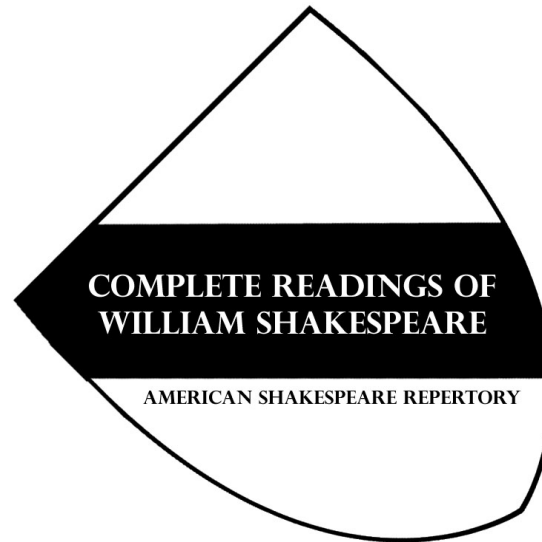


RICHARD II: THOMAS OF WOODSTOCK

EDITED BY JUSTIN ALEXANDER
THE COMPLETE READINGS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
READING 14 - SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2010



CAST LIST

RICHARD II	NEAL BECKMAN
THOMAS OF WOODSTOCK	TIM PERFECT
DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER	ANN FRANCES GREGG
QUEEN ANNE	KELLY BANCROFT
DUKE OF LANCASTER	JUSTIN ALEXANDER
DUKE OF YORK	GAIL FRAZER
ARUNDEL	MIKE RUBKE
BAGOT & LAPOOLE	KATIE HAWKINSON
BUSHY	MARETTA ZILIC
GREENE	BRIGID KELLEY
TRESILIAN	RYAN COBLE
CHENEY	MARTHA HEYL
NIMBLE	LUCAS GERSTNER
CROSBY / FLEMING	SUSANNAH HANDLEY
DUCHESS OF IRELAND	SHELLEY JOHNSON

[ACT I,] SCENE 1

Enter hastily at several doors: Duke of Lancaster, Duke of York, the Earls of Arundel and Surrey, with napkins on their arms and knives in their hands. And Sir Thomas Cheney, with others bearing torches, and some with cloaks and rapiers.

OMNES Lights, lights, bring torches knives.

LANCASTER Shut to the gates,
Let no man out until the house be search'd.

YORK Call for our coaches, let's away good brother.
Now by th' blest saints, I fear we are poisoned all.

ARUNDEL Poison'd my Lord

LANCASTER Aye, aye, good Arundel, it is high time begone.
May ~~God~~ heaven be blest for this prevention.

YORK God for thy mercy, would our cousin king
So cozen us, to poison us in our meat?

LANCASTER Has no man here some helping antidote
For fear already we have taken some dram?
What think'st thou Cheney, thou first broughtst the tidings?
Are we not poisoned, think'st thou?

CHENEY Fear not, my lords.
That mischievous potion was as yet unserv'd.
It was a liquid bane dissolv'd in wine
Which after supper should have been carous'd
To young King Richard's health.

LANCASTER Good i'faith are his uncles' deaths become
Health to King Richard? How came it out?

Sir Thomas Cheney, pray resolve us ~~this doubt~~.

CHENEY A Carmelite friar, my lord, reveal'd the plot
And should have acted it, but touched in conscience
He came to your good brother; the Lord Protector.
And so disclosed it; who straight sent me to you.

YORK The lord protect him for it, aye, and our cousin king.
High heaven be judge we wish all good to him—

LANCASTER A heavy charge, good Woodstock, hast thou had
To be protector to so wild a prince
So far degenerate from his noble father
<Whom the trembling French the Black Prince call'd
(Not of a swart and melancholy brow
For sweet and lovely was his countenance
But that he made so many funeral days
In mournful France: The warlike battles won
At Crecy field, Poitiers, Artoise, and Maine
Made all France groan under his conquering arm)>
But heaven forestalled his diadem on earth
To place him with a royal crown in heaven.
Rise may his dust to glory: Ere he'd have done
A deed so base unto his enemy,
Much less unto the brothers of his father,
He'd first have lost his royal blood in drops,
Dissolv'd the strings of his humanity
And lost that livelihood that was preserv'd
To make his (unlike) son a wanton king.

YORK Forbear, good John of Gaunt; believe me brother,
We may do wrong unto our cousin king.
I fear his flattering minions more than him.

LANCASTER By the blest virgin, noble Edmund York,
I'm past all patience. Poison his subjects,
His royal Uncles? Why the proud Castilian[s]

Where John of Gaunt writes king and sovereign,
Would not throw off their vile and servile yoke
By treachery so base; patience, gracious heaven.

ARUNDEL A good invoke, right princely Lancaster.
Calm thy high spleen. Sir Thomas Cheney here
Can tell the circumstance; pray give him leave.

LANCASTER Well, let him speak.

CHENEY 'Tis certainly made known, my reverent Lords,
To your loved brother, and the good protector
That not King Richard but his flatterers
(Sir Henry Greene; joined with Sir Edward Bagot
and that sly machiavel Tresilian,
whom now the King elects for Lord Chief Justice)
Had all great hands in this conspiracy.

LANCASTER By blessed Mary! I will confound them all.

YORK Your spleen confounds yourself.

LANCASTER By kingly Edward's soul, my royal father,
I'll be reveng'd at full on all their lives.

YORK Nay if your rage break to such high extremes
You will prevent yourself, and lose revenge.

LANCASTER Why Edmund, canst thou give a reason yet
Though we so near in blood, his hapless Uncles,
(His grandsire Edward's sons; his father's brothers)
Should thus be made away, why might it be
That Arundel and Surrey here should die?

SURREY Some friend of theirs wanted my earldom sore.

ARUNDEL Perhaps my office of the Admiralty.

If a better and more fortunate hand
Could govern it I would 'twere none of mine.
Yet thus much can I say; and make my praise
No more than merit: A wealthier prize
Did never yet take harbor in our roads
Than I to England brought; you all can tell
Full threescore sail of tall and lusty ships
And six great carracks fraught with oil and wines
I brought King Richard in abundance home.
So much that plenty hath so staled our palates
As that a tun of high-prized wines of France
Is hardly worth a mark of English money.
If service such as this done to my country
Merit my heart to bleed, let it bleed freely.

LANCASTER We'll bleed together, warlike Arundel.
Cousin of Surrey. Princely Edmund York.
Let us think on some revenge: If we must die
Ten thousand souls shall keep us company.

YORK Patience good Lancaster, tell me, kind Cheney,
How does thy master, our good brother Woodstock,
Plain Thomas (for, by th' rood, so all men call him
For his plain dealing and his simple clothing).
"Let others jet in silk and gold", says he,
"A coat of English frieze, best pleaseth me."
How thinks his unsophisticated plainness
Of these bitter compounds? Fears he no drug
Put in his broth? Shall his healths be secure?

CHENEY Faith my Lord, his mind suits with his habit,
Homely and plain. Both free from pride and envy
And therein will admit distrust to none.

*Enter Thomas of Woodstock in frieze. The mace [afore him]. The Lord
Mayor Exton and others with lights afore them.*

CHENEY And see his grace himself is come to greet you.
By your leave there, room for my Lord Protector's grace.

YORK/LANCASTER Health to your grace.

WOODSTOCKI salute your healths good brothers, pray pardon me,
I will speak with you anon: Hie thee, good Exton.
Good Lord Mayor, I do beseech ye prosecute
With your best care a means for all our safeties.
Mischief hath often double practices,
Treachery wants not his second stratagem,
Who knows but steel may hit, though poison fail.
Alack the day, the night is made a veil
To shadow mischief. Set, I beseech,
Strong guard and careful to attend the city.
Our lady help, we know not who are friends
Our foes are grown so mighty; pray be careful.

LORD MAYOR Your friends are great in London. Good my Lord,
I'll front all dangers, trust it on my word.

WOODSTOCK Thanks from my heart I swear:

Exit Lord Mayor.

Afore my God

I know not which way to bestow myself
The times so busy and so dangerous too.
Why how now brothers; how fares good John of Gaunt?
Thou'rt vex'd I know; thou griev'st, kind Edmund York;
Arundel and Surrey, noble kinsmen
I know ye all are discontented much;
But be not so. Afore my God I swear
King Richard loves you all: And credit me,
The princely gentleman is innocent
Of this black deed and base conspiracy.

Speak, speak, how is't with princely Lancaster?

LANCASTER Sick Gloucester, sick. We all are weary
And fain we would lie down to rest ourselves
But that so many serpents lurk i'th' grass
We dare not sleep.

WOODSTOCK Enough, enough.
Good brother, I have found out the disease.
When the head aches, the body is not healthful.
King Richard's wounded with a wanton humor;
Lull'd and secured by flattering sycophants;
But 'tis not deadly yet, it may be cured.
Some vein let blood where the corruption lies
And all shall heal again—

YORK Then lose no time, lest it grow ulcerous.
The false Tresilian, Greene, and Bagot
Run naught but poison, brother, spill them all.

LANCASTER They guide the nonage King; 'tis they protect him.
Ye wear the title of protectorship
But like an under-officer, as though
Yours were derived from theirs; faith, y'are too plain.

WOODSTOCK In my apparel, you'll say.

LANCASTER Good faith in all.
The commons murmur 'gainst the [dissolute] King;
Treason is whisper'd at each common table
As customary as their thanks to heaven.
Men need not gaze up to the sky to see
Whether the sun shine clear or no, 'tis found
By the small light should beautify the ground.
Conceit you me, a blind man thus much sees:
He wants his eyes to whom we bend our knees.

ARUNDEL You all are princes of the royal blood
Yet like great oaks ye let the ivy grow
To eat your hearts out with his false embraces;
Ye understand, my Lord?

WOODSTOCK Aye, aye, good coz, as if ye plainly said
Destroy those flatterers and tell King Richard
He does abase himself to countenance them.
Soft, soft,
Fruit that grows high is not securely pluck'd.
We must use ladders and by steps ascend
Till by degrees we reach the altitude.
You conceit me too, pray be smooth awhile.
Tomorrow is the solemn nuptial day
Betwixt the king and virtuous Anne-a-Beame
The Emperor's daughter, a right gracious lady
That's come to England for King Richard's love.
Then as you love his grace (and hate his flatterers)
Discount'nance not the day with the least frown;
Be ignorant of what ye know: Afore my god
I have good hope this happy marriage (brothers)
Of this so noble and religious princess
Will mildly calm his headstrong youth to see
And shun those stains that blurs his majesty.
If not, by good King Edward's bones, our royal father,
I will remove those hinderers of his health,
(Tho't cost my head.)

YORK/LANCASTER On these conditions, brother, we agree.

ARUNDEL And I.

SURREY And I.

LANCASTER To hide our hate is soundest policy.

YORK And brother Gloucester, since it is your pleasure

To have us smooth our sullen brows with smiles
We'd have you suit your outside to your heart
And like a courtier cast this country habit
For which the coarse and vulgar call your grace
By th' title of plain Thomas: Yet we doubt not
Tomorrow we shall have good hope to see
Your high protectorship in bravery.

WOODSTOCK No no, good York, this is as fair a sight.
My heart in this plain frieze sits true and right.
In this I will serve my King as true and bold
As if my outside were all trapp'd in gold.

LANCASTER By Mary but you shall not, brother Woodstock.
What, the marriage day to Richard and his Queen,
And will ye so disgrace the state and realm?
We'll have you brave, i' faith!

WOODSTOCK Well, well,
For your sakes, brothers, and this solemn day
For once I'll sumpter a gaudy wardrobe. But 'tis more
Than I have done, I vow, this twenty years.
Afore my God, the King could not have entreated me
To leave this habit, but your wills be done.
Let's hie to court; you all your wishes have;
One weary day, plain Thomas will be brave.

Exeunt omnes.

[ACT I,] SCENE 2

Enter Greene, Bagot, and Tresilian in rage.

TRESILIAN Nay good Sir Henry, King Richard calls for you.

BAGOT Prithee sweet Greene
Visit his highness and forsake these passions.

GREENE 'Sblood I am vex'd, Tresilian mad me not;
Thyself and I and all are now undone.
The Lords at London are secur'd from harm,
The plot's revealed. Black curses seize the traitor.

BAGOT Eternal torments whip that Carmelite.

TRESILIAN A deeper hell than Limbo Patrum hold him;
A fainting villain, confusion crush his soul.

BAGOT Could the false slave recoil and swore their deaths.

GREENE Mischief devour him; had it but ta'en effect
On Lancaster and Edmund Duke of York
(Those headstrong Uncles to the gentle king)
The third brother, plain Thomas the Protector,
Had quickly been removed; but since 'tis thus
Our safeties must be [cared] for, and 'tis best
To keep us near the person of the king.
Had they been dead, [we'd] ruled the realm and him.

BAGOT So shall we still so long as Richard lives.
I know he cannot brook his stubborn uncles.
Come think not on't: Cheer thee, Tresilian,
Here's better news for thee: We have so wrought
With kingly Richard, that by his consent
You are already mounted on your footcloth

(Your scarlet, or your purple, which ye please)
And shortly are to underprop the name
(Mark me, Tresilian) of Lord Chief Justice of England.

TRESILIAN Hum, hum, hum, legit or non legit?
Methinks already I sit upon the bench
With dreadful frowns frightening the lousy rascals,
And when the jury once cries "guilty"
Could pronounce "Lord have mercy on thee"
With a brow as rough and stern as surly
Rhadamanth; or when a fellow talks
Cry "Take him, jailor; clap bolts of iron
On his heels and hands". Chief Justice, my lords.
Hum, hum, hum.
I will wear the office in his true ornament.

GREENE But good your honour, as 'twill shortly be,
You must observe and fashion to the time
The habit of your laws. The King is young,
Aye, and a little wanton: So perhaps are we.
Your laws must not be beadles then, Tresilian,
To punish your benefactors, look to that.

TRESILIAN How sir, to punish you, the minions to the king,
The jewels of his heart, his dearest loves?
'Zounds, I will screw and wind the stubborn law
To any fashion that shall like you best.
It shall be law, what I shall say is law,
And what's most suitable to all your pleasures.

BAGOT Thanks to your lordship which is yet to come.

GREENE Farewell, Tresilian, still be near the court.
Anon King Richard shall confirm thy state.
We must attend his grace to Westminster
To the high nuptials of fair Anne-a-Beame
That must be now his wife, and England's Queen.

TRESILIAN So let them pass. Tresilian, now bethink thee,
Hum, Lord Chief Justice; methinks already
I am swelled more plump than erst I was.
Authority's a dish that feeds men fat,
An excellent delicate: Yet best be wise,
No state's secure without some enemies.
The dukes will frown; why I can look as grim
As John of Gaunt, and all that frown with him.
But yet until mine office be put on
By kingly Richard, I'll conceal myself,
Framing such subtle laws that (Janus-like)
May with a double face salute them both;
I'll search my brain and turn the leaves of law.
Wit makes us great, greatness keeps fools in awe.
My man there, ho; where's Nimble?

[Enter] Nimble.

NIMBLE As Nimble as an eel, sir. Did ye call, sir?

TRESILIAN Sir: Look out some better phrase, salute again.

NIMBLE I know no other, sir, unless you will be frenchified,
and let me lay the *monsieur* to your charge, or sweet *signior*.

TRESILIAN Neither, 'tis higher yet: Nimble, thou buckram
scribe, think once again.

NIMBLE Neither sir: nor *monsieur*: nor *signior*: What should I
call him, trow? He's monstrously translated suddenly: At first when
we were schoolfellows then I called him sirrah, but since he became
my master I pared away the "ah" and serv'd him with the Sir: What
title he has got now, I know not, but I'll try further.

Has your worship any employment for me?

TRESILIAN Thou gross uncaput, thou speakest not yet.

NIMBLE My mouth was open I'm sure: If your honor
Would please to hear me—

TRESILIAN Ha, Honor say'st thou?
Aye, now thou hittest it nimble.

NIMBLE I knew I should
Wind about ye till I had your honor.

TRESILIAN Nimble, bend thy knee.
The Lord Chief Justice of England speaks to thee.

NIMBLE The Lord be praised, we shall have a flourishing
commonwealth, sir.

TRESILIAN Peace, let me speak to thee.

NIMBLE Yes, anything, so your honor not pray for me. I care
not for now you're Lord Chief Justice: If ever ye cry, Lord have
mercy upon me, I shall hang for't sure.

TRESILIAN No. Those fearful words shall not be pronounc'st
'gainst thee, Nimble.

NIMBLE Thank ye, my lord. Nay and you'll stand between
me and the gallows, I'll be an arrant thief sure; if I cannot pick up my
crumbs by the law quickly, I'll cast away my buckram bags and be a
highway lawyer now certainly.

TRESILIAN Canst thou remember, Nimble, how by degrees I
rose, since first thou knew'st me? I was first a schoolboy.

NIMBLE Aye, saving your honor's speech, your worshipful
tail was whipp'd for stealing my dinner out of my satchel: You were
ever so crafty in your childhood that I knew your worship would
prove a good lawyer.

ACT I, SCENE 3

TRESILIAN Interrupt me not; those days thou knew'st, I say,
From whence I did become a plodding clerk,
From which I bounce'st as thou dost now in buckram
To be a pleading lawyer. And there I stayed,
Till by the king I was Chief Justice made.
Nimble, I read this discipline to thee
To stir thy mind up still to Industry.

NIMBLE Thank your good lordship.

TRESILIAN Go to thy mistress: "Lady" you now must call her.
Bid her remove her household up to London;
Tell her our fortunes, and with how much peril
We have attain'd this place of eminence;
Go and remove her.

NIMBLE With a habis corpus or a surssararis, I assure ye.
And so I leave your Lordship, always hoping of your wonted favor,
that when I have pass'd the London Bridge of affliction I may arrive
with you at the Westminster Hall of promotion. And then I care not.

TRESILIAN Thou shalt: Thou hast an executing look
And I will put the axe into thy hand.
I rule the law: Thou by the law shalt stand.

NIMBLE I thank your lordship, and a fig for the rope then.

Exeunt [omnes].

Sound a sennet. Enter in great state.

King Richard [and] Queen Anne, crowned.

Lancaster, York, Arundel, Surrey, Greene, Bagot.

*And Woodstock very brave, the Duchess of Gloucester, and the Duchess of
Ireland.*

RICHARD Bagot and Greene, next to the fair Queen Anne
Take your high places, by King Richard's side,
And give fair welcome to our Queen and bride.
Uncles of Woodstock, York, and Lancaster
Make full our wishes, and salute our Queen;
Give all your welcomes to fair Anne-a-Beame.

LANCASTER I hope sweet prince, her Grace mistakes us not
To make our hearts the worser part of us;
Our tongues have in our English eloquence
(Harsh though it is) pronounc'st her welcomes many
By oaths and loyal protestations
To which we add a thousand infinites;
But in a word, fair Queen, for ever welcome.

