

# **William Shakespeare**

## **King Richard III**



**+ Sidney Lee**

**The Classic Biography:  
The Life of William Shakespeare**

**William Shakespeare and Sidney Lee**

# **King Richard III (The Unabridged Play) + The Classic Biography: The Life of William Shakespeare**

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# King Richard III

## Persons Represented

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JOHN MORTON, BISHOP OF ELY

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM

DUKE OF NORFOLK

EARL OF SURREY, his son

EARL RIVERS, brother to King Edward's Queen

MARQUIS OF DORSET and LORD GREY, her sons

EARL OF OXFORD  
LORD HASTINGS  
LORD STANLEY  
LORD LOVEL  
SIR THOMAS VAUGHAN  
SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF  
SIR WILLIAM CATESBY  
SIR JAMES TYRREL  
SIR JAMES BLOUNT  
SIR WALTER HERBERT  
SIR ROBERT BRAKENBURY, Lieutenant of the Tower  
CHRISTOPHER URSWICK, a priest  
Another Priest  
LORD MAYOR OF LONDON  
SHERIFF OF WILTSHIRE

ELIZABETH, Queen to King Edward IV  
MARGARET, widow to King Henry VI  
DUCHESS OF YORK, mother to King Edward IV, Clarence,  
and Gloster  
LADY ANNE, widow to Edward, Prince of Wales, son to  
King Henry VI; afterwards married to the Duke of Gloster  
A YOUNG DAUGHTER OF CLARENCE

Lords, and other Attendants; two Gentlemen, a  
Pursuivant, Scrivener, Citizens, Murderers, Messengers,  
Ghosts, Soldiers, &c.

SCENE: England

# ACT I

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### SCENE I. London. A street

[Enter GLOSTER.]

GLOSTER

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 chang'd to merry meetings,  
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.  
Grim-visag'd war hath smooth'd his wrinkled front;  
And now,—instead of mounting barbèd 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 shap'd 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,  
Deform'd, 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 determinèd 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 Clarence comes.

[Enter CLARENCE, guarded, and BRAKENBURY.]  
Brother, good day: what means this armèd guard  
That waits upon your grace?

CLARENCE  
His majesty,  
Tendering my person's safety, hath appointed  
This conduct to convey me to the Tower.

GLOSTER  
Upon what cause?

CLARENCE  
Because my name is George.

GLOSTER  
Alack, my lord, that fault is none of yours;  
He should, for that, commit your godfathers:—  
O, belike his majesty hath some intent



That you should be new-christen'd in the Tower.  
But what's the matter, Clarence? may I know?

CLARENCE

Yea, Richard, when I know; for I protest  
As yet I do not: but, as I can learn,  
He hearkens after prophecies and dreams;  
And from the cross-row plucks the letter G,  
And says a wizard told him that by G  
His issue disinherited should be;  
And, for my name of George begins with G,  
It follows in his thought that I am he.  
These, as I learn, and such like toys as these,  
Hath mov'd his highness to commit me now.

GLOSTER

Why, this it is when men are rul'd by women:—  
'Tis not the king that sends you to the Tower;  
My Lady Grey his wife, Clarence, 'tis she  
That tempers him to this extremity.  
Was it not she and that good man of worship,  
Antony Woodville, her brother there,  
That made him send Lord Hastings to the Tower,  
From whence this present day he is deliver'd?  
We are not safe, Clarence; we are not safe.

CLARENCE

By heaven, I think there is no man is secure  
But the queen's kindred, and night-walking heralds  
That trudge betwixt the king and Mistress Shore.  
Heard you not what an humble suppliant  
Lord Hastings was to her for his delivery?

GLOSTER

Humbly complaining to her deity  
Got my Lord Chamberlain his liberty.

I'll tell you what,—I think it is our way,  
If we will keep in favour with the king,  
To be her men and wear her livery:  
The jealous o'er-worn widow, and herself,  
Since that our brother dubb'd them gentlewomen,  
Are mighty gossips in our monarchy.

BRAKENBURY

I beseech your graces both to pardon me;  
His majesty hath straitly given in charge  
That no man shall have private conference,  
Of what degree soever, with your brother.

