help to send him thither;
For he was fitter for that place than earth.

LADY ANNE

And thou unfit for any place but hell

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Yes, one place else, if you will hear me name it.

LADY ANNE

Some dungeon.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Your bed-chamber.

LADY ANNE

I'll rest betide the chamber where thou liest!

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

So will it, madam till I lie with you.

LADY ANNE

I hope so.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

I know so. But, gentle Lady Anne,
To leave this keen encounter of our wits,
And fall somewhat into a slower method,
Is not the causer of the timeless deaths
Of these Plantagenets, Henry and Edward,
As blameful as the executioner?

LADY ANNE

Thou art the cause, and most accursed effect.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Your beauty was the cause of that effect;
Your beauty: which did haunt me in my sleep
To undertake the death of all the world,
So I might live one hour in your sweet bosom.

LADY ANNE

If I thought that, I tell thee, homicide,
These nails should rend that beauty from my cheeks.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

These eyes could never endure sweet beauty's wreck;
He that bereft thee, lady, of thy husband,
Did it to help thee to a better husband.

LADY ANNE

His better doth not breathe upon the earth.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

He lives that loves thee better than he could.

LADY ANNE

Where is he?

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Here.

She spitteth at him

Why dost thou spit at me?

LADY ANNE

Would it were mortal poison, for thy sake!

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Never came poison from so sweet a place.

LADY ANNE

Never hung poison on a fouler toad.

Out of my sight! thou dost infect my eyes.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

LADY ANNE

Would they were basilisks, to strike thee dead!

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,

Shamed their aspect with store of childish drops:

These eyes that never shed remorseful tear.

And when thy warlike father, like a child,

Told the sad story of my father's death,

And twenty times made pause to sob and weep,

That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks

Like trees bedash'd with rain: in that sad time

My manly eyes did scorn an humble tear;

And what these sorrows could not thence exhale,
Thy beauty hath, and made them blind with weeping.
If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,
Lo, here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword;
Which if thou please to hide in this true bosom.
And let the soul forth that adoreth thee,
I lay it naked to the deadly stroke,
And humbly beg the death upon my knee.

He lays his breast open: she offers at it with his sword

Nay, do not pause; for I did kill King Henry,
But 'twas thy beauty that provoked me.
Nay, now dispatch; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward,
But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.

Here she lets fall the sword

Take up the sword again, or take up me.

LADY ANNE

I will not be the executioner.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Then bid me kill myself, and I will do it.

LADY ANNE

I have already.

'Tis figured in my tongue.

Tush, that was in thy rage:

Speak it again, and, even with the word,
That hand, which, for thy love, did kill thy love,
Shall, for thy love, kill a far truer love;
To both their deaths thou shalt be accessory.

LADY ANNE

I would I knew thy heart.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

'Tis figured in my tongue.

LADY ANNE

I fear me both are false.

GLOUCESTER

Then never man was true.

LADY ANNE

Well, well, put up your sword.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

But shall I live in hope?

LADY ANNE

All men, I hope, live so.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

LADY ANNE

To take is not to give.

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Look, how this ring encompasseth finger.

Even so thy breast encloseth my poor heart;

Wear both of them, for both of them are thine

Bid me farewell.

LADY ANNE

'Tis more than you deserve;

But since you teach me how to flatter you,

Imagine I have said farewell already.

Exeunt LADY ANNE

SCENE 5

RICHARD (Duke of GLOUCESTER)

Was ever woman in this humour woo'd?

Was ever woman in this humour won?

I'll have her; but I will not keep her long.

What! I, that kill'd her husband and his father,

To take her in her heart's extremest hate,

With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,

The bleeding witness of her hatred by;

Having God, her conscience, and these bars

against me,
And I nothing to back my suit at all,
But the plain devil and dissembling looks,
And yet to win her, all the world to nothing!

Ha!

I do mistake my person all this while:
Upon my life, she finds, although I cannot,
Myself to be a marvellous proper man.
I'll be at charges for a looking-glass,
But first I'll turn yon fellow in his grave;
And then return lamenting to my love.
Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass,
That I may see my shadow as I pass.