WOODSTOCK Let me prevent the rest for mercy's sake;
If all their welcomes be as long as thine
This health will not go round this week by th'mass.
Sweet Queen, and cousin, now I'll call you so
In plain and honest phrase, welcome to England;
Think they speak all in me, and you have seen
All England cry with joy, "God bless the Queen";
And so afore my God I know they wish it.
Only I fear my duty not misconst'red,
Nay, nay, King Richard, 'fore God I'll speak the truth:
Sweet Queen, y'have found a young and wanton choice,
A wildhead, yet a kingly gentleman.
A youth unsettled, yet he's princely bred

Descended from the royal'st bloods in Europe,
The kingly stock of England and of France;
Yet he's a hare-brain, a very wag i' faith,
But you must bear, madam: 'las, he's but a blossom,
But his maturity I hope you'll find
True English bred, a king loving and kind.

RICHARD I thank ye for your double praise, good uncle.

WOODSTOCK Aye, aye, good coz. I'm plain Thomas, by th'rood,
I'll speak the truth.

QUEEN ANNE My sovereign Lord. And you true English peers.
Your all-accomplished honors have so tied
My senses by a magical restraint
In the sweet spells of this your fair demeanors
That I am bound and charmed from what I was;
My native country I no more remember
But as a tale told in my infancy,
The greatest part forgot: And that which is
Appears to England's fair Elysium
Like brambles to the cedars, [coarse] to fine,
Or like the wild grape to the fruitful vine;
And having left the earth where I was bred
And English made, let me be Englished;
They best shall please me shall me English call.
My heart, great king, to you: my love to all.

RICHARD Gramercy Nan, thou highly honor'st me.

YORK And blest is England in this sweet accord.

WOODSTOCK Afore my God, sweet queen, our English ladies
And all the women that this isle contains
Shall sing in praise of this your memory
And keep records of virtuous Anne a Beame
Whose discipline hath taught them womanhood.

What erst seemed well by custom, now looks rude;
Our women till your coming, fairest cousin,
Did use like men to straddle when they ride,
But you have taught them now to sit aside.
Yet by your leave young practice often reels;
I have seen some of your scholars kick up both their heels!

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER What have you seen, my Lord?

WOODSTOCK Nay, nay, nothing, wife.
I see little without spectacles thou know'st.

RICHARD Trust him not, Aunt, for now he's grown so brave
He will be courting. Aye, and kissing too.
Nay, uncle. Now I'll do as much for you,
And lay your faults all open to the world.

WOODSTOCK Aye, aye, do, do.

RICHARD I am glad you are grown so careless: Now by my crown
I swear, good uncles York and Lancaster,
When you this morning came to visit me
I did not know him in this strange attire.
How comes this golden metamorphosis
From homespun housewifery? Speak, good uncle;
I never saw you hatched and gilded thus.

WOODSTOCK I am no stoic, my dear sovereign cousin,
To make my plainness seem canonical,
But to allow myself such ornaments
As might be fitting for your nuptial day
And coronation of your virtuous Queen;
But were the eye of day once closed again
Upon this back they never more should come.

RICHARD You have much graced the day; but noble Uncle
I did observe what I have wondered at:

As we today rode on to Westminster
Methought your horse (that wont to tread the ground
And pace as if he kicked it scornfully,
Mound and curvet like strong Bucephalus)
Today he trod as slow and melancholy
As if his legs had failed to bear his load.

WOODSTOCK And can ye blame the beast? Afore my God
He was not wont to bear such loads; indeed
A hundred oaks upon these shoulders hang
To make me brave upon your wedding day.
And more than that: To make my horse more tire,
Ten acres of good land are stitch'd up here.
You know, good coz, this was not wont to be.

RICHARD In your t'other hose, Uncle?

GREENE No, nor his frieze coat neither.

WOODSTOCK Aye, aye, mock on, my t'other hose, say ye?
There's honest plain dealing in my t'other hose.
Should this fashion last I must raise new rents,
Undo my poor tenants, turn away my servants,
And guard myself with lace; nay, sell more land
And Lordships too, by th'rood; hear me King Richard:
If thus I jet in pride, I still shall lose;
But I'll build castles in my t'other hose.

QUEEN ANNE The king but jests, my lord; and you grow angry.

WOODSTOCK T'other hose, did some here wear that fashion
They would not tax and pill the commons so.

YORK 'sfoot, he forewarned us, and will break out himself.

LANCASTER No matter, we'll back him, though it grows to blows.

WOODSTOCK Scoff ye my plainness, I will talk no riddles,
Plain Thomas will speak plainly: There's Bagot there
And Greene —

GREENE And what of them, my Lord?

WOODSTOCK Upstarts come down, you have no places [there];
Here is better men to grace King Richard's chair,
If it pleased him grace them so.

RICHARD Uncle, forbear.

WOODSTOCK These [cut] the columns that should prop thy house;
They tax the poor, and I am scandaled for it
That by my fault those late oppressions rise
To set the commons in a mutiny
That London even itself was sack'd by them.
And who did all these rank commotions point at?
Even at these two. Bagot here and Greene,
With false Tresilian, whom your grace we hear
Hath made Chief Justice: Well, well, be it so;
Mischief on mischief sure will shortly flow.
Pardon my speech, my lord, since now we're all so brave
To grace Queen Anne, this day we will spend in sport;
But in my t'other hose, I'll tickle them for't.

GREENE Come, come, ye dote, my lord.

LANCASTER Dote, sir? Know ye to whom ye speak?

RICHARD No more, good uncles. Come, sweet Greene, [have] done.
I'll wring them all for this, by England's crown.
Why is our Lord Protector so outrageous?

WOODSTOCK Because thy subjects have such outrage shown them
By these thy flatterers. Let the sun dry up
What th'unwholesome fog hath choked the ground with.

Here's Arundel; thy ocean's Admiral
Hath brought thee home a rich and wealthy prize,
Taken three score sail of ships and six great carracks
All richly laden; let those goods be sold
To satisfy those borrowed sums of coin
Their pride hath forced from the needy commons,
To salve which inconvenience I beseech your Grace
You would vouchsafe to let me have the sale
And distribution of those goods.

RICHARD Our word, good uncle, is already passed,
Which cannot with our honor be recalled:
Those wealthy prizes already are bestow'd
On these our friends.

ALL LORDS On them, my Lord?

RICHARD Yes, who storms at it?

WOODSTOCK Shall cankers eat the fruit
That planting and good husbandry hath nourish'd?

GREENE / BAGOT Cankers?

YORK / ARUNDEL Aye, cankers! caterpillars!

LANCASTER Worse than consuming fires that [eat] up
All their furies [fall] upon.

RICHARD Once more be still.
Who is't that dares encounter with our will?
We did bestow them. Hear me, kind uncles,
We shall ere long be past protectorship.
Then will we rule ourself. And even till then
We let ye know those gifts are given to them.
We did it, Woodstock.

WOODSTOCK Ye have done ill, then.

RICHARD Ha, dare ye say so?

WOODSTOCK Dare I? Afore my God I'll speak, King Richard,
Were I assured this day my head should off.
I tell ye, sir, my allegiance stands excused
In justice of the cause: Ye have done ill.
The sun of mercy never shine on me
But I speak truth: When warlike Arundel,
Beset at sea, fought for those wealthy prizes
He did with fame advance the English cross,
Still crying, "Courage in King Richard's name."
For thee he won them, and do thou enjoy them
He'll fetch more honors home. But had he known
That kites should have enjoy'd the eagle's prize
The fraught had swum unto thine enemies.

RICHARD So, sir, we'll soothe your vexed spleen, good uncle,
And mend what is amiss. To those slight gifts
Not worth acceptance, thus much more we add:
Young Henry Greene shall be Lord Chancellor,
Bagot, Lord Keeper of our Privy Seal;
Tresilian, learned in our kingdom's laws,
Shall be Chief Justice. By them and their directions
King Richard will uphold his government.

GREENE Change no more words, my lord, ye do deject
Your kingly majesty to speak to such
Whose home-spun judgments, like their frosty beards,
Would blast the blooming hopes of all your kingdom.
Were I as you, my lord —

QUEEN ANNE Oh gentle Greene, throw no more fuel on
But rather seek to mitigate this heat.
Be patient, kingly Richard, quench this ire;
Would I had tears of force to stint this fire.

RICHARD Beshrew the churls that make my queen so sad.
But by my grandsire Edward's kingly bones,
My princely father's tomb, King Richard swears
We'll make them weep these wrongs in bloody tears.
Come fair Queen Anne a Beame: Bagot and Greene
Keep by King Richard's side; but as for you,
We'll shortly make your stiff obedience bow.

Exeunt King [Richard] and Queen [Anne].

BAGOT Remember this, my lords,
We keep the Seal: Our strength you all shall know.

Exit Bagot.

GREENE And we are chancellor: We love you well, think so.

Exit Greene.

YORK God for his mercy, shall we brook these braves,
Disgraced and threatened thus by fawning knaves?

LANCASTER Shall we that were great Edward's princely sons
Be thus out-braved by flattering sycophants?

WOODSTOCK Afore my God and holy saints I swear
But that my tongue hath liberty to show
The inly passions boiling in my breast,
I think my over-burthen'd heart would break.
What then may we conjecture? What's the cause
Of this remiss and inconsiderate dealing
Urg'd by the King and his confederates,
But hate to virtue, and a mind corrupt
With all preposterous rude misgovernment?

LANCASTER These prizes ta'en by warlike Arundel

Before his face are given those flatterers.

SURREY It is his custom to be prodigal
To any but to those do best deserve.

ARUNDEL Because he knew you would bestow them well
He gave it such, as for their private gain,
Neglect both honor and their country's good.

Wind horns within.

LANCASTER How now, what noise is this?

YORK Some posts it seems; pray heaven the news be good.

Enter Cheney.

WOODSTOCK Amen, I pray. For England's happiness,
Speak, speak, what tidings Cheney?

CHENEY Of war, my lord. And civil dissension:
The men of Kent and Essex do rebel.

WOODSTOCK I thought no less, and all ways fear'd as much.

CHENEY The shrieves in post have sent unto your Grace
That order be ta'en to stay the commons
For fear rebellion rise in open arms.

WOODSTOCK Now, headstrong Richard, shalt thou reap the fruit
Thy lewd licentious willfulness hath sown.
I know not which way to bestow myself.

YORK There is no standing on delay, my lords,
These hot eruptions must have some redress
Or else in time they will grow incurable.

WOODSTOCK The commons, they rebel: And the king all careless.
Here's wrong on wrong to stir more mutiny.
Afore my God I know not what to do.

LANCASTER Take open arms. Join with the vexed commons
And hale his minions from his wanton side;
Their heads cut off, the people's satisfied.

WOODSTOCK Not so, not so, alack the day good brother.
We may not so affright the tender prince.
We'll bear us nobly for the kingdom's safety
And the king's honour. Therefore list to me.
You, brother Gaunt and noble Arundel,
Shall undertake by threats or fair entreaty
To pacify the murmuring commons' rage;
And whiles you there employ your service hours
We presently will call a parliament
And have their deeds examin'd thoroughly;
Where if by fair means we can win no favor
Nor make King Richard leave their companies,
We'll thus resolve, for our dear country's good,
To right her wrongs, or for it spend our bloods.

LANCASTER About it then, we for the commons, you for the court.

WOODSTOCK Aye, aye. Good Lancaster, I pray be careful.
Come brother York, we soon shall right all wrong,
And send some headless from the court ere long.

Exeunt omnes.

ACT II, [SCENE 1]

Trumpets sound.

Enter King Richard, Greene, Bagot, Bushy, Scroop, Tresilian, and others.

RICHARD Thus shall King Richard suit his princely train
Despite his uncle's pride. Embrace us, gentlemen.
Sir Thomas Bagot, Bushy, Greene, and Scroop,
Your youths are fitting to our tender years
And such shall beautify our princely throne.
Fear not my uncles, nor their proudest strength,
For I will buckler ye against them all.

GREENE Thanks, dearest lord; let me have Richard's love
And like a rock unmoved my state shall stand
Scorning the proudest peer that rules the land.

BUSHY Your uncles [seek] to overturn your state,
To awe ye like a child, that they alone
May at their pleasures thrust you from the throne.

SCROOP As if the sun were forced to [decline]
Before his dated time of darkness comes.

BAGOT Sweet king, set courage to authority
And let them know the power of majesty.

GREENE May not the lion roar, because he's young?
What are your uncles but as elephants
That set their aged bodies to the oak?
You are the oak against whose stock they lean:
Fall from them once, and then destroy them ever.
Be thou no stay, King Richard, to their strength
But as a tyrant unto tyranny,
And so confound them all eternally.

TRESILIAN Law must extend unto severity
When subjects dare to brave their sovereign.

RICHARD Tresilian, thou art Lord Chief Justice now,
Who should be learned in the laws but thee?
Resolve us therefore what thou thinkst of them
That under title of protectorship
Seek to subvert their king and sovereign.

TRESILIAN As of the king's rebellious enemies:
As underminers of his sacred state:
[Which] in the greatest prince or mightiest peer
That is a subject to your majesty
Is nothing less than treason capital
And he is a traitor that endeavors it.

Book.

RICHARD Attaint them then, arrest them and condemn them.

GREENE Hale them to the block and cut off all their heads,
And then King Richard claim the government.

RICHARD See it be done, Tresilian, speedily.

TRESILIAN That course is all too rash, my gracious lord.

ALL Too rash for what?

TRESILIAN It must be done with greater policy
For fear the people rise in mutiny.

RICHARD Aye, there is the fear; the commons love them well
And all applaud the wily Lancaster,
The counterfeit relenting Duke of York,
Together with our fretful uncle Woodstock,
With greater reverence than King Richard's self.

But time shall come, when we shall yoke their necks
And make them bend to our obedience.
How now, what read'st thou, Bushy?

BUSHYThe monument of English chronicles, ~~my lord~~,
Containing acts and memorable deeds
Of all your famous predecessor kings.

RICHARD What find'st thou of them?

BUSHYExamples strange and wonderful, my lord;
The end of treason even in mighty persons;
For here 'tis said your royal grandfather,
Although but young and under government,
Took the protector then, proud Mortimer,
And on a gallows fifty foot in height
He hung him for his pride and treachery.

RICHARD Why should our proud protector then presume
And we not punish him, whose treason's viler far
Than ever was rebellious Mortimer?
Prithee read on, examples such as these
Will bring us to our kingly grandsire's spirit.
What's next?

BUSHYThe battle full of dread and doubtful fear
Was fought betwixt your father and the French.

RICHARD Read on, we'll hear it.

BUSHY*Then the Black Prince, encouraging his soldiers, being in number by 7,750 gave the onset to the French king's peasant army, which were number'd to 68,000, and in one hour got the victory, slew 6,000 of the French soldiers, took prisoners of dukes, earls, knights, and gentlemen to the number 1,700, and of the common sort 10,000, so the prisoners that were taken were twice so many as the Englishmen were in number. Besides, the thrice-renowned prince took with his own hand King John of France and his*

son prisoners. This was called the Battle of Poitiers and was fought on Monday the 19th of September 1363, my lord.

RICHARD A victory most strange and admirable;
Never was conquest got with such great odds.
Oh princely Edward, had thy son such hap,
Such fortune, and success to follow him,
His daring uncles and rebellious peers
Durst not control and govern as they do.
But these bright shining trophies shall awake me,
And as we are his body's counterfeit
So will we be the image of his mind
And die but we'll attain his virtuous deeds:
What next ensues, good Bushy? Read the rest.

BUSHY Here is set down, my princely sovereign,
The certain time and day when you were born.

RICHARD Our birthday say'st thou? Is that noted there?

BUSHY It is, my lord.

RICHARD Prithee let me hear't,
For thereby hangs a secret mystery
Which yet our uncle strangely keeps from us.
On, Bushy.

BUSHY Upon the third of April 1365 was Lord Richard, son to the Black Prince, born at Bordeaux.

RICHARD Stay: Let me think awhile: Read it again.

BUSHY Upon the third of April 1365 was Lord Richard, son to the Black Prince born at Bordeaux.

RICHARD 1365. What year is this?

GREENE 'Tis now, my lord, 1387.

RICHARD By that account the third of April next
Our age is number'd [two and twenty] years.
Oh treacherous men that have deluded us;
We might have claim'd our right a twelve-month since.
Shut up thy book, good Bushy: Bagot, Greene,
King Richard in his throne will now be seen;
This day I'll claim my right, my kingdom's due;
Our uncles well shall know they but intrude,
For which we will smite their base ingratitude.

BAGOT Edmond of Langley, Duke of York (my lord)
Sent from the Lord Protector and the peers
Doth crave admittance to your royal presence.

RICHARD Our uncle Edmond so: Were it not he
We would not speak with him: But go admit him:
Woodstock and Gaunt are stern and troublesome,
But York is gentle: Mild and generous,
And therefore we admit his conference.

Enter York.

BAGOT He comes, my lord.

RICHARD Methinks 'tis strange, my good and reverent uncle,
You and the rest should thus malign against us,
And every hour with rude and bitter taunts
Abuse King Richard and his harmless friends.
We had a father that once call'd ye brother,
A grandsire too that titled you his son;
But could they see how you have wrong'd King Richard
Their ghosts would haunt ye: And in dead of night
Fright all your quiet sleeps with horrid fears.
I pray stand up, we honor reverent years
In meaner subjects; good uncle rise and tell us

What further mischiefs are there now devised
To torture and afflict your sovereign with.

YORK My royal lord. Even by my birth I swear,
[By] father's tomb and faith to heaven I owe,
Your uncle's thoughts are all most honorable,
And to that end the good Protector sends me
To certify your sacred majesty.
The peers of England now are all assembled
To hold a parliament at Westminster
And humbly crave your highness would be there
To sit in counsel touching such affairs
As shall concern your country's government.

RICHARD Have they so soon procured a parliament;
Without our knowledge, too? 'Tis somewhat strange.
Yet say, good uncle, we will meet them straight.

YORK The news to all will be most wish'd and welcome;
I take my leave and to your grace I swear
(As I am subject loyal, just, and true)
We'll nothing do to hurt the realm nor you.

RICHARD We shall believe you uncle: Go attend him.

Exit York.

Yes we will meet them, but with such intent
As shall dismiss their sudden parliament
Till we be pleased to summon and direct it.
Come sirs to Westminster, attend our state.
This day shall make you ever fortunate;
The third of April. Bushy note the time
Our age accomplish'd, crown and kingdom's mine.

Exeunt omnes.

[ACT II, SCENE 2]

Flourish.

*Enter Lancaster, Arundel, Surrey, Queen [Anne], Woodstock [with
petitions and mace] and his Duchess [of Gloucester].*

York meets them in haste.

WOODSTOCK Now brother York; what says King Richard, ha?

YORK His highness will be here immediately.

WOODSTOCK Go cousin Surrey, greet the parliament;
Tell them the king is coming, give these petitions
To th'knights and burgesses o' the lower house
Sent from several shire of all the kingdom;
These copies I will keep. And show his highness.
Pray make haste.

SURREY I will, my lord.

Exit Surrey.