GLOSTER

Even so; an't please your worship, Brakenbury,  
You may partake of any thing we say:  
We speak no treason, man;—we say the king  
Is wise and virtuous; and his noble queen  
Well struck in years, fair, and not jealous;—  
We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,  
A cherry lip, a bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue;  
And that the queen's kindred are made gentlefolks:  
How say you, sir? can you deny all this?

BRAKENBURY

With this, my lord, myself have naught to do.

GLOSTER

Naught to do with Mistress Shore! I tell thee, fellow,  
He that doth naught with her, excepting one,  
Were best to do it secretly alone.

BRAKENBURY

What one, my lord?

GLOSTER

Her husband, knave:—wouldst thou betray me?

BRAKENBURY

I do beseech your grace to pardon me; and, withal,  
Forbear your conference with the noble duke.

CLARENCE

We know thy charge, Brakenbury, and will obey.

GLOSTER

We are the queen's abjects and must obey.—  
Brother, farewell: I will unto the king;  
And whatsoe'er you will employ me in,—  
Were it to call King Edward's widow sister,—  
I will perform it to enfranchise you.  
Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood  
Touches me deeper than you can imagine.

CLARENCE

I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

GLOSTER

Well, your imprisonment shall not be long;  
I will deliver or else lie for you:  
Meantime, have patience.

CLARENCE

I must perforce: farewell.

[Exeunt CLARENCE, BRAKENBURY, and guard.]

GLOSTER

Go tread the path that thou shalt ne'er return.  
Simple, plain Clarence!—I do love thee so  
That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,  
If heaven will take the present at our hands.—  
But who comes here? The new-delivered Hastings?  
[Enter HASTINGS.]

HASTINGS

Good time of day unto my gracious lord!

GLOSTER

As much unto my good Lord Chamberlain!

Well are you welcome to the open air.

How hath your lordship brook'd imprisonment?

HASTINGS

With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must;

But I shall live, my lord, to give them thanks

That were the cause of my imprisonment.

GLOSTER

No doubt, no doubt; and so shall Clarence too;

For they that were your enemies are his,

And have prevail'd as much on him as you.

HASTINGS

More pity that the eagles should be mew'd

Whiles kites and buzzards prey at liberty.

GLOSTER

What news abroad?

HASTINGS

No news so bad abroad as this at home,—

The king is sickly, weak, and melancholy,

And his physicians fear him mightily.

GLOSTER

Now, by Saint Paul, that news is bad indeed.

O, he hath kept an evil diet long,

And overmuch consum'd his royal person:

'Tis very grievous to be thought upon.

What, is he in his bed?

HASTINGS

He is.

GLOSTER

Go you before, and I will follow you.

[Exit HASTINGS.]

He cannot live, I hope; and must not die

Till George be pack'd with posthorse up to heaven.

I'll in, to urge his hatred more to Clarence

With lies well steel'd with weighty arguments;

And, if I fail not in my deep intent,

Clarence hath not another day to live;

Which done, God take King Edward to his mercy,

And leave the world for me to bustle in!

For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter:

What though I kill'd her husband and her father?

The readiest way to make the wench amends

Is to become her husband and her father:

The which will I; not all so much for love

As for another secret close intent,

By marrying her, which I must reach unto.

But yet I run before my horse to market:

Clarence still breathes; Edward still lives and reigns:

When they are gone, then must I count my gains.

[Exit.]

## **SCENE II. London. Another street**

[Enter the corpse of King Henry the Sixth, borne in an open coffin, Gentlemen bearing halberds to guard it; and Lady Anne as mourner.]

ANNE

Set down, set down your honourable load,—

If honour may be shrouded in a hearse,—

Whilst I awhile obsequiously lament  
Th' untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.—  
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:—  
O, cursèd be the hand that made these holes!  
Cursèd the heart that had the heart to do it!  
Cursèd the blood that let this blood from hence!  
More direful hap betide that hated wretch  
That makes us wretched by the death of thee,  
Than I can wish to adders, spiders, toads,  
Or any creeping venom'd thing that lives!  
If ever he have child, abortive be it,  
Prodigious, and untimely brought to light,  
Whose ugly and unnatural aspect  
May fright the hopeful mother at the view;  
And that be heir to his unhappiness!  
If ever he have wife, let her be made  
More miserable by the death of him  
Than I am made by my young lord and thee!—  
Come, now towards Chertsey with your holy load,  
Taken from Paul's to be interrèd there;  
And still, as you are weary of this weight,  
Rest you, whiles I lament King Henry's corse.  
[The Bearers take up the Corpse and advance.]  
[Enter GLOSTER.]  
GLOSTER  
Stay, you that bear the corse, and set it down.

