

The Life and Death of Richard the Third

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SCENE V. The Tower-walls.

Enter GLOUCESTER and BUCKINGHAM, in rotten armour, marvellous ill-favoured

GLOUCESTER

Come, cousin, canst thou quake, and change thy colour,
Murder thy breath in the middle of a word,
And then begin again, and stop again,
As if thou wert distraught and mad with terror?

BUCKINGHAM

Tut, I can counterfeit the deep tragedian;
Speak and look back, and pry on every side,
Tremble and start at wagging of a straw,
Intending deep suspicion: ghastly looks
Are at my service, like enforced smiles;
And both are ready in their offices,
At any time, to grace my stratagems.
But what, is Catesby gone?

GLOUCESTER

He is; and, see, he brings the mayor along.

Enter the Lord Mayor and CATESBY

BUCKINGHAM

Lord mayor,--

GLOUCESTER

Look to the drawbridge there!

BUCKINGHAM

Hark! a drum.

GLOUCESTER

Catesby, o'erlook the walls.

BUCKINGHAM

Lord mayor, the reason we have sent--

GLOUCESTER

Look back, defend thee, here are enemies.

BUCKINGHAM

God and our innocency defend and guard us!

GLOUCESTER

Be patient, they are friends, Ratcliff and Lovel.

Enter LOVEL and RATCLIFF, with HASTINGS' head

LOVEL

Here is the head of that ignoble traitor,
The dangerous and unsuspected Hastings.

GLOUCESTER

So dear I loved the man, that I must weep.
I took him for the plainest harmless creature
That breathed upon this earth a Christian;
Made him my book wherein my soul recorded
The history of all her secret thoughts:
So smooth he daub'd his vice with show of virtue,
That, his apparent open guilt omitted,
I mean, his conversation with Shore's wife,
He lived from all attainder of suspect.

BUCKINGHAM

Well, well, he was the covert'st shelter'd traitor
That ever lived.
Would you imagine, or almost believe,
Were't not that, by great preservation,
We live to tell it you, the subtle traitor
This day had plotted, in the council-house
To murder me and my good Lord of Gloucester?

Lord Mayor

What, had he so?

GLOUCESTER

What, think You we are Turks or infidels?
Or that we would, against the form of law,
Proceed thus rashly to the villain's death,
But that the extreme peril of the case,
The peace of England and our persons' safety,
Enforced us to this execution?

Lord Mayor

Now, fair befall you! he deserved his death;
And you my good lords, both have well proceeded,
To warn false traitors from the like attempts.
I never look'd for better at his hands,
After he once fell in with Mistress Shore.

GLOUCESTER

Yet had not we determined he should die,
Until your lordship came to see his death;
Which now the loving haste of these our friends,
Somewhat against our meaning, have prevented:
Because, my lord, we would have had you heard
The traitor speak, and timorously confess
The manner and the purpose of his treason;
That you might well have signified the same
Unto the citizens, who haply may
Misconstrue us in him and wail his death.

Lord Mayor

But, my good lord, your grace's word shall serve,
As well as I had seen and heard him speak
And doubt you not, right noble princes both,
But I'll acquaint our duteous citizens
With all your just proceedings in this cause.

GLOUCESTER

And to that end we wish'd your lord-ship here,
To avoid the carping censures of the world.

BUCKINGHAM

But since you come too late of our intents,
Yet witness what you hear we did intend:
And so, my good lord mayor, we bid farewell.

Exit Lord Mayor

GLOUCESTER

Go, after, after, cousin Buckingham.
The mayor towards Guildhall hies him in all post:
There, at your meet'st advantage of the time,
Infer the bastardy of Edward's children:
Tell them how Edward put to death a citizen,
Only for saying he would make his son
Heir to the crown; meaning indeed his house,
Which, by the sign thereof was termed so.

Moreover, urge his hateful luxury
And bestial appetite in change of lust;
Which stretched to their servants, daughters, wives,
Even where his lustful eye or savage heart,
Without control, listed to make his prey.
Nay, for a need, thus far come near my person:
Tell them, when that my mother went with child
Of that unsatiate Edward, noble York
My princely father then had wars in France
And, by just computation of the time,
Found that the issue was not his begot;
Which well appeared in his lineaments,
Being nothing like the noble duke my father:
But touch this sparingly, as 'twere far off,
Because you know, my lord, my mother lives.

BUCKINGHAM

Fear not, my lord, I'll play the orator
As if the golden fee for which I plead
Were for myself: and so, my lord, adieu.

GLOUCESTER

If you thrive well, bring them to Baynard's Castle;
Where you shall find me well accompanied
With reverend fathers and well-learned bishops.

BUCKINGHAM

I go: and towards three or four o'clock
Look for the news that the Guildhall affords.

Exit BUCKINGHAM

GLOUCESTER

Go, Lovel, with all speed to Doctor Shaw;

To CATESBY

Go thou to Friar Penker; bid them both
Meet me within this hour at Baynard's Castle.

Exeunt all but GLOUCESTER

Now will I in, to take some privy order,
To draw the brats of Clarence out of sight;
And to give notice, that no manner of person
At any time have recourse unto the princes.

Exit