QUEEN ANNE Pity King Richard's youth, most reverent uncles,
And in your high proceedings gently use him;
Think of his tender years. What is now amiss
His riper judgment shall make good and [perfect]
To you and to the kingdom's benefit.

YORK Alack sweet Queen, you, and our lord the king,
Have little cause to fear our just proceedings;
We'll fall beneath his feet, and bend our knees
So he cast off those hateful flatterers
That daily ruinate his state and kingdom.

WOODSTOCK Go in, sweet ladies, comfort one another;
This happy parliament shall make all even

And plant sure peace betwixt the king and realm.
May heaven direct your wisdoms to provide
For England's honor and King Richard's good.

YORK Believe no less, sweet Queen. Attend her highness.

Flourish.
Ex[eunt Queen Anne and Duchess of Gloucester].

ARUNDEL The king is come, my lords.

WOODSTOCK Stand from the door then, make way Cheney.

Sound [trumpets].
Enter King Richard, Bagot, Bushy, Greene, Scroop, and others.

GREENE Yonder's your uncle, my lord.

RICHARD Aye, with our plain protector
Full of complaining, sweet Greene, I'll wage my crown.

BAGOT Give them fair words and smooth awhile.
The toils are pitch'd and you may catch them quickly.

RICHARD Why how now, uncle? What, disrobed again
Of all your golden rich habiliments?

WOODSTOCK Aye, aye, good coz, I'm now in my t'other hose;
I'm now my plain self, plain Thomas, and by th'rood
In these plain hose I'll do the realm more good
Than these that pill the poor to jet in gold.

RICHARD Nay, be not angry, uncle.

WOODSTOCK Be you then pleased, good coz, to hear me speak
And view thy subjects' sad petitions
See here, King Richard, whilst thou livest at ease,

Lulling thyself in nice security,
Thy wronged kingdom's in a mutiny.
From every province are the people come
With open mouths exclaiming on the wrongs
Thou and these upstarts have imposed on them.
Shame is deciphered on thy palace gate,
Confusion hangeth o'er thy wretched head,
Mischief is coming and in storms must fall;
Th'oppression of the poor to heaven doth call.

RICHARD Well, well, good uncle, these your bitter taunts
Against my friends and me will one day cease;
But what's the reason you have sent for us?

LANCASTER To have your grace confirm this parliament
And set your hand to certain articles
Most needful for your state and kingdom's quiet.

RICHARD Where are those articles?

ARUNDEL The states and burgesses o'th'parliament
Attend with duty to deliver them.

YORK Please you ascend your throne, we'll call them in.

Paper.

RICHARD We'll ask a question first, and then we'll see them;
For trust me reverent uncles, we have sworn
We will not sit upon our royal throne
Until this question be resolv'd at full.
Reach me that paper, Bushy: Hear me princes,
We had strange petition here deliver'd us:
A poor man's son, his father being deceased,
Gave him in charge unto a rich man's hands
To keep him and the little land he had
Till he attained to twenty-one years.

The poor revenue amounts but to three crowns
And yet th'insatiate churl denies his right
And bars him of his fair inheritance.
Tell me, I pray, will not our English laws
Enforce this rich man to resign his due?

WOODSTOCK There is no let to bar it gracious sovereign.
Afore my God, sweet prince, it joys my soul
To see your grace in person thus to judge his cause.

YORK Such deeds as this will make King Richard shine
Above his famous predecessor kings
If thus he labor to establish right.

[**RICHARD**] The poor man then had wrong, you all confess?

[**WOODSTOCK**] And shall have right, my liege, to quit his wrong.

[**RICHARD**] Then Woodstock give us right, for we are wrong'd.
Thou art the rich, and we the poor man's son.
The Realms of England, France, and Ireland
Are those three crowns thou yearly keep from us.
Is't not a wrong when every meanman's son
May take his birthright at the time expired
And we the principal, being now attain'd
Almost to [two and twenty] years of age,
Cannot be suffer'd to enjoy our own,
Nor peaceably possess our father's right?

WOODSTOCK Was this the trick, sweet prince? Alack the day,
You need not thus have doubled with your friends.
The right I hold, even with my heart, I render
And wish your grace had claim'd it long ago,
Thou'dst rid mine age of mickle care and woe.
And yet I think I have not wrong'd your birthright,
For if times were search'd I guess your grace
Is not so full of years till April next.

But be it as it will: Lo, here, King Richard,
I thus yield up my sad protectorship;

Gives the mace up.

A heavy burthen has thou ta'en from me,
Long may'st thou live in peace and keep thine own
That truth and justice may attend thy throne.

RICHARD Then in the name of heaven we thus ascend it,
And here we claim our fair inheritance
Of fruitful England, France, and Ireland,
Superior Lord of Scotland, and the rights
Belonging to our great Dominions.
Here uncles take the crown from Richard's hand
And once more place it [on] our kingly head;
This day we will be new enthronished.

WOODSTOCK With all our hearts, my lord: Trumpets be ready.

A flourish.

Long live King Richard, of that name the second,
The sovereign lord of England's ancient rights

RICHARD We thank ye all. So now we feel ourself;
Our body could not fill this chair till now,
'Twas scanted to us by protectorship;
But now we let ye know King Richard rules
And will elect and choose, place and displace
Such officers as we ourself shall like of.
And first my lords, because your age is such
As pity 'twere ye should be further press'd
With weighty business of the common weal,
We here dismiss ye from the council table
And will that you remain not in our court.
Deliver up your staves, and hear ye, Arundel,

We do discharge ye of the Admiralty;
Scoop take his office, and his place in council.

SCROOP I thank your highness.

YORK Here take my staff, good cousin. York thus leaves thee.
Thou lean'st on staves that will at length deceive thee.

LANCASTER There lie the burthen of old Lancaster,
And may he perish that succeeds my place.

RICHARD So, sir, we will observe your humor.
Sir Henry Green succeed our uncle York—
And Bushy take the staff of Lancaster.

BUSHY I thank your grace: His [curse] frights not me;
I'll keep it to defend your majesty.

WOODSTOCK What transformations do mine eyes behold,
As if the world were topsy-turvy turn'd.
Hear me, King Richard.

RICHARD Plain Thomas I'll not hear ye.

GREENE Ye do not well to move his majesty.

WOODSTOCK Hence, flatterer, or by my soul I'll kill thee.
Shall England that so long was governed
By grave experience of white-headed age
Be subject now to rash, unskillful boys?
Then force the sun run backward to the east,
Lay Atlas' burthen on a pygmy's back,
Appoint the sea his times to ebb and flow,
And that as eas'ly may be done as this.

RICHARD Give up your counsel staff, we'll hear no more.

WOODSTOCK My staff, King Richard? See, coz, here it is.
Full ten years space within a prince's hand
(A soldier and a faithful counselor)
This staff hath always been discretely kept;
Nor shall the world report an upstart groom
Did glory in the honors Woodstock lost;
And therefore, Richard, thus I sever it.

[Breaks the staff.]

There let him take it, shiver'd, crack'd, and broke
As will the state of England be ere long
By [thus] rejecting true nobility.
Farewell, King Richard; I'll to Plashy, brothers,
If ye ride through Essex call and see me.
If once the pillars and supporters quail,
How can the strongest castle choose but fail?

ALL LORDS And so will he ere long. Come, come, lets leave them.

BUSHY Aye, aye, your places are supplied sufficiently.

Exeunt the Lords [Woodstock, York, Lancaster, and Arundel].

SCROOP Old, doting, grey-beards.
'fore God, my lord, had they not been your uncles,
[I'd break] my council staff about their heads.

GREENE We'll have an act for this: It shall be henceforth
Counted high [treason] for any fellow
With a grey beard to come within forty foot
Of the court gates.

BAGOT Aye, or a great-bellied doublet.
We'll alter the kingdom [presently].

GREENE Pox on't. We'll not have a beard amongst us;
We'll [shave the] country and the city too,
Shall we not, Richard?

RICHARD Do what ye will, we'll shield and buckler ye;
We'll have a guard of archers to attend us,
And they shall daily wait on us and you.
Send proclamations straight in Richard's name
T'abridge the laws our late protector made.
Let some be sent to seek Tresilian forth.

BAGOT Seek him? Hang him. He lurks not far off I warrant.
And this news come abroad once, ye shall have him here [presently].

RICHARD Would he were come. His counsel would direct you well.

GREENE Troth, I think I shall trouble myself but with a few
[counsels]. What cheer shall we have to dinner, King Richard?

RICHARD No matter what today, we'll mend it shortly.
The hall at Westminster shall be enlarg'd,
And only serve us for a dining room
Wherein I'll daily feast ten thousand men.

GREENE An excellent device. The commons [have]
murmured [against us] a great while and there's no such means as
meat to stop [their mouths].

SCROOP 'Sfoot, make their gate wider, let's first fetch their [money]
and bid them to dinner afterwards.

GREENE 'Sblood, and I were not a counselor I could find in
[me] to dine at a tavern today, sweet king. Shall's be merry?

[SCROOP] We must have money to buy new suits, my lord;
The fashions that we wear are gross and stale.
We'll go sit in council to devise some new.

[ALL] A special purpose to be thought on. It shall be the first thing
we'll do.

RICHARD Come, wantons, come: If Gloucester hear of this
He'll say our counsel guides us much amiss.
Dismiss the parliament our uncles call'd
And tell the peers it is our present pleasure
That each man parts unto his several home.

Flourish.

When we are pleased they shall have summons sent
And with King Richard hold a parliament.
Set forward.

GREENE You of the council march before the king;
I will support his arm.

RICHARD Gramercy, Greene.

*Trumpets sound.
Exeunt omnes.*

[ACT II, SCENE 3]

*Enter Queen [Anne], the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Ireland,
and other maids with shirts and bands and other lining.*

QUEEN ANNE Tell me, dear aunt, has Richard so forgot
The types of honor and nobility
So to disgrace his good and reverent uncles?

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER

Madam 'tis true. No sooner had he claim'd
The full possession of his government
But my dear husband and his noble brethren
Were all dismissed from the counsel table;
Banish'd the court. And even before their faces
Their offices bestow'd on several grooms.

DUCHESS OF IRELAND

My husband Ireland, that unloving lord
(God pardon his amiss) he now is dead;
King Richard was the cause he left my bed.

QUEEN ANNE No more, good cousin, could I work the means
He should not so disgrace his dearest friends.
Alack the day. Though I am England's queen
I meet sad hours and wake when others sleep;
He meets content, but care with me must keep;
Distressed poverty o'erspreads the kingdom.
In Essex, Surrey, Kent, and Middlesex
Are seventeen thousand poor and indigent
Which I number'd, and to help their wants
My jewels and my plate are turn'd to coin
And shared amongst them; oh riotous Richard,
A heavy blame is thine for this distress
That dost allow thy pooling flatterers
To gild themselves with others' miseries.

[DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER]

Wrong not yourself with sorrow, gentle queen,
Unless that sorrow were a helping means
To cure the malady you sorrow for.

[QUEEN ANNE] The sighs I vent are not mine own, dear aunt;
I do not sorrow in mine own behalf,
Nor now repent with peevish forwardness
And wish I ne'er had seen this English shore,
But think me happy in King Richard's love.
No, no, good aunt, this troubles not my soul;
'Tis England's subjects' sorrow I sustain,
I fear they grudge against their sovereign.

[DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER]

Fear not that, madam. England's not mutinous;
'Tis peopled all with subjects, not with outlaws.
Though Richard (much misled by flatterers)
Neglects and throws his scepter carelessly,
Yet none dares rob him of his kingly rule.

[DUCHESS OF IRELAND]

Besides, your virtuous charity, fair queen,
So graciously hath won the commons' love
~~As only you have power to stay their rigor.~~

<**[QUEEN ANNE]** The wealth I have shall be the poor's [revenue]
As sure as 'twere confirm'd by parliament.
This mine own industry (and sixty more
I daily keep at work) is all their own.
The coin I have, I send them. Would 'twere more.
To satisfy my fears or pay those sums
My wanton lord hath forced from needy subjects,
I'd want myself. Go let those trunks be fill'd
With those our labors to relieve the poor;
Let them be carefully distributed.

For those that now shall want, we'll work again
And tell them ere two days we shall be furnish'd.

Enter Cheney.

[CHENEY] What, is the court removing? Whither goes that trunk?

[MAID] 'Tis the Queen's charity, sir, of needful clothing
To be distributed amongst the poor.

[CHENEY] Why there's one blessing yet, that England hath
A virtuous queen although a wanton king.
Good health, sweet princess; believe me, madam,
You have quick utterance for your housewifery;
Your grace affords good pennyworths sure, ye sell so fast;
Pray heaven your gettings quit your safe return.

[QUEEN ANNE] Amen, for 'tis from heaven I look for recompense.

[CHENEY] No doubt, fair queen, the righteous powers will quit you
for these religious deeds of charity.>

[Enter Cheney.]

CHENEY [~~Health to your majesty:~~]
But to my message. Madam, my lord the duke
Entreats your grace prepare with him to horse;
He will this night ride home to Plashy House.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER
Madam, ye hear I'm sent for.

QUEEN ANNE Then be gone.
Leave me alone in desolation.

DUCHESS OF IRELAND
Adieu, good aunt, I'll see you shortly there;

King Richard's kindred are not welcome here.

QUEEN ANNE Will ye all leave me then? Oh woe is me,
I now am crown'd a queen of misery.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER
Where didst thou leave my husband, Cheney? Speak.

CHENEY Accompanied with the dukes of York and Lancaster,
Who as I guess [intend] to ride with him,
For which he wish'd me haste your grace's presence.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER
Thou see'st the passions of the queen are such
I may not too abruptly leave her highness;
But tell my lord I'll see him presently.

QUEEN ANNE Saw'st thou King Richard, Cheney? Prithee tell me
What revels [keep] his flattering minions?

CHENEY They sit in council to devise strange fashions
And suit themselves in wild and antic habits
Such as this kingdom never yet beheld:
French hose, Italian cloaks, and Spanish hats;
Polonian shoes, with picks a handful long
Tied to their knees; with chains of pearl and gold
Their plumed tops fly waving in the air
A cubit high above their wanton heads.
Tresilian with King Richard likewise sits,
Devising taxes and strange shifts for money
To build again the hall at Westminster
To feast <and revel> in. And when abroad they come,
Four hundred archers in a guard [attend] them.

QUEEN ANNE Oh certain ruin of this famous kingdom.
Fond Richard, thou build'st a hall to feast in
And starvest thy wretched subjects to erect it.

A flourish.

Woe to those men that thus incline thy soul
To these remorseless acts and deeds so foul.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER

[The] trumpets tell us that King Richard's coming.
I'll take me leave, fair queen, but credit me
Ere many days again I'll visit ye.

DUCHESS OF IRELAND

I'll home to Langley with my uncle York
And there lament alone my wretched state.

Exeunt both Duchesses.

QUEEN ANNE Blest heaven conduct ye both. Queen Anne alone
For Richard's follies still must sigh and groan.

Exit Queen.

ACT III, [SCENE 1]

Sound a sennet.

*Enter King Richard, Bagot, Bushy, Greene, and Scroop, very richly attired
in new fashions. And Tresilian whispering to the king.
A guard of archers after them.*

RICHARD Come my Tresilian,
Thus like an Emperor shall King Richard reign,
And you so many kings attendant on him.
Our guard of archers keep the doors I charge ye;
Let no man enter to disturb our pleasures.

Blanks.

Thou toldst me, kind Tresilian, thou'dst devised
Blank charters to fill up our treasury,
Opening the chests of hoarding cormorants
That laugh to see their kingly sovereign lack.
Let's know the means, we may applaud thy wit.

TRESILIAN See here, my lord, only with parchment innocent
sheep skins. Ye see here's no fraud, no clause, no deceit in the
writing.

ALL Why, there's nothing writ.

TRESILIAN There's the trick [on't]:
These blank charters shall be forthwith sent
To every shrieve through all the shires of England,
With charge to call before them presently
All landed men, freeholders, farmers, graziers,
Or any else that have ability.
Then in your highness' name they shall be charg'd
To set their names and forthwith seal these blanks.
That done, these shall return to court again;

But cartloads of money soon shall follow them.

ALL SCROOP Excellent, Tresilian.

BUSHY Noble Lord Chief Justice.

BAGOT Where should his grace get such a counselor?

GREENE Not if his beard were off; prithee, Tresilian, off with it.
'Sfoot, thou seest we have not a beard among us.
Thou send'st out barbers there to pool the whole country;
[~~S~~foot,] let some shave thee.

BUSHY 'Twould become thee better i' faith,
And make thee look more grim when thou sit'st in judgment.

TRESILIAN I tell ye gallants, I will not lose a hair of my lordship,
And King Richard's favor for the pope's revenues.

Enter Queen [Anne].

GREENE [By] your leave there, give way to the Queen.

RICHARD Now Anne a Beame, how cheers my dearest queen?
Is't holiday, my love? Believe me, lords,
'Tis strange to take her from her sempstery;
She and her maids are all for housewifery.
Shalt work no more, sweet Nan. Now Richard's king,
And peer and people all shall stoop to him.
We'll have no more protecting uncles, trust me.
Prithee look smooth and bid these nobles welcome.

QUEEN ANNE Whom my lord favors must to me be welcome.

RICHARD These are our counselors, I tell ye lady,
And these shall better grace King Richard's court
Than all the dotting heads that late controll'd us:

Thou see'st already we begin to alter
The vulgar fashions of our homespun kingdom.
I tell thee Nan, the states of Christendom
Shall wonder at our English royalty.
We held a council to devise these suits –
Sir Henry Greene devised this fashion shoe;
Bushy this pick; Bagot and Scroop set forth
This kind coherence twixt the toe and knee
To have them chain'd together lovingly,
And we as sovereign did confirm them all.
Suit they not quaintly, Nan? Sweet queen, resolve me.

QUEEN ANNE I see no fault that I dare call a fault;
But would your grace consider with advice
What you have done unto your reverent uncles.
(My fears provoke me to be bold my lord.)
They are your noble kinsmen, to revoke the sentence were –

RICHARD An act of folly, Nan. King's words are laws.
If we infringe our word, we break our law.
No more of them, sweet queen.

TRESILIAN Madam, what's done was with advice enough.
The king is now at years and hath shook off
The servile yoke of mean protectorship.

BUSHY His highness can direct himself sufficient;
Why should his pleasures then be curb'd by any
As if he did not understand his state?

RICHARD They tell thee true, sweet love: Come ride with me
And see today my hall at Westminster
Which we have builded now to feast our friends.

GREENE Do, do, good madam: Prithee sweet king,
Let's ride somewhither and it be but to show ourselves.
'Sfoot, our devices here are like jewels

Kept in a casket, or good faces in masks
That grace not the owners because they're obscur'd.
If our fashions be not publish'd what glories
In the wearing?

RICHARD We'll ride through London only to be gazed at.
Fair Anne a Beame, you shall along with us;
At Westminster you shalt see my sumptuous hall,
My royal tables richly furnished
Where every day I feast ten thousand men,
To furnish out which feast I daily spend
Thirty fat oxen and three hundred sheep
With fish and fowl in numbers numberless.
Not all our chronicles shall point a king
To match our bounty, state, and royalty;
Or let successors yet to come
Strive to exceed me. And if they forbid it
Let records say, only King Richard did it.