ANNE

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

GLOSTER

Villains, set down the corse; or, by Saint Paul,  
I'll make a corse of him that disobeys!

FIRST GENTLEMAN

My lord, stand back, and let the coffin pass.

GLOSTER

Unmanner'd dog! stand thou, when I command:  
Advance thy halberd higher than my breast,  
Or, by Saint Paul, I'll strike thee to my foot  
And spurn upon thee, beggar, for thy boldness.  
[The Bearers set down the coffin.]

ANNE

What, do you tremble? are you all afraid?  
Alas, I blame you not; for you are mortal,  
And mortal eyes cannot endure the devil.—  
Avaunt, thou dreadful minister of hell!  
Thou hadst but power over his mortal body,  
His soul thou canst not have; therefore, be gone.

GLOSTER

Sweet saint, for charity, be not so curst.

ANNE

Foul devil, for God's sake, hence and trouble us not;  
For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,  
Fill'd it with cursing cries and deep exclaims.  
If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,  
Behold this pattern of thy butcheries.—  
O, gentlemen, 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;  
Thy deeds, inhuman and unnatural,  
Provokes this deluge most unnatural.—  
O God, which this blood mad'st, 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,  
As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood,  
Which his hell-govern'd arm hath butchered!

GLOSTER

Lady, you know no rules of charity,  
Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

ANNE

Villain, thou knowest nor law of God nor man:  
No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

GLOSTER

But I know none, and therefore am no beast.

ANNE

O wonderful, when devils tell the truth!

GLOSTER

More wonderful when angels are so angry.—  
Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,  
Of these supposed crimes to give me leave,  
By circumstance, but to acquit myself.

ANNE

Vouchsafe, diffus'd infection of a man,  
Of these known evils but to give me leave,  
By circumstance, to accuse thy cursèd self.

GLOSTER

Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have  
Some patient leisure to excuse myself.

ANNE

Fouler than heart can think thee, thou canst make  
No excuse current but to hang thyself.

GLOSTER

By such despair I should accuse myself.

ANNE

And by despairing shalt thou stand excus'd;  
For doing worthy vengeance on thyself,  
That didst unworthy slaughter upon others.

GLOSTER

Say that I slew them not?

ANNE

Then say they were not slain:  
But dead they are, and, devilish slave, by thee.

GLOSTER

I did not kill your husband.

ANNE

Why, then he is alive.

GLOSTER

Nay, he is dead; and slain by Edward's hand.

ANNE

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

The which thou once didst bend against her breast,  
But that thy brothers beat aside the point.

GLOSTER

I was provokèd by her slanderous tongue  
That laid their guilt upon my guiltless shoulders.

ANNE

Thou wast provokèd by thy bloody mind,  
That never dreamt on aught but butcheries:  
Didst thou not kill this king?

GLOSTER

I grant ye.

ANNE

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

GLOSTER

The better for the king of Heaven, that hath him.

ANNE

He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come.

GLOSTER

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

ANNE

And thou unfit for any place but hell.

GLOSTER

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

ANNE  
Some dungeon.

GLOSTER  
Your bedchamber.

ANNE  
Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest!

GLOSTER  
So will it, madam, till I lie with you.

ANNE  
I hope so.

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

ANNE  
Thou wast the cause and most accurs'd effect.

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

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

GLOSTER

These eyes could not endure that beauty's wreck;  
You should not blemish it if I stood by:  
As all the world is cheerèd by the sun,  
So I by that; it is my day, my life.

ANNE

Black night o'ershade thy day, and death thy life!

GLOSTER

Curse not thyself, fair creature; thou art both.

ANNE

I would I were, to be reveng'd on thee.

GLOSTER

It is a quarrel most unnatural,  
To be reveng'd on him that loveth thee.

ANNE

It is a quarrel just and reasonable,  
To be reveng'd on him that kill'd my husband.

GLOSTER

He that bereft thee, lady, of thy husband,  
Did it to help thee to a better husband.

ANNE

His better doth not breathe upon the earth.

GLOSTER

He lives that loves thee better than he could.

ANNE

Name him.

GLOSTER  
Plantagenet.

ANNE  
Why, that was he.