QUEEN ANNE Oh, but my lord, 'twill tire your revenues
To keep this festival a year together.

RICHARD As many days as I writ England's king
We will maintain that bounteous festival.
Tresilian, look to your blank charters speed'ly,
Send them abroad with trusty officers;
And Bagot, see a messenger be sent
To call our uncle Woodstock home to th'court;
Not that we love his meddling company
But that the raged commons [love] his plainness
And should grow mutinous about these blanks
We'll have him near us: Within his arrow's length
We stand secure: We can restrain his strength:
See it be done: Come Anne to our great hall
Where Richard keeps his gorgeous festival.

Sound.

*Exeunt.
Manet Tresilian.*

TRESILIAN Within there, ho.

Enter Crosby and Fleming.

CROSBY Your lordship's pleasure.

TRESILIAN What, are those blanks dispatch'd?

FLEMING They're all truss'd up, my lord, in several packets.

TRESILIAN Where's Nimble? Where's that varlet?

Enter Nimble [in the new fashion].

NIMBLE As nimble as a morris-dancer now my bells are on;
How do you like the rattling of my chains, my lord?

TRESILIAN Oh villain thou, wilt hang in chains for this;
Art thou crept into the court fashion, knave?

NIMBLE Alas my lord, ye know I have follow'd your lordship
without ere a rag since ye run away from the court once: And I pray
let me follow the fashion a little to show myself a courtier.

TRESILIAN Go spread those several blanks throughout the kingdom,
And here's commission with the council's hands
With charge to every shrieve and officer
T'assist and aid you. And when they're seal'd and sign'd
See ye note well such men's ability
As set their hands to them. Inquire what rents,
What lands or what revenues they spent by th'year
And let me straight receive intelligence.
Besides I'd have you use yourselves so conningly
To mark who grudges or but speaks amiss

Of good King Richard, myself, or any of his new counselors.
Attach them all for privy whisperers
And send them up; I have a trick in law
Shall make King Richard seize into his hands
The forfeiture of all their goods and lands:
Nimble, take thou these blanks and see you take
Especial note of them.

NIMBLE I'll take the ditty, sir, but you shall set a note to't, for
if any man shall speak but an ill word of anything that's written
here—

TRESILIAN Why, ass, there's nothing.

NIMBLE And would ye have them speak ill of nothing?
That's strange. But I mean, my lord, if they should but give this
paper an ill word, as to say "I will tear this paper" or, worse, "I will
rend this paper", or fouler words than that, as to say, "I will
bumfiddle your paper". If there be any such, I have a black book for
them, my lord, I warrant ye.

TRESILIAN Be it your greatest care to be severe.
Crosby and Fleming, pray be diligent.

CROSBY We shall, my lord.

NIMBLE But how if we meet with some ignoramus fellows,
my lord, that cannot write their minds. What shall they do?

TRESILIAN If they but set to their marks, 'tis good.

NIMBLE We shall meddle with no women in the blanks, shall
we?

TRESILIAN Rich widows, none else; for a widow is as much as
man and wife.

NIMBLE Then a widow's a hermaphrodite, both cut and long
tail, and if she cannot write she shall set her mark to it.

TRESILIAN What else, sir?

NIMBLE But if she have a daughter, she shall set her mother's
mark to't.

TRESILIAN Meddle with none but men and widows, I charge ye.

NIMBLE Well, sir, I shall see a widow's mark then, I ne'er
saw none yet.

TRESILIAN You have your lessons [perfect]: Now begone,
Be bold and swift in execution.

Exit Tresilian.

NIMBLE [Goodbye], my lord, we will domineer over the
vulgar like so many Saint Georges over the poor dragons. Come,
sirs, we are like to have a flourishing common wealth i'faith.

Exeunt.

[ACT III, SCENE 2]

Enter Woodstock, Lancaster, and York at Plashy.

WOODSTOCK Come my good brothers, here at Plashy House
I'll bid you welcome with as true a [heart]
As Richard with a false and mind corrupt
Disgraced our names and thrust us from his court.

LANCASTER Beshrew him that repines, my lord, for me.
I lived with care at court, I now am free.

YORK Come, come, let's find some other talk, I think not [on't];
I ne'er slept soundly when I was amongst them
So let them go; this house of Plashy, brother,
Stands in a sweet and pleasant air i' faith;
'Tis near the Thames and circled round with trees
That in the summer serve for pleasant fans
To cool ye; and in winter strongly break
The storm winds that else would nip ye too.

WOODSTOCK And in faith, old York,
We have all need of some kind wintering;
We are beset, heaven shield, with many storms
And yet these trees at length will prove to me
Like Richard and his riotous minions.
Their wanton heads so oft play with the winds,
Throwing their leaves so prodigally down,
They'll leave me cold at last; and so will they
Make England wretched, and i'th'end themselves.

LANCASTER If Westminster Hall devour as it has begun
'Twere better it was ruin'd lime and stone.

WOODSTOCK Afore my god, I late was certified
That at one feast was serv'd ten thousand dishes.

YORK He daily feasts they say ten thousand men,
And every man must have his dish at least.

WOODSTOCK Thirty fat oxen and three hundred sheep
Serve but one day's expenses.

LANCASTER A hundred scarcely can suffice his guard;
A camp of soldiers feeds not like those bowmen.

WOODSTOCK But how will these expenses be maintain'd?

YORK Oh they say there are strange tricks come forth
To fetch in money. What they are I know not.

WOODSTOCK You've heard of the fantastic suits they wear;
Never was English king so habited.

LANCASTER We could allow his clothing, brother Woodstock,
But we have four kings more are equaled with him.
There's Bagot, Bushy, wanton Greene, and Scroop
In state and fashion without difference.

YORK Indeed, they're more than kings, for they rule him.

WOODSTOCK Come, come, our breaths reverberate the wind;
We talk like good divines, but cannot cure
The grooms of the sin; or shall we speak
Like all-commanding wise astronomers
And flatly say, "Such a day shall be fair."
And yet it rains, whether he will or no.
So may we talk, but thus will Richard do.

Enter Cheney with blanks.

LANCASTER How now, Cheney? What drives thee on so fast?

CHENEY If I durst, I would say (my lord)
Tresilian drives me on; half as ill,
I'm still the pursuivant of unhappy news.
Here's blank charters, my lord (I pray behold them)
Sent from King Richard and his counselors.

WOODSTOCK Thou make'st me blank at very sight of them.
[~~What must these~~]

LANCASTER They appear in shape of obligations.

CHENEY They are no less. The country's full of them.
Commissions are come down to every shrieve
To force the richest subjects of the land
To set their hands and forthwith seal these blanks
And then the bond must afterwards be paid:
That shall confirm a due debt to the king
As much or little as they please to 'point it.

LANCASTER Oh strange unheard of vile taxation.

WOODSTOCK Who is't can help my memory a little?
Has not this ere been held a principle,
There's nothing spoke or done that has not been?

YORK It was a maxim ere I had a beard.

WOODSTOCK 'Tis now found false. An open heresy.
This is a thing was never spoke nor done.
Blank charters, call ye them? If any age
Keep but a record of this policy—
(I phrase it too, too well) flat villainy,
Let me be chronicl'd Apostata,
Rebellious to my god and country both.

LANCASTER How do the people entertain these blanks?

CHENEY With much dislike; yet some for fear have sign'd them;
Others there be refuse and murmur strangely.

WOODSTOCK <Afore my god>, I cannot blame them for it.
He might as well have sent defiance to them.
Oh vulture England, wilt thou eat thine own?
Can they be rebels call'd that now turn head?
I speak but what I fear, not what I wish;
This foul oppression will withdraw all duty
And in the commons' hearts hot rancors breed
To make our country's bosom shortly bleed.

LANCASTER What shall we do to seek for remedy?

YORK Let each man hie him to his several home
Before the people rise in mutiny
And, in the mildest part of lenity,
Seek to restrain them from rebellion,
For what can else be look'd for? Promise redress;
That eloquence is best in this distress.

LANCASTER York counsels well. Let's haste away.
The time is sick. We must not use delay.

YORK Let's still confer by letters.

WOODSTOCK Content, content,
So friends may parlay even in banishment.
Farewell good brothers; Cheney conduct them.

Exeunt all but Woodstock.

Adieu good York and Gaunt farewell forever;
I have a sad presage comes suddenly
That I shall never see these brothers more
~~On earth I fear we never shall meet more.~~
Of Edward the Third's seven sons we three are left

To see our father's kingdom ruinate.
I would my death might end the misery
My fear presageth to my wretched country:
The commons will rebel without all question,
And 'fore my god, I have no eloquence
To stay this uproar. I must tell them plain
We all are struck, but must not strike again.

Enter a Servant (George).

How now, what news?

SERVANT There's a horseman at the gate, my lord;
He comes from the king, he says, to see your grace.

WOODSTOCK To see me, say'st thou? I' godsname, let him come
He brings no blank charters with him.
Prithee bid him 'light and enter.

SERVANT I think he dares not for fouling on his feet, my lord. I
would have had him light, but he swears he's a courtier. He will not
off [on's horse's] back till the inner gate be open.

WOODSTOCK Passion of me, that's strange; I prithee give him
satisfaction: Open the inner gate. What might this fellow be?

SERVANT Some fine fool. He's attired very fantastic'ly, and
talks as foolishly. [*text likely missing*]

WOODSTOCK Go let him in: And when you have done, bid Cheney
come and speak with me.

SERVANT I will, my lord.
Come on, sir. Ye may ride into my lord's cellar now and ye will, sir.

Enter a spruce courtier [on] horseback.

COURTIER Prithee fellow stay and take my horse.

SERVANT I have business for my lord, sir, I cannot.

Exit Servant.

COURTIER A rude swain, by heaven; but stay, here walks another.
Hear'st-ta thou? Fellow, is this Plashy House?

WOODSTOCK Ye should have ask'd that question before ye came in,
sir, but this is it.

COURTIER The hinds are all most rude and gross: I prithee, walk
my horse.

WOODSTOCK I have a little business, sir.

COURTIER Thou shalt not lose by't. I'll give thee a tester for thy
pains.

WOODSTOCK I shall be glad to earn money, sir.

COURTIER Prithee, do, and know thy duty. Thy head's too saucy.

WOODSTOCK Cry ye mercy, I did not understand your worship's
calling.

COURTIER The Duke of Gloucester lies here, does he not?

WOODSTOCK Merry does he, sir.

COURTIER Is he within?

WOODSTOCK He's not far off, sir. He was here even now.

COURTIER Ah, very good. Walk my horse well, I prithee. He's travel'd hard and he's hot i'faith. I'll in and speak with the duke and pay thee presently.

WOODSTOCKI make no doubt, sir:

Exit Courtier.

Oh strange metamorphosis. Is't possible that this fellow that's all made of fashions should be an Englishman? No marvel if he know not me being so brave and I so beggarly. Well, I will earn money to enrich me now, and 'tis the first I earn'd by th'rood this forty year.

[To the horse.]

Come on, sir, you have sweat hard about this haste, yet I think you know little of the business: Why so I say; you're a very indifferent beast, you'll follow any man that will lead you. Now truly, sir, you look but e'en leanly on't: You feed not in Westminster Hall adays, where so many sheep and oxen are devour'd. I'm afraid they'll eat you shortly if you tarry amongst them; you're prick'd more with the spur than the provender, I see that: I think your dwelling be at hackney when you're at home, is't not? You know not the duke neither, no more than your master. And yet I think you have as much wit as he: Faith, say a man should steal ye and feed ye fatter, could ye run away with him lust[i]ly? Ah, your silence argues a consent, I see.

Enter Cheney, Courtier, and Servants.

By th'mass, here comes company, we had been both taken if we had, I see.

CHENEY Saw ye not my lord at the gate, say ye?
Why I left him there but now.

COURTIER In sooth I saw no creature, sir, only an old groom I got to walk my horse.

CHENEY A groom, say ye? 'Sfoot, 'tis my lord the duke. [W]hat have ye [done]? This is somewhat too coarse; your grace should be a hostler to this [fellow].

[COURTIER] I do beseech your grace's pardon. The error was in the mistake. Your plainness did deceive me: Please it your grace to redeliver [the reins].

WOODSTOCKNo, by my faith. I'll have my money first. Promise is a [debt].

COURTIER I know your grace's goodness will refuse it.

WOODSTOCKThink not so nicely of me: Indeed I will not.

COURTIER If so you please, there is your tester.

WOODSTOCKIf so you please, there is your horse, sir.
Now pray you tell me [what] is your haste to me?

COURTIER Most swift and serious from his majesty.

WOODSTOCKWhat, from King Richard? My dear lord and kinsman? Go sirrah, take you his horse, lead him to the stable, meat him well. I'll double his reward, there's twelve pence for ye.

SERVANT I thank your grace.

Exit Servant with the horse.

WOODSTOCK Now sir, your business.

COURTIER His majesty commends him to your grace.

WOODSTOCKThis same's a rare fashion you have got at court;
Of whose devising was't, I pray?

COURTIER I assure your grace, [ye] King <Richard's> [~~his~~] council
Sat three days about it.

WOODSTOCK By my faith,
Their wisdoms took great pains I assure ye;
The state was well employ'd the [while], by th'rood.
Then this at court is all the fashion now?

COURTIER The king himself doth wear it;
Whose most gracious majesty sent me in haste.

WOODSTOCK This pick doth strangely well become the foot.

COURTIER This pick the king doth likewise wear, being a
Polonian pick; and me did his highness pick from forth the rest.

WOODSTOCK He could not have pick'd out such another, I assure
ye.

COURTIER I thank your grace that picks me out so well:
But as I said, his highness would request—

WOODSTOCK But this most fashionable chain, that links as it were
the toe and knee together —

COURTIER In a most kind coherence, so it like your grace:
For these two parts, being in operation
And quality different, as for example:
The toe a disdainer, or spurner;
The knee a dutiful and most humble orator.
This chain doth, as it were, so toe-ify the knee
And so knee-ify the toe that between both
It makes a most methodical coherence
Or coherent method.

WOODSTOCK 'Tis most excellent, sir,

And full of art. Please ye walk in?

COURTIER My message tender'd I will tend your grace.

WOODSTOCK Cry ye mercy, have you a message to me?

COURTIER His majesty, most affectionately,
And like a royal kinsman, entreats your grace's
Presence at the court.

WOODSTOCK Is that your message, sir?
I must refuse it then. My English plainness
Will not suit that place, the court's too fine for me.
My service here will stand in better stead
To quench the fire those blanks have made.
I would they all were burnt or he hang'd
That first devised them, sir, they stir the country so.
I dare not come, and so excuse me, sir.
If the king think it ill, he thinks amiss.
I am plain Thomas still.
The rest I'll tell ye as ye sit at meat.
Furnish a table, Cheney. Call for wine.
Come sir, ye shall commend me to the king.
Tell him I'll keep these parts in peace to him.

Exeunt omnes.

[ACT III, SCENE 3]

Enter Master Ignorance the Bailey of Dunstable, Crosby, Fleming, and Nimble, with blanks.

CROSBY Dispatch good Master Bailey, the markets are almost done you see. 'Tis rumored that the blanks are come and the rich choughs begin to flock out o' th' town, and therefore I charge ye, in the king's name, be ready to assist us.

IGNORANCE Nay look ye, sir. Be not too pestiferous I beseech ye. I have begun myself and seal'd one of your blanks already, and by my example there's more shall follow. I know my place and calling: My name is Ignorance and I am bailey of Dunstable. I cannot write nor read, I confess it. No more could my father, nor his father, nor none of the Ignorants this hundred year, I assure ye.

NIMBLE Your name proclaims no less, sir. And it has been a most learned generation.

IGNORANCE Though I cannot write I have set my mark. *Ecce signum.* Read it, I beseech ye.

NIMBLE The mark of Simon Ignorance, the bailey of Dunstable., being a sheephook with a tarbox at end on't.

IGNORANCE Very right. It was my mark ever since I was an Innocent, and therefore, as I say, I have begun and will assist ye, for here be rich whoresons i' th' town, I can tell ye, that will give ye the slip and ye look not to it.

FLEMING We therefore presently will divide ourselves: You two shall stay here [while] we, Master Ignorance, with some of your brethren the men of Dunstable, walk through the town, noting the carriage of the people. They say there are strange songs and libels cast about the marketplace against my lord Tresilian and the rest of

the king's young counselors. If such there be: We'll have some aid and attach them speedily.

IGNORANCE Ye shall do well, sir. And for your better aiding, if you can but find out my brother, Master Ignoramus, he will be most pestiferous unto ye I assure ye.

CROSBY I'm afraid he will not be found, sir, but we'll inquire. Come fellow Fleming: And Nimble look to the whisperers I charge ye.

Exit Crosby and Fleming.

NIMBLE I warrant ye: Come, Master Bailey, let your billmen retire till we call them. And you and I will here shadow ourselves and write down their speech.

IGNORANCE Nay, you shall write and I will mark, sir.

Enter a Farmer, a Butcher, and [Cowntail the] Grazier, very hastily.

And see, see? Here comes some already; all rich cubs by the mass; I know them all, sir.

FARMER Tarry, tarry, good neighbors. Take a knave with ye. What a murrain. Is there a bear broke loose i' th' town that ye make such haste from the market?

COWTAIL A bear? No, nor a lion baited neither. I tell ye, neighbor, I am more afraid of the bee than the bear. There's wax to be used today, and I have no seal about me. I may tell you in secret, here's a dangerous world towards. Neighbor, you're a farmer, and I hope here's none but God and good company, we live in such a state. I am [e'en] almost weary of all I assure ye. Here's my other neighbor, the butcher that dwells at Hockley. [He's] heard his landlord tell strange tidings. We shall be hoisted and we tarry here I can tell ye.

NIMBLE They begin to murmur. I'll put them down all for whisperers. Master Bailey, what's he that talks so?

IGNORANCE His name is Cowtail, a rich grazier, and dwells here hard by at Layton Bussard.

NIMBLE Cowtail, a grazier, dwelling at Layton: – Bussard, Master Bailey?

IGNORANCE Right, sir. Listen again, sir.

FARMER Ah sirrah, and what said the good knight your landlord neighbor?

BUTCHER Marry, he said – (but I'll not stand to anything, I tell ye that aforehand) – he said that King Richard's new counselors (God amend them) had crept into honest men's places than themselves were; and that the king's uncles and the old lords were all banish'd the court; and he said flatly we should never have a merry world as long as it was so.

NIMBLE Butcher, you and your landlord will be both hang'd for't.

BUTCHER And then he said that there's one Tresilian, a lawyer, that has crept in amongst them and is now a lord forsooth; and he has sent down into every country of England a sort of black chapters –

FARMER Black chapters? Y'god'sname, neighbor, out of what black book were they [taken]?

COWTAIL Come, come. They are blank charters, neighbors. I heard of them afore, and therefore I made such haste away. They're sent down to the high shrieve with special charge that every man that is of any [credit] or worship i'th'country must set their hands

and seal to them. For what intent I know not, I say no more. I smell something.