GLOSTER  
The selfsame name, but one of better nature.

ANNE  
Where is he?

GLOSTER  
Here.  
[She spits at him.]  
Why dost thou spit at me?

ANNE  
Would it were mortal poison, for thy sake!

GLOSTER  
Never came poison from so sweet a place.

ANNE  
Never hung poison on a fouler toad.  
Out of my sight! thou dost infect mine eyes.

GLOSTER  
Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

ANNE  
Would they were basilisks to strike thee dead!

GLOSTER  
I would they were, that I might die at once;

For now they kill me with a living death.  
Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,  
Sham'd their aspects with store of childish drops:  
These eyes, which never shed remorseful tear,  
No, when my father York and Edward wept,  
To hear the piteous moan that Rutland made  
When black-fac'd Clifford shook his sword at him;  
Nor 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.  
I never su'd to friend nor enemy;  
My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing word;  
But, now thy beauty is propos'd my fee,  
My proud heart sues, and prompts my tongue to speak.  
[She looks scornfully at him.]  
Teach not thy lip such scorn; for it was made  
For kissing, lady, not for such contempt.  
If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,  
Lo, here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword;  
Which if thou please to hide in this true breast  
And let the soul forth that adoreth thee,  
I lay it naked to the deadly stroke,  
And humbly beg the death upon my knee,  
Nay, do not pause; for I did kill King Henry,—  
[He lays his breast open; she offers at it with his sword.]  
But 'twas thy beauty that provokèd me.  
Nay, now dispatch; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward,—  
[She again offers at his breast.]  
But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.  
[She lets fall the sword.]  
Take up the sword again, or take up me.



ANNE

Arise, dissembler: though I wish thy death,  
I will not be thy executioner.

GLOSTER

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

ANNE

I have already.

GLOSTER

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

ANNE

I would I knew thy heart.

GLOSTER

'Tis figured in my tongue.

ANNE

I fear me both are false.

GLOSTER

Then never was man true.

ANNE

Well, well, put up your sword.

GLOSTER

Say, then, my peace is made.

ANNE

That shalt thou know hereafter.

GLOSTER

But shall I live in hope?

ANNE

All men, I hope, live so.

GLOSTER

Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

ANNE

To take is not to give.

[She puts on the ring.]

GLOSTER

Look, how this ring encompasseth thy finger,  
Even so thy breast encloseth my poor heart;  
Wear both of them, for both of them are thine.  
And if thy poor devoted servant may  
But beg one favour at thy gracious hand,  
Thou dost confirm his happiness for ever.

ANNE

What is it?

GLOSTER

That it may please you leave these sad designs  
To him that hath most cause to be a mourner,  
And presently repair to Crosby Place;  
Where,—after I have solemnly interr'd  
At Chertsey monastery, this noble king,  
And wet his grave with my repentant tears,—  
I will with all expedient duty see you:

For divers unknown reasons, I beseech you,  
Grant me this boon.

ANNE

With all my heart; and much it joys me too  
To see you are become so penitent.—  
Tressel and Berkeley, go along with me.

GLOSTER

Bid me farewell.

ANNE

'Tis more than you deserve;  
But since you teach me how to flatter you,  
Imagine I have said farewell already.  
[Exeunt Lady Anne, Tress, and Berk.]

GLOSTER

Sirs, take up the corse.

GENTLEMEN

Towards Chertsey, noble lord?

GLOSTER

No, to White Friars; there attend my coming.  
[Exeunt the rest, with the Corpse.]  
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 no friends to back my suit withal,  
But the plain devil and dissembling looks,  
And yet to win her,—all the world to nothing!

Ha!  
Hath she forgot already that brave prince,  
Edward, her lord, whom I, some three months since,  
Stabb'd in my angry mood at Tewksbury?  
A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,—  
Fram'd in the prodigality of nature,  
Young, valiant, wise, and, no doubt, right royal,—  
The spacious world cannot again afford:  
And will she yet abase her eyes on me,  
That cropp'd the golden prime of this sweet prince,  
And made her widow to a woeful bed?  
On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety?  
On me, that halt and am misshapen thus?  
My dukedom to a beggarly denier,  
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;  
And entertain a score or two of tailors,  
To study fashions to adorn my body:  
Since I am crept in favour with myself,  
I will maintain it with some little cost.  
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.  
[Exit.]