FARMER ~~Well, well, my masters, let's be wise, we are not all one man's.~~ They say there are whispering knaves; let's hie us home, ~~for I assure ye,~~ 'twas told me where I broke my fast this after[noon] that there were above three score gentlemen in our shire that had set their hands and seals to those blank charters already.

COWTAIL Now God amend them for it, they have given an ill example we shall be forc'd to follow.

BUTCHER I would my wife and children were at Jerusalem with all the wealth. I'd make shift for one, I warrant them. Come neighbors, let's be gone.

NIMBLE Step forward with your bills, Master Bailey.

[Emerging.]

Not too fast, sirs. I charge ye i'th'king's name to stand till we have done with ye.

OMNES Saint Benedicite, what must we do now, trow?

IGNORANCE Be not so pestiferous my good friends and neighbors: You are men of wealth and credit in the country, and therefore as I myself and others have begun, I charge ye in his highness' name presently to set your hands and seals to these blank charters.

COWTAIL Jesu rescue my soul, I'm departed.

FARMER I'm e'en struck to at heart, too.

BUTCHER Alas, sir, we are poor men. What should our hands do?

IGNORANCE There is no harm, I warrant ye. What need you fear when ye see Bailey Ignorance has seal'd before ye?

COWTAIL I pray ye, let's see them, sir.

NIMBLE Here ye bacon-fed pudding eaters, are ye afraid of a sheepskin?

COWTAIL Mass, 'tis somewhat darkly written.

FARMER Aye, aye, 'twas done i'th'night sure.

COWTAIL Mass, neighbors. Here's nothing that I see.

BUTCHER And can it be any harm, think ye, to [set] your hands to nothing? These blank charters are but little pieces of parchment; let's set our marks to them and be rid of a knave's company.

FARMER As good at first as last, we can be but undone.

COWTAIL Aye, and our own hands [undo] us, that's the worst on't: Lend's your pen, sir.

BUTCHER We must all venture neighbors, there's no remedy.

NIMBLE They grumble as they do it; I must put them down
For whisperers and grumblers: Come have you done yet?

COWTAIL Aye, sir. Would you and they were sodden for my swine.

NIMBLE Here's wax then. I'll seal them for ye, and you shall severally take them off and then deliver them as your deeds.

Seal them.

Come you [boar's] grease, take of this seal here; so: This is your deed?

FARMER 'Faith sir, in some respect it is and it is not.

NIMBLE And this is yours?

COWTAIL Aye sir, against my will I swear.

NIMBLE Ox-jaw take off this seal. You'll deliver your deed with a good conscience.

BUTCHER There 'tis sir, against my conscience, God's my witness. I hope ye have done with us now, sir.

NIMBLE No ye caterpillars, we have worse matters against ye yet. Sirrah, you know what your landlord told ye concerning my lord Tresilian and King Richard's new favorites, and more than that, you know your own speech, and therefore, Master Bailey, let some of your billmen away with them to the high shrieve's presently, either to put in bail or be sent up to th'court for privy whisperers.

IGNORANCE Their offenses are most pestiferous. Away with them.

OMNES Now out, alas, we shall all to hanging sure.

Exeunt officers with [the] three men.

NIMBLE Hanging, nay that's the least on't, ye shall tell me that a twelvemonth hence else. Stand close, Master Bailey; we shall catch more of these traitors presently.

IGNORANCE You shall find me most pestiferous to assist ye; and so I pray ye commend my service to your good lord and master. Come, sir, stand close; I see [here more].

Enter a schoolmaster and a servingman.

SERVINGMAN Nay, sweet master schoolmaster, let's hear't again I beseech ye.

SCHOOLMASTER *Patientia.* You're a serving man, I'm a scholar; I have shown art and learning in these verses I assure ye, and yet if they were well search'd they're little better than libels. But the carriage of a thing is all, sir, I have cover'd them rarely.

SERVINGMAN 'Sfoot, the country's so full of intelligencers that two men can scarce walk together but they're attach'd for whisperers.

SCHOOLMASTER This paper shall wipe their noses, and they shall not bow to a goose for't, for I'll have these verses sung to their faces by one of my schoolboys, wherein I'll tickle them all i' faith. Shalt hear else, but first let's look there be no pitchers with ears nor nettles with eyes about us.

SERVINGMAN Come, come, all's safe I warrant ye.

SCHOOLMASTER Mark then. Here I come over them for their blank charters, [shalt] hear else:

Will ye buy any *Parchment* knives?
We sell for little gain.
Who ere are weary of their lives
They'll rid them of their pain.
Blank Charters they are call'd;
A vengeance on the villain
I would he were both flay'd and ball'd:
God bless my lord Tresilian.

Is't not rare?

NIMBLE Oh rascals, they're damned three hundred fathom deep already.

SCHOOLMASTER Nay, look ye, sir. There can be no exceptions taken for this last line helps all, wherein with a kind of equivocation I say, "God bless my lord Tresilian." Do ye mark, sir? Now hear in the next verse I run o'er all the flatterers i' th' court by name. Ye shall see else.

A poison may be Greene
But Bushy can be no faggot;
God mend the King and bless the Queen,
And 'tis no matter for Bagot.

For Scroop, he does no good,
But if you'll know the villain,
His name is now to be understood:
God bless my lord Tresilian.

How like ye this, sir?

SERVINGMAN Most excellent i' faith, sir.

NIMBLE Oh traitors, Master Bailey. Do your authority.

IGNORANCE Two most pestiferous traitors. Lay hold of them I charge ye.

SERVINGMAN What mean ye, sir?

NIMBLE Nay, talk not. For if ye had a hundred lives they were all hang'd. Ye have spoken treason in the ninth degree.

SCHOOLMASTER Treason? *Patientia* good sir. We spoke not a word.

IGNORANCE Be not so pestiferous. Mine ears have heard your examinations, wherein your utter'd most shameful treason, for ye said "God bless my lord Tresilian".

SCHOOLMASTER I hope there's no treason in that, sir.

NIMBLE That shall be tried. Come, Master Bailey. Their hands shall be bound under a horse's belly and sent up to him presently. They'll both be hanged, I warrant them.

SERVINGMAN Well sir, if we be: We'll speak more ere we be hang'd in spite of [ye].

NIMBLE Aye, aye, when you're hang'd speak what you will, we care not. Away with them.

Exeunt [officers], the school[master], and serving[man].

Ye see, Master Bailey, what knaves are abroad now you are here? 'Tis time to look about, ye see?

IGNORANCE I see there are knaves abroad indeed, sir: I [speak] for mine own part. I will do my best to reform the pestiferousness of the time. And as, for example, I have set my mark to the charters, so will I set mine eyes to observe these dangerous cases.

Enter one a whistling.

NIMBLE Close again, Master Bailey. Here comes another whisperer I see by [some noise]. Oh villain, he whistles treason. I'll lay hold of him myself.

WHISTLER Out, alas, what do you mean, sir?

NIMBLE A rank traitor, Master Bailey. Lay hold on him, for he has most erroneously and rebelliously whistled treason.

WHISTLER Whistled treason? Alas, sir, how can that be?

IGNORANCE Very easily, sir. There's a piece of treason that flies up and down this country in the likeness of a ballad, and this being the very tune of it thou hast [whistled].

WHISTLER Alas, sir, ye know I spake not a word.

NIMBLE That's all one. If any man whistles treason 'tis as ill as speaking [it]. Mark me, Master Bailey, the bird whistles that cannot speak, and [yet] there be birds in a manner that can speak, too: Your raven will call ye [black], your crow will call ye knave, Master Bailey, ergo he that can whistle can speak, and therefore this fellow hath both spoke and whistled treason. How say you, Bailey Ignorance?

IGNORANCE Ye have argued well, sir. But ye shall hear me sift him nearer, for I do not think but there are greater heads in this [matter]. And therefore, my good fellow, be not pestiferous, but say and tell the truth: Who did set you awork? Or who was the cause of your whistling? Or did any man say to you, "Go whistle"?

WHISTLER Not any man, woman, or child; truly, sir.

IGNORANCE No? How durst you whistle then? Or what cause had ye to do so?

WHISTLER The truth is, sir, I had lost two calves out of my pasture, and being in search for them, from the top of the hill I might spy you two i'th'bottom here, and took ye for my calves, sir; and that made me come whistling down for joy in hope I had found them.

NIMBLE More treason yet: He [takes] a courtier and a bailey for two calves. To Limbo with him. He shall be quarter'd and then hang'd.

WHISTLER Good Master Bailey, be pitiful.

IGNORANCE Why [look] ye, sir: He makes a pitiful fellow of a bailey, too. Away with him. Yet stay awhile, here comes your fellows, sir.

Enter Crosby and Fleming.

[CROSBY] Now Master Bailey, are your blanks seal'd yet?

IGNORANCE They are, sir. And we have done this day most strange and pestiferous service, I assure ye, sir.

FLEMING Your care shall be rewarded. Come, fellow Nimble, we must to court about other employments. There are already 13,000 blanks sign'd and return'd to the shrieves and 700 sent up to th' court for whisperers, out of all which my lord will fetch a round sum I doubt it not. Come, lets away.

NIMBLE Aye. Aye. We'll follow. Come ye sheepbiter. Here's a traitor of all traitors that not only speaks but has whistled treason. Come, come, sir. I'll spoil your whistle I warrant ye.

Exeunt omnes.

ACT IV, [SCENE 1]

Enter Tresilian with writings and a man with bags of money.

TRESILIAN Sirrah, are the bags seal'd?

SERVANT Yes, my lord.

TRESILIAN Then take my keys and lock the money in my study safe. Bar and make sure, I charge ye, so begone.

SERVANT I will, my lord.

Exit servant.

TRESILIAN So 7,000 pounds
From Bedford, Buckingham, and Oxford shires
These blanks already have return'd the king.
So then there's four for me and three for him.
Our pains in this must needs be [satisfied].
Good husbands will make hay while the sun shines
And so must we, for thus conclude these times:
So men be rich enough, they're good enough.
Let fools make conscience how they get their coin.
I'll please the king and keep me in his grace,
For prince's favors purchase land apace.
These blanks that I have scatter'd in the realm
Shall double his revenues to the crown.

Enter Bushy and Scroop.

SCROOP Now Lord Tresilian, is this coin come yet?

BUSHY King Richard wants money. You're too slack Tresilian.

TRESILIAN Some shires have sent. And more, my lords, will follow.

These sealed blanks I now have turn'd to bonds
And these shall down to Norfolk presently.
The choughs with much ado have sign'd and seal'd
And here's a secret note my men have sent
Of all their yearly states amounts unto,
And by this note I justly tax their bonds.
Here's a fat whoreson in his russet slops,
And yet may spend 300 pounds by th' year,
The third of which the hogsface owes the king.
Here's his bond for't, with his hand and seal,
And so by this I'll sort each several sum.
The thirds of all shall to King Richard come.
How like you this, my lords?

SCROOP Most rare, Tresilian, hang 'em codsheads.
Shall they spend money and King Richard lack it?

BUSHY Are not their lives and lands and livings his?
Then rack them thoroughly.

TRESILIAN Oh my lords,
I have set a trick afoot for ye,
And ye follow it hard and get the King
To sign it, you'll be all kings by it.

BUSHY The farming out the kingdom? Tush Tresilian, 'tis half
granted already, and had been fully concluded had not the
messenger returned so unluckily from the Duke of Gloucester, which
a little moved the King at his uncle's stubbornness. But to make all
whole, we have left that smoothfaced, flattering Greene to follow
him close, and he'll never leave till he has done it I warrant ye.

SCROOP There's no question on't. King Richard will betake
himself to a yearly stipend and we four by lease must rent the
kingdom.

Enter Bagot.

BUSHY Rent it and rack it too ere we forfeit our leases
And we had them once. How now, Bagot, what news?

BAGOT All rich and rare, the realm must be divided
presently, and we four must farm it. The leases are amaking, and for
7,000 pounds a month the kingdom is our own, boys.

BUSHY 'Sfoot, lets differ for no price, and it were [70,000] pounds a
month, we'll make somebody pay for't.

SCROOP Where is his highness?

BAGOT He will be here presently to seal the writings. He's a
little angry that the Duke comes not, but that will vanish quickly. On
with your soothest faces ye wenching rascals; humor him finely and
you're all made by it.

Sound.

Enter King Richard, Greene, and others.

BUSHY See, see. He comes and that flattering hound Greene close
at's elbows.

SCROOP Come, come, we must all flatter if we mean to live
by it.

RICHARD Our uncle will not come then?

GREENE That was his answer, flat and resolute.

RICHARD Was ever subject so audacious?

BAGOT And can your grace, my lord, digest these wrongs?

RICHARD Yes, as a mother that beholds her child
Dismember'd by a bloody tyrant's sword.

I tell thee, Bagot, in my heart remains
Such deep impressions of his churlish taunts
As nothing can remove the gaul thereof
Till with his blood mine eyes be satisfied.

GREENE 'Sfoot, raise powers, my lord, and fetch him thence perforce.

RICHARD I dare not, Greene, for while he keeps i'th'country
There is no meddling; he's so well belov'd
As all the realm will rise in arms with him.

TRESILIAN 'Sfoot, my lord, and you'd fain have him, I have a
trick shall fetch him from his house at Plashy in spite of all his
favorites.

GREENE Let's ha't Tresilian, thy wit must help or all's dash'd
else.

TRESILIAN Then thus, my lord: [While] the duke securely revels
i'th'country we'll have some trusty friends disguise themselves like
masquers and this night ride down to Plashy, and in the name of
some near, adjoining friends, offer their sports to make him merry,
which he no doubt will thankfully accept. Then in the masque we'll
[have] it so devised, the dance being done and the room voided then,
upon some occasion single the duke alone, thrust him in a masquing
suit, clap a vizard on his face, and so convey him out o'th'house at
pleasure.

SCROOP How if he cry and call for help?

TRESILIAN What serves your drums but to drown his cries?
And being in a masque 'twill never be suspected.

GREENE Good i'faith, and to help it my lord: Lapoole the
Governor of Calais is new come over, who with a troop of soldiers
closely ambush'd in the woods near the house shall shroud
themselves till the masque be ended: Then, the duke being attach'd,

he shall be there ready to receive him, hurry him away to the
Thames side, where a ship shall be laid ready for his coming. So clap
him under hatches, hoist sails, and secretly convey him out
o'th'realm to Calais.

And so by this mean ye shall prevent all mischief,
For neither of your uncles nor any of the kingdom
Shall know what's become of him.

RICHARD I like it well, sweet Greene, and by my crown
We'll be i'th'masque ourself, and so shall you.
Get horses ready, this night we'll ride to Plashy.
But see ye carry it close and secretly,
For whilst this plot's aworking for the duke
I'll set a trap for York and Lancaster.
Go, Tresilian, let proclamations straight be sent
Wherein thou shalt accuse the dukes of treason
And then attach, condemn, and close imprison them.
Lest the commons should rebel against us
We'll send unto the King of France for aid,
And in requital we'll surrender up
Our forts of Guisnes and Calais to the French.
Let crown and kingdom waste, yea life and all,
Before King Richard see his true friends fall.
Give order our disguises be made ready
And let Lapoole provide the ship and soldiers;
We will not sleep, by heaven, till we have seiz'd him.

BUSHY'Sfoot, urge our suit again, he will forget it else.

RICHARD These traitors once surprised, then all is sure;
Our kingdom quiet and your states secure.

GREENE Most true, sweet king: And then, your grace, as you
promis'd, farming out the kingdom to us four shall not need to
trouble yourself with any business. This old turkcock Tresilian shall
look to the law and we'll govern the land most rarely.

<[**RICHARD**] So sir, the love of thee and these, my dearest Greene,
Hath won King Richard to consent to that
For which all foreign kings will point at us.
And of the meanest subjects of our land
We shall be censur'd strangely when they tell
How our great father toil'd his royal person
Spending his blood to purchase towns in France
And we his son to ease our wanton youth
Become a landlord to this warlike realm,
Rent out our kingdom, like a pelting farm,
That erst was held as fair as Babylon,
The maiden conqueress of all the world.

[**GREENE**] 'Sfoot, what need you care what the world talks?
You still retain the name of King, and if any disturb ye, we four
[come] presently from the four parts of the kingdom with four
peasant armies to assist you.

[**RICHARD**] You four must be all then, for I think nobody else
will follow you unless it be to hanging.

[**GREENE**] Why Richard, King Richard, will ye be as good as
your word and seal the writings? 'Sfoot and thou dost not, and I do
not join with thine uncles and turn traitor, would I might be turn'd
to a toadstool.>

[**RICHARD**] Very well, sir. They did well to choose you for their
orator that has King Richard's love and heart in keeping. Your suit is
granted, sir. Let's see the writings.

ALL They're here, my lord.

RICHARD View them, Tresilian, then we'll sign and seal them.
Look to your bargain, Greene, and be no looser, for if you forfeit or
run behind hand with me, I swear I'll both imprison and punish ye
soundly.

GREENE Forfeit, sweet king? 'Sblood, I'll sell their houses ere
I'll forfeit my least I warrant thee.

RICHARD If they be stubborn, do and spare not. Rack them
soundly. And we'll maintain it: Remember ye not the proviso
enacted in our last parliament that no statute, were it ne'er so
profitable for the commonwealth, should stand in any force 'gainst
our proceedings?

GREENE 'Tis true, my lord. Then what should hinder ye to
accomplish anything that may best please your kingly spirit to
determine?

RICHARD True Greene, and we will do it in spite of them. Is't
just, Tresilian?

TRESILIAN Most just, my liege: These gentlemen here – Sir
Henry Greene, Sir Edward Bagot, Sir William Bushy, and Sir Thomas
Scroop – all jointly here stand bound to pay your majesty, or your
deputy, wherever you remain, 7,000 pounds a month for this your
kingdom: For which your grace, by these writings, surrenders to
their hands all your crown lands, lordships, manors, rents, taxes,
subsidies, fifteens, imposts, foreign customs, staples for wool, tin,
lead, and cloth, all forfeitures of goods or lands confiscate, and all
other duties that is, shall, or may appertain to the king or crown's
revenues. And for non-payment of the sum or sums aforesaid, your
majesty to seize the lands and goods of the said gentlemen above
named and their bodies to be imprisoned at your grace's pleasure.

RICHARD How like you that, Greene? Believe me if you fail, I'll
not favor ye a day.

GREENE I'll ask no favor at your hands, sir. Ye shall have
your money at your day and then do your worst, sir.

RICHARD 'Tis very good; set to your hands and seals. Tresilian, we make you our deputy to receive this money. Look strictly to them I charge ye.

TRESILIAN If the money come not to my hands at the time appointed, I'll make them smoke for't.

GREENE Aye, aye, you're an upright justice, sir, we fear ye not. Here, my lord. They're ready, sign'd, and seal'd.

TRESILIAN Deliver them to his majesty. All together as your special deeds.

BAGOT We do with humble thanks unto his majesty
That makes us tenants to so rich a lordship.

RICHARD Keep them, Tresilian. Now will we sign and seal to you. Never had English subjects such a landlord.

GREENE Nor never had English king his subjects as we four that are able to farm a whole kingdom and pay him rent for't.

RICHARD Look that ye do. We shall expect performance speedily. There's your indenture sign'd and seal'd, which as our kingly deed we here deliver.

GREENE Thou never didst a better deed in thy life, sweet bully, thou [may'st] now live at ease; we'll toil for thee and send thy money in tumbling.

RICHARD We shall see your care, sir. Reach me the map we may allot their portions and part the realm amongst them equally. You four shall here by us divide yourselves into the thirty-nine shires [and] counties of my kingdom. Parted thus, come stand by me and mark those shires assign'd ye: Bagot, thy lot betwixt the Thames and sea thus lies - Kent, Surrey, Sussex, [Hampshire], Barkeshire,

Wiltshire, Dorset-shire, Somersett-shire, Devonshire, Cornwall - those [parts] are thine. As ample, Bagot, as the crown is mine.

BAGOT All thanks, love, duty to my princely sovereign.

RICHARD Bushy: From thee shall stretch his government over these [counties] that lie in Wales, together with our counts of Gloucester, [Worcester], Hereford, Shropshire, Stafford shire, and Chessire. There's thy lot.

BUSHY Thanks to my king that thus hath honor'd me.

RICHARD Sir Thomas Scroop, from Trent to Tweed thy lot is parted thus: All Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Northumberland. Receive thy lot, thy state, and government.

SCROOP With faith and duty to your highness' throne.

RICHARD Now my Greene, what have I left for thee?

GREENE 'Sfoot, and you'll give me nothing, then goodnight landlord. Since you have serv'd me last, and I be not the last shall pay your rent, ne'er trust me.

RICHARD I kept thee last to make thy part the greatest. See here, sweet Greene, these shires are thine, even from the Thames to Trent thou here shalt lie, i'th'middle of my land.

GREENE That's best i'th'winter. [Are] there any pretty wenches in my government?

RICHARD Guess that by this: Thou has London, Middlesex, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Harfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Northampton shire, Rutland shire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Huntington shire, and Lincolnshire. There's your portion, sir.

[ACT IV, SCENE 2]

GREENE 'Slid, I will rule like a king amongst them
And thou shalt reign like an Emperor over us.

RICHARD Thus have I parted out my whole realm amongst ye;
Be careful of your charge and government.
And now to attach our stubborn uncles:
Let warrants be sent down, Tresilian,
For Gaunt and York, Surrey and Arundel,
[While] we this night at Plashy suddenly
Surprise plain Woodstock; being parted thus
We shall with greater ease arrest and take them.
Your places are not sure while [they] have breath,
Therefore pursue them hard. Those traitors gone,
The staves are broke the people lean upon,
And you may guide and rule them at your pleasures.
Away to Plashy; let our masque be ready.
Beware, plain Thomas, for King Richard comes
Resolv'd with blood to wash all former wrongs.

Exeunt omnes.

*Enter Woodstock and his Duchess [of Gloucester] with a Gentleman,
Cheney, and others.*

WOODSTOCK The Queen so sick; come, come, make haste good wife;
Thou't be belated sure, 'tis night already;
On with thy cloak and mask; to horse, to horse

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER
Good troth, my lord, I have no mind to ride;
I have been dull and heavy all this day,
My sleeps were troubled with sad dreams last night,
And I am full of fear and heaviness.
Pray let me ride tomorrow.

WOODSTOCK What, and the Queen so sick? Away for shame.
Stay for a dream? Thou'st dreamt I'm sure ere this.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER
Never so fearful were my dreams till now.
Had [they] concern'd myself my fears were past,
But you were made the object of mine eye
And I beheld you murder'd cruelly.

WOODSTOCK Ha? Murder'd? Alack, good lady, didst thou dream of me?
Take comfort then, all dreams are contrary.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER
Pray god it prove so, for my soul is fearful
The vision did appear so lively to me.
[Methought] as you were ranging through the woods
An angry lion with a herd of wolves
Had in an instant round encompass'd you
When to your rescue, 'gainst the course of kind,
A flock of silly sheep made head against them

Bleating for help: 'Gainst whom the Forest King
Roused up his strength and slew both you and them:
This fear affrights me.

[WOODSTOCK] Afore my God, thou'rt foolish.
I'll tell thee all thy dream:
Thou know'st last night we had some private talk
About the blanks the country's tax'd withal,
Where I compared the state as now it stands
(Meaning King Richard and his harmful flatterers)
Unto a savage herd of ravening wolves,
The commons to a flock of silly sheep
Who, whilst their slothful shepherd careless stood,
Those forest thieves broke in and suck'd their blood;
And this thy apprehension took so deep
The form was portray'd lively in thy sleep.
Come, come, 'tis nothing. What are her horses ready?

CHENEY They are, my lord.

WOODSTOCKWhere is the gentleman that brought this message?
Where lies the Queen, sir?

[GENTLEMAN] At Sheen, my lord; most sick and so much alter'd
As those about her fear her sudden death.

WOODSTOCKForfend it, heaven. Away, make haste, I charge ye.
What, weeping now? Aford my God, thou'rt fond.
Come, come, I know thou art no augurer of ill;
Dry up thy tears, this kiss and part: Farewell.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER
That farewell from your lips to me sounds ill;
Where'er I go my fears will follow still.

WOODSTOCKSee her to horseback, Cheney:

*Exeunt Duchess [of Gloucester] and ye rest.
Manet Woodstock.*

'Fore my God, 'tis late,
And but important business craves such haste,
She had not gone from Plashy House tonight.
But woe is me, the good Queen Anne is sick,
And, by my soul, my heart is sad to hear it.
So good a lady and so virtuous
This realm for many ages could not boast of;
Her charity hath stay'd the commons rage
That would ere this have shaken Richard's chair
Or set all England on a burning fire;
And 'fore my God, I fear when she is gone
This woeful land will all to ruin run.
How now, Cheney? What, is thy lady gone yet?

CHENEY She is, my lord. With much unwillingness.
And 'tis so dark I cannot blame her grace;
The lights of heaven are shut in pitchy clouds
And flakes of fire run tilting through the sky
Like dim ostents to some great tragedy.

WOODSTOCKGod bless, good Anne a Beame. I fear her death
Will be the tragic scene the sky foreshows us;
When kingdoms change, the very heavens are troubled.
Pray God King Richard's wild behavior
Force not the powers of heaven to frown upon us;
My prayers are still for him. What thinkst thou, Cheney?
May not plain Thomas live a time to see
This state attain her former royalty?
'Fore God I doubt it not; my heart is merry
And I am suddenly inspired for mirth. Ha:
What sport shall we have tonight, Cheney?

CHENEY I'm glad to see your grace addicted so,
For I have news of sudden mirth to tell ye,

Which till I heard you speak I durst not utter:
We shall have a masque tonight my lord.

WOODSTOCK Ha? A masque say'st thou? What are they, Cheney?

CHENEY It seems, my lord, some country gentleman,
To show their dear affection to your grace,
Proffer their sports this night to make you merry;
Their drums have call'd for entrance twice already.

WOODSTOCK Are they so near? I prithee let them enter.
Tell them we do embrace their loves most kindly,
Give order through the house that all observe them.

Exit Cheney.

We must accept their loves although the times
Are no way suited now for masques and revels.
What ho, within there.

Enter servants. (Toby)

SERVANT My lord

WOODSTOCK Prepare a banquet: Call for lights and music.
They come in love and we'll accept it so;
Some [sport] does well, we're all too full of woe.

Enter Cheney.

[CHENEY] They're come, my lord.

Antic.
Flourish coronets:
Dance and music:
Coronets.

[WOODSTOCK] They all are welcome, Cheney: Set me a chair
We will behold their sports in spite of care.

Sound a flourish, then a great shout and winding of horns.
Then enters Cynthia.

CYNTHIA From the clear orb of our Ethereal Sphere
Bright Cynthia comes to hunt and revel here.
The groves of Callidon and Arden woods
Of untamed monsters (wild and savage herds)
We and our knights have freed, and hither come
To hunt these forests where we hear there lies
A cruel and tusked boar whose terror flies
Through this large kingdom, and with fear and dread
Strikes her a massed greatness pale and dead.
And having viewed from far these towers of stone,
We heard the people, midst their joy and moan,
Extol to heaven a faithful prince and peer
That keeps a court of love and pity here.
Reverent and mild his looks: If such there be,
This state directs, great prince, that you are he.
And ere our knights to this great hunting go,
Before your grace they would some pastime show
In sprightly dancing. Thus they bade me say
And wait an answer to return or stay.

WOODSTOCK Nay, for heaven's pity let them come, I prithee.
Pretty device, i' faith, stand by, make room there.

Music.

Stir, stir, good fellows, each man to his task.
We shall have a clear night; the moon directs the masque.

*Enter King Richard, Greene, Bushy, [and] Bagot like Diana's knights, led
in by four other knights with horns about their necks and boarspears in
their hands.*

WOODSTOCK Ha, country sports, say ye? 'Fore God 'tis courtly.
 A general welcome, courteous gentlemen.
 And when I see your faces, I'll give it each man more particular.
 If your entertainment fail your merit,
 I must ask pardon: My lady is from home
 And most of my attendants waiting on her.
 But we'll do what we can to bid your welcome;
 Afore my God, it joys my heart to see,
 Amidst these days of woe and misery,
 Ye find a time for harmless mirth and sport.
 But 'tis your loves, and we'll be thankful for't: Ah sirrah,
 Ye come like knights to hunt the boar indeed.
 And heaven, he knows we had need of helping hands:
 So many wild boars [root] and [spoil] our lands
 That England almost is destroy'd by them.
 I [care] not if King Richard heard me speak it;
 I wish his grace all good, high heaven can tell,
 But there's a fault in some, alack the day:
 His youth is led by flatterers much astray.
 But he's our king, and God's great deputy,
 And if ye hunt to have me second ye
 In any rash attempt against his state,
 Afore my God, I'll ne'er consent unto it;
 I ever yet was just and true to him
 And so will still remain. What's now amiss
 Our sins have caused, and we must bid heaven's will.
 I speak my heart: I am plain Thomas still.
 Come, come, a hall and music there; your dance being done
 A banquet stands prepared to bid you welcome.

They Dance.
Music, then enter Cheney.

How now, Cheney, is this banquet ready?

CHENEY There is no time, I fear, for banqueting.

A drum afar off.

I fear your person is betray'd, my lord.
 The house is round beset with armed soldiers.

WOODSTOCK Ha? Soldiers? Afore my God, the commons all are up then;
 They will rebel against the king, I fear me,
 And flock to me to back their bold attempts.
 Go arm the household, Cheney:

Exit Cheney.

Hear me gentlemen—
 'Fore God I do not like this whispering.
 If your intents be honest, show your faces.

RICHARD Guard fast the doors and seize him presently.
 This is the cave that keeps the tusked boar
 That roots up England's vineyards uncontroll'd.
 Bagot arrest him; if for help he cry,
 Drown all his words with drums confusedly.

WOODSTOCK Am I betray'd?

BAGOT Ye cannot 'scape, my lord, the toils are pitch'd
 And all your household fast in hold ere this.
 Thomas of Woodstock. Duke of Gloucester.
 Earl of Cambridge and of Buckingham.
 I here arrest thee in King Richard's name
 Of treason to the crown, his state, and realm.

WOODSTOCK I'll put in bail and answer to the law.
 Speak, is King Richard here?

ALL No, no, my lord, away with him.

WOODSTOCK Villains touch me not.
I am descended of the royal blood,
King Richard's uncle, his grandsire's son,
His princely father's brother.
Becomes it princes to be led like slaves?

RICHARD Put on a vizard. Stop his cries.

WOODSTOCK Ha? Who bids them so? I know that voice full well.
Afore my God, false men, King Richard's here:
Turn thee, thou headstrong youth, and speak again.
By thy dead father's soul, I charge thee hear me:
So heaven may help me at my greatest need
As I have wish'd thy good and England's safety.

BAGOT You're still deceiv'd, my lord, the king's not here.

BUSHY On with his masquing suit and bear him hence.
We'll lead ye fairly to King Richard's presence.

WOODSTOCK Nay, from his presence to my death you'll lead me,
And I am pleased I shall not live to see
My country's ruin and his misery.
Thou hear'st me well, proud king, and well may'st boast
That thou betray'dst me here so suddenly;
For had I known thy secret treachery
Nor thou nor these thy flattering minions,
With all your strengths, had wrong'd plain Woodstock [thus].
But use your wills. Your uncles Gaunt and York
Will give you thanks for this: And the poor [commons]
When they shall hear of these your unjust [proceedings] –

RICHARD Stop's mouth, I say. We'll hear no more.

WOODSTOCK Good heaven forgive me; pray ye forbear [awhile].
I'll speak but one word more, indeed I will:
Some man commend me to my virtuous wife;

Tell her her dreams have ta'en effect indeed:
By wolves and lions now must Woodstock [bleed].

RICHARD Deliver him to Lapoole; the ship lies ready;
Convey him o'er to Calais speedily,
There use him as we gave directions.
Sound up your drums, our hunting sports are done;
And when you're past the house, cast by your habits
And mount your horses with all swiftest haste;
The boar is taken and our fears are past.

Sound.
Exeunt omnes.

[ACT IV, SCENE 3]

Enter Crosby, Fleming, and Nimble.

CROSBY Come sirs attend, my lord is coming forth.
The high shrieves of Kent and Northumberland
With twenty gentlemen are all arrested
For privy whisperers against the state,
In which I know my lord will find some trick
To seize their goods: And then there's work for us.

NIMBLE Nay, there will be work for the hangman first:
Then we rifle the goods and my lord seizes the lands:
If these seven hundred whisperers
That are taken come off lustily,
He'll have the devil and all shortly.

Enter Tresilian with the Shrieves of Kent and Northumberland, with officers.

FLEMING See, see, they're coming.

TRESILIAN Call for a marshal there. Commit the traitors.

SHRIEVES We do beseech your honor, hear us speak.

TRESILIAN Sir, we'll not hear ye. The proof's too plain against ye.
Becomes it you, sir, being Shrieve of Kent
To stay the blanks King Richard sent abroad,
Revile our messengers, refuse the charters,
And spurn like traitors 'gainst the king's decrees?

SHRIEVE OF KENT My lord: I plead our ancient liberties,
Recorded and enroll'd in the king's crown office,
Wherein the men of Kent are clear discharg'd
Of fines, fifteens, or any other taxes

For ever given them by the conqueror.

TRESILIAN You're still deceived: Those charters were not sent
To abrogate your ancient privilege,
But for his highness' use they were devised
To gather and collect amongst his subjects
Such sums of money as they well might spare
And he in their defense must hourly spend.
Is not the subject's wealth at the king's will?
What, is he lord of lives and not of lands?
Is not his high displeasure present death?
And dare ye stir his indignation so?

SHRIEVE OF NORTHUMBERLAND
We are freeborn, my lord, yet do confess
Our lives and goods are at the king's dispose.
But how, my lord? Like to a gentle prince
To take or borrow what we best may spare,
And not, like bondslaves, force it from our hands.

TRESILIAN Presumptuous traitors. That will we try on you.
Will you set limits to the king's high [pleasure]?
Away to prison; seize their goods and lands.

SHRIEVE OF KENT
Much good may it do ye, my lord. The care is ta'en;
As good die there as here abroad be slain.

SHRIEVE OF NORTHUMBERLAND
Well, God forgive both you and us, my lord;
Your hard oppressions have undone the state
And made all England poor and desolate.

[**TRESILIAN**] Why suffer ye there speech? To prison hie.
There let them perish, rot consume, and die.

Exeunt [officers] with the shrieves.

Art thou there, Nimble?

[NIMBLE] I am here, my lord. And since your lordship is now employ'd to punish traitors, I am come to present myself unto you.

[TRESILIAN] What, for a traitor?

[NIMBLE] No, my lord, but for a discoverer of the strangest traitor that was ever heard of. For by plain arithmetic of my capacity I have found out the very words a traitor spoke that has whistled treason.

[TRESILIAN] How is that, whistle treason?

[NIMBLE] Most certain, my lord. I have a trick for't: If a carman do but whistle, I'll find treason in't, I warrant ye.

TRESILIAN Thou'rt a rare statesman, Nimble; thou'st a reaching head.

NIMBLE I'll put treason into any man's head, my lord, let him answer it as he can. And then my lord we have got a schoolmaster that teaches all the country to sing treason. And like a villain he says God bless your lordship.

TRESILIAN Thou'rt a most strange discoverer. Where are these traitors?

NIMBLE All in prison, my lord. Master Ignorance the bailey of Dunstable and I have taken great pains about them. Besides, here's a note of seven hundred whisperers, most of them sleepy knaves we pulled out of Bedfordshire.

TRESILIAN Let's see the note. Seven hundred whispering traitors. Monstrous villains. We must look to these. Of all the sort, these are the most dangerous

To stir rebellion 'gainst the king and us.
What are they, Crosby? Are the rebels wealthy?

CROSBY Fat choughs, my lord, all landed men. Rich farmers, graziers, and such fellows that having been but a little pinch'd with imprisonment begin already to offer their lands for liberty.

TRESILIAN We'll not be nice to take their offers, Crosby. Their lands are better than their lives to us, And without their lands they shall not ransom lives. Go sirs, to terrify the traitors more Ye shall have warrants straight to hang them all. Then, if they proffer lands and put in bail To make a just surrender speedily, Let them have lives and after liberty But those that have nor lands nor goods to pay Let them be whipp'd, then hang'd; make haste away.

NIMBLE Well then. I see my whistler must be whipp'd; he has but two calves to live on, and has lost them, too: And for my schoolmaster, I'll have him march about the marketplace with ten dozen of rods at's girdle the very day he goes afeasting and every one of his scholars shall have a jerk at him. Come, sirs.

TRESILIAN Away and leave us.

*Exit Nimble and the [rest].
Manet Tresilian.*

Here comes Sir Edward Bagot.

Enter Bagot.

BAGOT Right happily met, my lord Tresilian.

TRESILIAN You're well return'd to court, Sir Edward, To this sad house of Sheen, made comfortless

By the sharp sickness of the good Queen Anne.

BAGOT King Richard's come and gone to visit her;
Sad for her weak estate he sits and weeps.
Her speech is gone. Only, at sight of him,
She heav'd her hands and closed her eyes again,
And whether alive or dead is yet uncertain.

Enter Bushy.

TRESILIAN Here comes Sir William Bushy. What tidings, sir?

[BUSHY] The king's a widower, sir. Fair Anne a Beame
Hath breath'd her last farewell to all the realm.

TRESILIAN Peace with her soul; she was a virtuous lady.
How takes King Richard this her sudden death?