### **SCENE III. London. A Room in the Palace**

[Enter QUEEN ELIZABETH, LORD RIVERS, and LORD GREY.]

RIVERS

Have patience, madam: there's no doubt his majesty  
Will soon recover his accusom'd health.

GREY.

In that you brook it ill, it makes him worse:  
Therefore, for God's sake, entertain good comfort,  
And cheer his grace with quick and merry eyes.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

If he were dead, what would betide on me?

GREY

No other harm but loss of such a lord.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

The loss of such a lord includes all harms.

GREY

The heavens have bless'd you with a goodly son  
To be your comforter when he is gone.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Ah, he is young; and his minority  
Is put unto the trust of Richard Gloster,  
A man that loves not me, nor none of you.

RIVERS

Is it concluded he shall be protector?

QUEEN ELIZABETH

It is determin'd, not concluded yet:  
But so it must be, if the king miscarry.  
[Enter BUCKINGHAM and STANLEY.]

GREY

Here come the Lords of Buckingham and Stanley.

BUCKINGHAM

Good time of day unto your royal grace!

STANLEY

God make your majesty joyful as you have been!

QUEEN ELIZABETH

The Countess Richmond, good my Lord of Stanley,  
To your good prayer will scarcely say amen.  
Yet, Stanley, notwithstanding she's your wife,  
And loves not me, be you, good lord, assur'd  
I hate not you for her proud arrogance.

STANLEY

I do beseech you, either not believe  
The envious slanders of her false accusers;  
Or, if she be accus'd on true report,  
Bear with her weakness, which I think proceeds  
From wayward sickness, and no grounded malice.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Saw you the king to-day, my Lord of Stanley?

STANLEY

But now the Duke of Buckingham and I  
Are come from visiting his majesty.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

What likelihood of his amendment, lords?

BUCKINGHAM

Madam, good hope; his grace speaks cheerfully.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

God grant him health! Did you confer with him?

BUCKINGHAM

Ay, madam; he desires to make atonement

Between the Duke of Gloster and your brothers,  
And between them and my lord chamberlain;  
And sent to warn them to his royal presence.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Would all were well!—but that will never be:  
I fear our happiness is at the height.

[Enter GLOSTER, HASTINGS, and DORSET.]

GLOSTER

They do me wrong, and I will not endure it:—  
Who are they that complain unto the king  
That I, forsooth, am stern and love them not?  
By holy Paul, they love his grace but lightly  
That fill his ears with such dissentious rumours.  
Because I cannot flatter and look fair,  
Smile in men's faces, smooth, deceive, and cog,  
Duck with French nods and apish courtesy,  
I must be held a rancorous enemy.  
Cannot a plain man live, and think no harm,  
But thus his simple truth must be abus'd  
With silken, sly, insinuating Jacks?

GREY

To who in all this presence speaks your grace?

GLOSTER

To thee, that hast nor honesty nor grace.  
When have I injur'd thee? when done thee wrong?—  
Or thee?—or thee?—or any of your faction?  
A plague upon you all! His royal grace,—  
Whom God preserve better than you would wish!—  
Cannot be quiet scarce a breathing while,  
But you must trouble him with lewd complaints.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Brother of Gloster, you mistake the matter.



The king, on his own royal disposition,  
And not provok'd by any suitor else—  
Aiming, belike, at your interior hatred  
That in your outward action shows itself  
Against my children, brothers, and myself—  
Makes him to send; that thereby he may gather  
The ground of your ill-will, and so remove it.

GLOSTER

I cannot tell: the world is grown so bad  
That wrens make prey where eagles dare not perch:  
Since every Jack became a gentleman,  
There's many a gentle person made a Jack.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Come, come, we know your meaning, brother Gloster;  
You envy my advancement, and my friends';  
God grant we never may have need of you!

GLOSTER

Meantime, God grants that we have need of you:  
Our brother is imprison'd by your means,  
Myself disgrac'd, and the nobility  
Held in contempt; while great promotions  
Are daily given to ennoble those  
That scarce, some two days since, were worth a noble.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

By Him that rais'd me to this careful height  
From that contented hap which I enjoy'd,  
I never did incense his majesty  
Against the Duke of Clarence, but have been  
An earnest advocate to plead for him.  
My lord, you do me shameful injury  
Falsely to draw me in these vile suspects.