BUSHY Fairs like a madman: Rends his princely hair,
Beats his sad breast, falls groveling on the earth
All careless of his state, wishing to die
And even in death to keep her company.
But that which makes his soul more desperate,
Amidst this heat of passion, weeping comes
His aunt, the Duchess, Woodstock's hapless wife,
With tender love and [comfort];
At sight of whom his griefs again redoubled
Calling to mind the lady's woeful state,
As yet all ignorant of her own mishap,
He takes her in his arms, weeps on her breast,
And would have there reveal'd her husband's fall
Amidst his passions had not Scroop and Greene
By violence borne him to an inward room
Where still he cries to get a messenger
To send to Calais to reprieve his uncle.

BAGOT I do not like those passions.

If he reveal the plot we all shall perish.
Where is the Duchess?

BUSHY With much ado we got her leave the presence
With an intent in haste to ride to Plashy.

TRESILIAN She'll find sad comforts there. Would all were well.
A thousand dangers round enclose our state.

BAGOT And we'll break through, my lord, in spite of fate.
Come, come, be merry good Tresilian.
Here comes King Richard; all go comfort him.

Enter King [Richard], ~~Greene~~, and Scroop.

SCROOP My dearest lord, forsake these sad laments.
No sorrows can suffice to make her live.

RICHARD Then let sad sorrow kill King Richard, too,
For all earthly joys with her must die
And I am kill'd with cares eternally
For Anne a Beame is dead, forever gone.
She was too virtuous to remain with me,
And heaven hath given her higher dignity.
Oh God I fear, even here begins our woe;
Her death's but chorus to some tragic scene
That shortly will confound our state and realm.
Such sad events black mischief will attend
And bloody acts I fear must crown the end.

BAGOT Presage not so, sweet prince, your state is strong,
Your youthful hopes with expectations crown'd;
Let not one loss so many comforts [drown].

RICHARD Despair and madness seize me. Oh ~~my~~ dear friends,
What loss can be compared to such a queen?
Down with this house of Sheen; go ruin all,

Pull down her buildings, let her turrets fall,
Forever lay it waste and desolate
That English king may never here keep court,
But to all ages leave a sad report
When men shall see these ruin'd walls of Sheen
And sighing say, "Here died King Richard's queen."
For which we'll have it wasted lime and stone
To keep a monument of Richard's moan.
Oh torturing grief.

BUSHY Oh dear my liege, all tears for her are vain oblations;
Her quiet soul rests in celestial peace.
With joy of that, let all your sorrows cease.

RICHARD Send post to Calais and bid Lapoole forbear
On pain of life to act our sad decree.
For heaven's love go, prevent the tragedy.
We have too much provoked the powers divine
And here repent thy wrongs, good uncle Woodstock,
The thought whereof confounds my memory.
If men might die when they would point the time,
The time is now King Richard would be gone,
For as a fearful thunderclap doth strike
The soundest body of the tallest oak
Yet harmless leaves the outward bark untouch'd,
So is King Richard struck. Come, come, let's go;
My wounds are inward, inward burn my woe.

Exeunt omnes.

ACT V, [SCENE 1]

A bed for Woodstock.

Enter Lapoole with a light. After him the two Murderers.

LAPOOLE Come sirs, be resolute. The time serves well
To act the business you have ta'en in hand.
The duke is gone to rest, <the room is voided,
No ear can hear his cries>, be fearless bold
And win King Richard's love with heaps of gold.
Are all your instruments for death made ready?

1 MURDERER All fit [to th']purpose, my lord. Here's first a towel
with which we do intend to strangle him. But if he strive and this
should chance to fail, I'll maul his old mazzard with his hammer,
knock him down like an ox, and after cut's throat. How like ye [this]?

LAPOOLE No, wound him not. It must be done so fair and cunningly
As if he died a common natural death,
For so we must give out to all that ask.

2 MURDERER There is no way then but to smother him.

LAPOOLE I like that best. Yet one thing let me tell ye:
Think not your work contrived so easily
As if you were to match some common man.
Believe me, sirs, his countenance is such,
So full of dread and lordly majesty
<Mix'd with such mild and gentle havior>,
As will (except you be resolv'd at full)
Strike you with fear even with his princely looks.

1 MURDERER Not and he look'd as grim as Hercules,
As stern and terrible as the devil himself.

LAPOOLE 'Tis well resolv'd; retire yourselves awhile,

<Stay in the next withdrawing chamber there>,
And when <I spy the best advantage for ye>
Occasion serves, I'll call you forth.

2 MURDERER Do but beckon
With your finger, my lord, and like vultures
We come flying and seize him presently.

Exeunt two Murderers.

LAPOOLE Do so.
<And yet> now by <all> my fairest hopes I swear
The boldness of these villains to this murder
Makes me abhor them and the deed forever.
<Horror of conscience with the king's command
Fights a fell combat in my fearful breast>:
The king commands his uncle here must die
And my sad conscience bids the contrary
And tells me that his innocent blood thus spilt
Heaven will revenge; murder's a heinous guilt
<A seven times crying sin. Accursed man,
The further that I wade in this foul act
My troubled senses are the more distract,
Confounded, and tormented past my reason.>
But there's no lingering; either he must die
Or great King Richard vows my tragedy.
Then twixt two evils 'tis good to choose the least;
Let danger fright faint fools, I'll save mine own
And let him fall to black destruction.

He draws the curtains.

He sleeps upon his bed. The time serves fitly,
I'll call the murderers in. Sound music there
To rock his senses in eternal slumbers.
Sleep, Woodstock, sleep. Thou never more shalt wake.
This town of Calais shall forever tell

Within her castle walls plain Thomas fell.

*Exit Lapoole.
Thunder & lightning.
Enter the Ghost of the Black Prince.*

[BLACK PRINCE] Night horror and the eternal shrieks of death
Intended to be done this dismal night
Hath shook fair England's great cathedral
And from my tomb elate at Canterbury
The ghost of Edward the Black Prince is come
To stay King Richard's rage, my wanton son.
Thomas of Woodstock wake. Thy brother calls thee.
Thou royal issue of King Edward's loins,
Thou art beset with murder; rise and fly;
If here thou stay, death comes and thou must die.
Still dost thou sleep: Oh I am nought but air.
Had I the vigor of my former strength
When thou beheldest me fight at Crecy field,
(Where hand-to-hand, I took King John of France
And his bold sons my captive prisoners)
I'd shake these stiff supporters of thy bed
And drag thee from this dull security.
Oh yet for pity wake. Prevent thy doom.
Thy blood upon my son will surely come.
For which, dear brother Woodstock, haste and fly.
Prevent his ruin and thy tragedy.

*Thunder.
Exit Ghost.*

[WOODSTOCK] Oh.

Enter Edward the Third's Ghost.

[EDWARD III] Sleepst thou so soundly and pale death so nigh?
Thomas of Woodstock, wake, my son, and fly.

Thy wrongs have roused thy royal father's ghost,
And from his quiet grave King Edward's come
To guard thy innocent life. My princely son,
Behold me here. Sometimes fair England's lord,
Seven warlike sons I left, yet being gone
No one succeeded my kingly throne.
Richard of Bordeaux, my [accursed] grandchild
Cut off your titles to the kingly state
And now your lives, and all, would ruinate;
Murders his grandsire's son, his father's brothers;
Becomes a landlord of my kingly titles;
Rents out my crown's revenues; racks my subjects
That spent their bloods with me in conquering France,
Beheld me ride in state through London streets,
And at my stirrup lowly footing by
Four captive kings to grace my victory.
Yet that, not this, his riotous youth can stay
Till death hath ta'en his uncles all away.
Thou fifth of Edward's sons get up and fly;
Haste thee to England, close and speedily.
Thy brothers York and Gaunt are up in arms;
Go join with them. Prevent thy further harms.
The murderers are at hand. Awake my son.
This hour foretells thy sad destruction.

Exit Ghost.

[WOODSTOCK] Oh good angels guide me, stay thou blessed spirit;
Thou royal shadow of my kingly father,
Return again. I know thy reverent looks.
With thy dear sight once more recomfort me;
Put by the fears my trembling heart foretells
And here is made apparent to my sight
By dreams and visions of this dreadful night.
Upon my knees I beg it: Ha: Protect me heaven:
The doors are all made fast: 'Twas but my fancy.
All's whist and still, and nothing here appears

But the vast circuit of this empty room.
Thou blessed hand of mercy, guide my senses.
Afore my God, [methought] as here I slept
I did behold in lively form and substance
My father Edward and my warlike brother
Both gliding by my bed. And cried to me
To leave this place to save my life and fly.
Lighten my fears, dear lord. I hear remain
A poor old man, thrust from my native country;
Kept imprison'd in a foreign kingdom.

Enter Lapoole and the Murderers.

If I must die, bear record righteous heaven
How I have nightly waked for England's good,
And yet to right her wrongs would spend my blood.
Send they sad doom, King Richard, take my life.
I wish my death might ease my country's grief.

LAPOOLE We are prevent'd; back, retire again.
He's risen from his bed. What fate preserves him?

[Exit Murderers.]

My lord, how fare you?

WOODSTOCK Thou canst not kill me, villain.
God's holy angels [guard] a just man's life
And with his radiant beams as bright as fire
Will guard and keep his righteous innocence.
I am a prince; thou dare'st not murder me.

LAPOOLE Your grace mistakes, my lord.

WOODSTOCK What art thou? Speak.

LAPOOLE Lapoole, my lord. This city's governor.

WOODSTOCK Lapoole thou art King Richard's flatterer.

Oh you just gods, record their treachery,
Judge their foul wrongs, that under show of friendship
Betray'd my simple kind. Intendiments
My heart gave; it was no time for revels
When you like masquers came disguised to Plashy,
Joined the wanton king to trap my life
(For that I know's the end his malice aims at;
This castle and my secret sending hither
Imports no less). Therefore I charge ye tell me,
Even by the virtue of nobility,
And partly, too, on that allegiance
Thou owe'st the offspring of King Edward's house,
If ought thou know'st to prejudice my life,
Thou presently reveal and make it known.

LAPOOLE Nay, good my lord, forbear that fond suspicion.

WOODSTOCK I tell thee Poole, there is no less intended.

Why am I sent thus from my native country
But here at Calais to be murdered?
And that, Lapoole, confounds my patience.
This town of Calais where I spent my blood
To make it captive to the English king;
Before whose walls great Edward lay encamp'd
With his seven sons almost for fourteen months;
Where the Black Prince, my brother, and my wife,
The peers of England, and our royal father,
Fearless of wounds, ne'er left till it was won.
And was't to make a prison for his son?
Oh righteous heavens, why do you suffer it?

LAPOOLE Disquiet not your thoughts, my gracious lord.

There is no hurt intended, credit me.
Although awhile your freedom be abridg'd,
I know the king. If you would but submit

And write your letters to his majesty
Your reconciliation might be easily wrought.

WOODSTOCK For what should I submit or ask his mercy?

Had I offended, with all low submission
I'd lay my neck under the block before him
And willingly endure the stroke of death.
But if not so, why should my fond entreaties
Make my true loyalty appear like treason?
No, no, Lapoole, let guilt men beg pardons.
My mind is clear. And I must tell ye, sir,
Princes have hearts like pointed diamonds
That will in sunder burst afore they bend.
And such lives here though death King Richard [sends].
Yet fetch me pen and ink; I'll write to [him]
Not to entreat, but to admonish him
That he forsake his foolish ways in time
And learn to govern like a virtuous prince:
Call home his wise and reverent counselors,
Thrust from his court those cursed flatterers
That hourly [work] the realm's confusion.
This counsel, if he follow, may in time
Pull down those mischiefs that so fast do climb.

LAPOOLE Here's pen and paper, my lord. Wilt please ye write?

WOODSTOCK Anon I will; shut to the doors and leave me.

Goodnight, Lapoole, and pardon me I prithee
That my sad fear made question of thy faith.
My state is fearful and my mind was troubled
Even at thy entrance with most fearful visions
Which made my passions more extreme and hasty.
Out of my better judgments I repent it
And will reward thy love: Once more goodnight.

LAPOOLE Good rest unto your grace,
[aside] I mean in death

This dismal night: Thou breathest thy latest breath.
He sits to write, I'll call the murderers in
To steal behind and closely strangle him.

Exit Lapoole.

WOODSTOCK So help me heaven, I know not what to write,
What style to use, nor how I should begin.
My method is too plain to greet a king.
I'll nothing say t'excuse or clear myself,
For I have nothing [done] that needs excuse,
But tell him plain: Though here I spend my blood
I wish his safety and all England's good.

Enter both Murderers.

1 MURDERER Creep close to his back, ye rogue, be ready with the
towel when I have knock'd him down to strangle him.

2 MURDERER Do it quickly whilst his back is towards ye, ye
damn'd villain, if thou let'st him speak but a word we shall not kill
him.

1 MURDERER I'll watch him for that, down [on] your knees and
creep ye rascal.

WOODSTOCK Have mercy, God. My sight o'th'sudden fails me, I
cannot see my paper, my trembling fingers will not hold my pen, a
thick congealed mist o'er spreads the chamber. I'll rise and view the
room.

2 MURDERER No too fast for failing.

Strikes him.

WOODSTOCK What villain hand hath done a deed so bad
To drench his black soul in a prince's blood?

1 MURDERER Do ye prate, sir? Take that and that, 'zounds put the
towel about's throat and strangle him quickly, ye slave. Or by the
heart of hell I'll fell thee, too.

2 MURDERER 'Tis done, ye damn'd slave. Pull ye dog: And pull
thy soul to hell in doing it. For thou hast kill'd the truest subject that
ever breath'd in England.

1 MURDERER Pull, rogue, pull; think of the gold we shall have for
[doing] it, and then let him and thee go to th'devil together. Bring in
the feather bed and roll him up in that till he be smother'd and
stifled and life and soul press'd out together. Quickly, ye hell hound.

2 MURDERER Here, here, ye cannibal. 'Zounds he kicks and
sprawls; lie on's breast, ye villain.

1 MURDERER Let him sprawl and hang. He's sure enough for
speaking. Pull off the bed now. Smooth down his hair and beard.
Close his eyes. And set his neck right: Why so: All fine and cleanly,
who can say that this man was murder'd now?

[Enter Lapoole.]

LAPOOLE What, is he dead?

[2] MURDERER As a doornail, my lord. What will ye do
with his body?

[LAPOOLE] Take it up gently, lay him in his bed.
Then shut the door as if he there had died.

[1 MURDERER] It cannot be perceived otherwise, my lord.
Never was murder done with such rare skill. At our return we shall
expect reward, my lord.

LAPOOLE 'Tis ready told. Bear in the body, then return and take it.

Exeunt with body.

Within there, ho.

[Enter soldiers.]

[SOLDIER] My lord

LAPOOLE <Draw all>.

Be ready with your weapons, <soldiers>, guard the room.
There's two false traitors enter'd the duke's chamber
Plotting to bear him thence, betray the castle,
Deliver up the town and all our lives
To the French forces that are hard at hand
<To second their attempts>. Therefore stand close,
And as they enter seize them presently.
Our wills your warrant, use no further words
But hew them straight to pieces with your swords.

SOLDIER I warrant ye, my lord. And their skins were scaled with brass
We have swords will pierce them. Come sirs, be ready.

Enter the Murderers.

1 MURDERER Come ye miching rascal; the deeds done and all things
perform'd rarely. We'll take our reward, steal close out o'th'town, buy
us fresh geldings, spur cut and ride till we are past all danger, I
warrant thee.

LAPOOLE Give their reward there. Quick I say.

SOLDIER Down with the traitors. Kill the villains.

BOTH MURDERERS Hell and the devil, 'zounds hold ye rascals.

They kill the Murderers.

LAPOOLE <Drag hence their bodies. Hurl them in the sea.
The black reward of death's a traitor's pay.

Exeunt soldiers with their bodies.

So this was well perform'd. Now who but we
Can make report of Woodstock's tragedy?
Only he died a natural death at Calais.
So must we give it out, or else King Richard
Through Europe's kingdoms will be hardly censur'd.
His head-strong uncles, York and Lancaster,
Are up, we hear, in open arms against him.
<The gentlemen and commons of the realm,
Missing the good old duke, their plain protector,
Break their allegiance to their sovereign lord
And all revolt upon the barons' [side].>
To help which harm, I'll o'er to England straight
And with th'old troops of soldiers ta'en from Calais,
I'll back King Richard's power. For should he fail
(And his great uncles get the victory)
His friends are sure to die: But if he win,
They fall, and we shall rise whilst Richard's king.

Exeunt.

[ACT V, SCENE 2]

Drums march within.

Enter Tresilian and Nimble with Armor.

TRESILIAN These proclamations we have sent abroad
Wherein we have accused the dukes of treason.
Will [dent] their pride and make the people leave them.
I hope no less, at least. Where are thou, Nimble?

NIMBLE So loaden with armor I cannot stir, my lord.

TRESILIAN Whose drums are those that beat even now?

NIMBLE King Richard's drums, my lord: The young lords are
pressing soldiers.

TRESILIAN Oh, and do they take their press with willingness?

NIMBLE As willing as a punk that's press'd on a featherbed;
they take [their pressing] apiece with great patience. Marry, the lords
no sooner turn their backs but they run away like sheep, sir.

TRESILIAN They shall be hang'd like dogs for't.
What [dare] the slaves refuse their sovereign

NIMBLE They say the proclamations' false, my lord,
And they'll not fight against the king's friends.

TRESILIAN So I fear'd as much and since 'tis come to this
I must provide betime and seek for safety;
For now the king and our audacious peers
Are grown to such height of burning rage
As nothing now can quench their kindled ire
But open trial by the sword and lance.
And then I fear King Richard's part will fail.

Nimble. Our soldiers run, thou say'st?

NIMBLE Aye, by my troth, my lord. And I think 'tis our best
course to run after [them]. For if [they] run now, what will they do
when the battle begins? If we tarry here and the king's uncles catch
us, we are sure to be hang'd. My lord: Have you no trick of law to
defend us? No demure or writ of error to remove us?

TRESILIAN Nimble, we must be wise.

NIMBLE Then let's not stay to have more wit beaten into our
heads, I like not that, my lord.

TRESILIAN I am a man of peace and not for war.

NIMBLE And yet they say you have made more wrangling i'th'land
Than all the wars [have] done this seven years.

TRESILIAN This battle will revenge their base exclams.
But hear'st thou, Nimble? I'll not be there today.
One man amongst so many is no maim,
Therefore I'll keep aloof till all be done.
If good, I stay; if bad, away I run.
Nimble, it shall be so. I'll neither fight nor die,
But this resolv'd, disguise myself and fly.

Exit Tresilian.

NIMBLE 'Tis the wisest course, my lord.
And I'll go put off mine armor that I may run lustily, too.

Exit Nimble.

[ACT V, SCENE 3]

Enter with drum and colors: York, Lancaster, Arundel, [and] Surrey with the Duchess of Gloucester, and Soldiers, and Cheney.

LANCASTER Go to our tents, dear sister; cease your sorrows.

We will revenge our noble brother's wrongs
And force that wanton tyrant to reveal
The death of his dear uncle, harmless Woodstock
So traitorously betray'd.

YORK Alack, good man,

It was an easy task to work on him.
His plainness was too open to their view;
He fear'd no wrong because his heart was true.
Good sister, cease your weeping. There's none here
But are as full of woe and touch'd as near.
Conduct and guard her, Cheney, to the tent.
Expect to hear severest punishment
On all their heads that have procured his harms
Struck from the terror of our threat'ning arms.

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER

May all the powers of heaven assist your hands,
And may their sins sit heavy on their souls,
That they in death this day may perish all
That traitorously conspired good Woodstock's fall.

Exeunt Cheney and the Duchess [of Gloucester].

LANCASTER If he be dead, by good King Edward's soul,
We'll call King Richard to a strict account
For that and for his realm's misgovernment.

Drums.

You peers of England raised in righteous arms
Here to re-edify our country's ruin:
Join all your hearts and hands never to cease
Till with our swords we work fair England's peace.

ARUNDEL Most princely Lancaster, our lands and lives
Are to these just proceedings ever vow'd.

SURREY Those flattering minions that [o'erturn] the state
This day in death shall meet their endless fate.

[YORK] Never such vipers were endur'd so long
To gripe and eat the hearts of all the kingdom.

[LANCASTER] This day shall here determinate all wrongs:
The meanest man tax'd by their foul oppressions
Shall be permitted freely to accuse
And right they shall have to regain their one,
Or all shall sink in dark confusion.

[YORK] How now, what drums are these?

[Enter] Cheney.

[CHENEY] To arms, my lords. The minions of the king
Are swiftly marching on to give ye battle.

LANCASTER They march to death then, Cheney. Dare the traitors
Presume to brave the field with English princes?

YORK Where is King Richard? He was resolv'd but lately
To take some hold of strength and so secure him.

CHENEY Knowing their states were all so desperate,
It seems they have persuaded otherwise,
For now he comes with full resolve to fight.
Lapole this morning is arrived at court

With the Calais soldiers and some French supplies
To back this now intended enterprise.

LANCASTER Those new supplies have spurr'd their forward hopes
And thrust their resolutions boldly on
To meet with death and sad destruction.

YORK Their drums are near. Just heaven direct this deed
And as our cause deserves, our fortunes speed.

March about.

*Enter with drum and colors: The King, Greene, Bushy, Bagot, Scroop,
Lapole, and soldiers. They march about [all].*

RICHARD Although we could have easily surprised,
Dispers'd, and overthrown your rebel troops
That draw your swords against our sacred person,
The highest gods' anointed deputy,
Breaking your holy oaths to heaven and us,
Yet of our mild and princely clemency
We have forborne: That by this parliament
We might be made partaker of the cause
That moved ye rise in this rebellious sort.

LANCASTER Hast thou, King Richard, made us infamous
By proclamations false and [impudent]?
Hast thou condemn'd us in our absence, too,
As most notorious traitors to the crown?
Betray'd our brother Woodstock's harmless life
And sought base means to put us all to death?
And dost thou now plead dotish ignorance
Why we are landed thus in our defense?

GREENE Methinks your treasons to his majesty,
Raising his subjects against his royal life,
Should make ye beg for mercy at his feet.

RICHARD You have forgotten, uncle Lancaster,
How you in prison murdered cruelly
A friar Caramelite because he was
To bring in evidence against your grace
Of most ungracious deeds and practices.

LANCASTER And you, my lord, remember not so well
That by that Caramelite at London once,
When at supper, you'd have poison'd us.

YORK For shame, King Richard, leave this company
That like dark clouds obscure the sparkling stars
Of thy great birth and true nobility.

ARUNDEL Yield to your uncles. Who but they should have
The guidance of your sacred state and counsel?

BAGOT Yield first your heads, and so he shall be sure
To keep his person and his state secure.

RICHARD And by my crown, if still you thus persist
Your heads and hearts ere long shall answer it.

ARUNDEL Not till ye send for more supplies from France;
For England will not yield ye strength to do it.

YORK Thou well may'st doubt their loves that lost their [hearts];
Ungracious prince, cannot thy native country
Find men to back this desperate enterprise?

LANCASTER His native country? Why that is France, my lords.
At Bordeaux was he born, which place allures
And ties his deep affections still to France.
Richard is English blood: Not English born.
Thy mother travell'd in unhappy hours
When she at Bordeaux left her heavy load.

The soil is fat for wines, not fit for men;
And England now laments that heavy time:
Her royalties are lost; her state made base;
And thou no king but landlord now become
To this great state that terror'd Christendom.

RICHARD I cannot brook these braves; let drums sound death
And strike at once to stop this traitor's breath.

<**BAGOT** Stay, my dear lord: And once more hear my princes.
The King was minded ere this brawl began
To come to terms of composition.

LANCASTER Let him revoke the proclamations,
Clear us of all supposed crimes of treason,
Reveal where our good brother Gloucester keeps
And grant that these pernicious flatterers
May by the law be tried to quit themselves
Of all such heinous crimes alleged against them,
And we'll lay down our weapons at thy feet.

ALL Presumptuous traitors.

ALL Traitors.

RICHARD Again we double it, rebellious traitors;>
Traitors to heaven and to us: Draw all your swords
And fling defiance to those traitorous lords.

ALL [KING'S MEN] Let drums thunder and begin the fight;

ALL [LORDS' MEN] Just heaven protect us and defend the right.

Exeunt omnes.

[ACT V, SCENE 4]

Alarum.

Enter Green and Cheney: Meet armed.

CHENEY Stand, traitor, for thou can'st not scape my sword.

GREENE What villain fronts me with the name of traitor?
Was't thou, false Cheney? Now by King Richard's love
I'll tilt thy soul out for that base reproach.
I would thy master and the late protector
With both his treacherous brothers, Gaunt and York,
Were all opposed with thee to try these arms;
I'd seal't on all your hearts.

CHENEY This shall suffice
To free the kingdom from their villainies.

They fight.

Enter Arundel.

ARUNDEL Thou hunt'st a noble game, right warlike Cheney.
Cut but this visor off, thou heal'st the kingdom.
Yield thee, false traitor; most detested man
That set'st King Richard 'gainst his reverent uncles,
To shed the royal bloods, and make the realm
Weep for their timeless desolation.
Cast down thy weapons, for by this my sword
We'll bear thee from this place alive or dead.

GREENE Come both, then. I'll stand firm and dare your worst.
He that flies from it, be his soul accurst.

[Cheney and Arundel kill Greene.]

ARUNDEL So may the foes of England fall in blood,
Most dissolute traitor. Up with his body, Cheney,
And hail it to the tent of Lancaster.

[Enter Richard,] Bagot, Bushy, Scroop, and Soldiers.

CHENEY Stand firm, my lord. Here's rescue.

ARUNDEL Courage then;
We'll bear his body hence in spite of them.

They fight.

*To them enter Lancaster, York, and Surrey:
And beats them all away.
Manet the King [with Greene's body].*

RICHARD Oh princely youth. King Richard's dearest friend.
What heavy star this day had dominance
To cut off all thy flowering, youthful hopes?
Prosper, proud rebels. As you dealt by him,
Hard-hearted uncles, unrelenting churls,
That here have murder'd all my earthly joys.
Oh my dear Greene, wert thou alive to see
How I'll revenge thy timeless tragedy
On all their heads that did but lift a hand
To hurt this body that I held so dear.

Alarum.

Even by this kiss, and by my crown, I swear.

Enter Bagot, Bushy, and Scroop to the King.

BAGOT Away, my lord. Stand not to wail his death.
The field is lost; our soldiers shrink and fly;
Lapoole is taken prisoner by the lords.

Hie to the Tower. There is no help in swords.

SCROOP Still to continue war were childishness.
Their odds a mountain, ours a molehill is.

BUSHY Let's fly to London and make strong the Tower;
Loud proclamations post throughout the camp
With promise of reward to all that take us.
Get safety for our lives, my princely lord.
If here we stay, we shall be all betray'd.

RICHARD Oh my dear friends, the fearful wrath of heaven
Sits heavy on our heads for Woodstock's death.
Blood cries for blood. And that almighty hand
Permits not murder unreveng'd to stand; come, come,
We yet may hide ourselves from worldly strength,
But heaven will find us out and strike at length.

BUSHY Each lend a hand to bear this load of woe
That erst King Richard loud and tender'd so.

Exeunt omnes.

[ACT V, SCENE 5]

Alarum & Lancaster.

Enter Tresilian disguised with Nimble.

TRESILIAN Where art thou, Nimble?

NIMBLE As light as a feather, my lord. I have put off my shoe that I might run lustily. The battle's lost and [the] prisoners. What shall we do, my lord? Yonders a [ditch]. We may run along that and ne'er be seen, I [warrant].

[**TRESILIAN**] I did suspect no less, and so 'tis fall'n.
The day is lost. And dash'd are all our hopes.
King Richard's taken prisoner by the peers.
Oh that I were upon some steepy rock
Where I might tumble headlong to the sea
Before those cruel lords do seize on me.

NIMBLE Oh that I were transform'd into a mouse that I [might creep] into any hole i'th'house and I cared not.

TRESILIAN Come, Nimble, 'tis no time to use delay.
I'll keep me in this poor disguise awhile
And so unknown prolong my weary life
In hope King Richard shall conclude my peace.

Sound retreat.

Hark, hark, the trumpets call the soldiers back [again];
Retreat is sounded, now the times [serve] fit
And we may steal from hence: Away, good [Nimble].

NIMBLE Nay, stay, my lord. 'Slid, and ye go that way, [farewell]. But and you'll be ruled by me, I have thought of a [trick] that ye shall 'scape them all most bravely.

TRESILIAN Bethink thyself, good Nimble, quickly man.

NIMBLE I'll meditate, my lord, and then I'm for ye: Now, Nimble, show thyself a man of valor. Think of thy fortunes. 'Tis a hanging matter if thou conceal him; besides there's a thousand marks for him that takes him, with the dukes' favors and free pardon: Besides he's but a coward (he would ne'er run from battle else). Saint Anthony assist me, I'll set upon him presently: My lord, I have thought upon this trick: I must take ye prisoner.

TRESILIAN How, prisoner?

NIMBLE There's one way to 'scape else. Then must I carry yet to the king's uncles, who presently [condemn] ye for a traitor, [send] ye away to hanging. And then God bless my lord Tresilian.

TRESILIAN Wilt thou betray thy master, villain?

NIMBLE Aye, if my master be a villain. You think 'tis nothing for a man to be hang'd for his master: You hear not the proclamation.

TRESILIAN What proclamation?

NIMBLE Oh sir, all the country's full of them: That whosoever sees you, does not presently take ye, and bring ye to the lords shall be hang'd for his labor. Therefore no more words, lest I raise the whole camp upon ye. Ye see one of your own swords of justice drawn over ye. Therefore go quietly, lest I cut your head off and save the hangman a labor.

TRESILIAN O villain.

NIMBLE No more words; away, sir.

Exeunt.

[ACT V, SCENE 6]

Sound a retreat, then a flourish.

*Enter with victory Lancaster, Cheney, Arundel, Surrey, and soldiers with
Lapoole, Bushy, and Scroope [as] prisoners.
Drum and colors.*

LANCASTER Thus princely Edward's sons in tender care
Of wanton Richard and their father's realm
Have toil'd to purge fair England's pleasant field
Of all those rancorous weeds that choked the grounds
And left her pleasant meads like barren hills.
Who is't can tell us which way Bagot fled?

ARUNDEL Some say to Bristol to make strong the castle.

LANCASTER See that the ports be laid. He'll fly the land
For England hath no hold can keep him from us.
Had we Tresilian hang'd, then all were sure.

CHENEY Where slept our scouts that he escaped the field?

[**ARUNDEL**] He fled, they say, before the fight begun.

LANCASTER Our proclamations soon shall find him forth,
The root and ground of all these vile abuses.

Enter Nimble with Tresilian, bound and guarded.

How now, <what guard is that?> What traitor's there?

NIMBLE The traitor now is ta'en: I here present the villain
And if he needs will know his name,
God bless my lord Tresilian.

CHENEY Tresilian, my lord,

Attach'd and apprehended by this man.

NIMBLE Yes, and it please ye, my lord, 'twas I that took him.
I was once a trampler in the law after him and I thank him. He
taught me this trick, to save myself from hanging.

LANCASTER Thou'rt a good lawyer, and hast removed the cause
from thyself fairly.

NIMBLE I have removed it with a habis corpus; and then I
took him with surssaris, and bound him in this bond to answer it.
Nay, I have studied for my learning. I can tell ye, my lord, there was
not a stone between Westminster Hall and Temple Bar but I have
told them every morning.

ARUNDEL What moved thee, being his man, to apprehend
him?

NIMBLE Partly for the causes: First, the fear of the
proclamation, for I have plodded in Plowden and can find no law [to
say a servant must serve faithful still a master's treachery. And so to
block the law would be to block myself beneath the axe (slit my
throat as surely as a razor out of Occam), but to block my master's
blot is sure to save myself. Second, for the pay of the proclamation,
for such marks as it has marked would go far to make servant into
master, and so free myself twice over. Nay, three times over – once
from the lash of treachery; once from the strap of servitude; and once
from the whip of justice. Third, as I am a right and honest
Englishman, loyal unto your ducal crowns; for I know no treason in
myself (nay not so much as a whistle of it) and so I hope you'll spare
my crown and then pay me the golden crowns.

ARUNDEL Sir, you have spoken with a true rare wit.

LANCASTER Indeed, I have heard no man's wit like this
In all my days. Come, sir, hold your prisoner close
And your just rewards shall be paid by us.

But before you part, let me speak unto your
Captive prisoner. Now, traitorous Tresilian,
What excuse can you make for the tricks you've play'd?
We know you have spread late slanders 'gainst us;
Turned the king's ear with false law and meek praise;
And have roused all the land with taxations
Foul and vile. How answer you these charges?

TRESILIAN I shall make no answer to you, my lord,
For I have done no ill in doing my duty.

LANCASTER 'Sfoot, you hold duty in a light regard,
For in your broken duty you have broken
Your oaths to God, to King, to Law, to All.
For it your lying lawyer's tongue will be
Forever still'd. Bear hence this Lord Chief Justice
And hang his tricks from the scaffold of true law.

Exit Nimble and Tresilian.

ARUNDEL My lord, your brother York in arms resplendent
Comes bearing the captive king.

LANCASTER Call him no king.
He hath named himself an emperor divine,
But lived a landlord. Let him make answer
In a landlord's court. We'll see him tether'd
To these disloyal tenants who have bankrupted
His name, his kingdom, and his title all.

Enter York and soldiers, with King Richard as prisoner.

YORK Brother Lancaster, I bring ye fair news
That field and day are ours in perfect victory
And bring as prisoner our nephew king
In bond, but not yet broken in his pride.

LANCASTER The pride of a lion itself would break
Before such griefs as have been suffered
In his name by the commons and his lords.

ARUNDEL How shall such griefs be answered, my dear lord?

LANCASTER As such: To the profit and grace of this fair realm
We shall pluck from him and his court such traitors
As have in continuity harried
By remains his good name and rightful wits.
In docket, therefore, place Sir William Bagot,
Sir Henry Greene, and false Sir Stephen Scroop;
Add to their names that of Tresilian,
That false justice, and Bushy, coward fled.
These, and all other lords of his poor council,
We have determined should be drawn and hang'd;
Their lives made forfeit for the rents they owe.

RICHARD Here have I seen wonders truly wrought:
Dukes raised up like kings; kings subjected before dukes.
Those you have condemn'd without word of their defense
Are those most loyal, true, and just to king and crown.
They have done naught but what has been commanded,
And should they then be sentenced unto death?
I see clear now the true bent of your thoughts,
And it goes sore against my mind to see
That they have bent you 'gainst your honors true.

LANCASTER Are you yet haughty in your desolation?
Know that we stand here to find another king
Than the false 'postor who has ruled in stead.
And if such cannot be found and acclaimed
That would and ought to obey the faithful
Counsel of his lords, then surely there is
No king upon this plain to rule his subjects loyal.

RICHARD Think you, sir, I am a merchant or a fool

To sell my land to ruin and naught for all?
All that has been done has been done in my true name.
My royal throne I have ne'er abdicated,
Not even to those my friends most loyal.
Do you think the kingdom's locks I'll ever turn
For those most false and forsworn to my word?

YORK Let not this heat of passion make a forge
Or crucible to turn false true, or true to false.
I beg of you, my lord, to look about ye
For the preservation of the realm and see;
And in the seeing marvel to behold:
Look at this goodly army which has marched
In such strength to rally 'round your sides,
And yet 'tis not one-tenth part of all those
Willing subjects that have risen to destroy
Those true false traitors that with wicked counsel
Subverted the law unto base enterprises,
Turned the commons into a thieving purse,
And debased the right royal blood of Edward,
The grandsire from whom your own stock has sprung.
In wronging us, they have made you wrong yourself.

RICHARD Do you think to fear me with your bold presumption?
I stand safe encircled by that divinity
Which hedges 'bout the souls of all true kings.
But for those who have suffered in my stead,
Who would be piked for standing in my picked shoes,
I can feel true dread by proximation.
Let but the too-swift hand of your quick justice
Wait until the soon coming parliament,
That true defenses in patience may be heard,
And I shall enrich you for these your pains:
We issue good pardons to all rebelled;
Return those blank charters gathered by our debtors;
And give forth further honors and rewards
Like to a Roman Caesar gifting laurels

To a faithful general 'pon the Rubicon.
Further we will go, proud Lancaster,
By granting you such holy palatine
That you will be made like unto a king
Within our kingdom; and for your heir and son,
The noble Bolingbroke, now Earl of Darby,
We make of him anew the Duke of Herford,
And with him spruce so many duketti
Among those lesser nobles loyal to you,
As shall be thought to gloss and reassure
Those prides which have been injured by things past.

LANCASTER Nay, Richard, we will not be bought and sold
Like tenants farming from your proffered palm.
We hold within our grip fresh treasons which shall
Make your former crimes pale to dim memories.
Here is an order writ by your own hand,
Taken from messenger galloped towards France,
To plead a trait'rous license of safe conduct
From a French king held this country's enemy.
And for the payment of your pass, you pledge
Into their taking the town of Calais
And all our proud fortresses of France.
Yet worse, you would homage do a foreign king
For fair Aquitaine which was your right of birth;
You would engore upon the horns of your white hart
Your country, your lords, your subjects, and your crown,
Along with all those crowns which came before
Your own to win those rights you would depose.
You would unseat yourself and so cut off
All those unborn kings who've yet to claim their rights.
What awful treason's writ by one who would
Turn kings of France into mere liegemen of the Frank?

RICHARD I have heard slanders enough to fill my cup for life.
Be wary, uncles. Forget not that you stand
Before a king. Subjected I may be,

But never will I live to be a subject.
I look upon you and I see your angers,
And in the griefs and losses I have born,
I see and sympathize their rightful cause.
But your rages so boil forth that all England
Shall they burn before them without limit.
So I rise high before you, resplendent
In that awful power given me by God,
To stand between you and your purposed doom
Of monarchy's true grace and holy seat.
You speak of treason, and yet you dare to
Seek the debasing of a true-born king.
As surely as a violation
Of the holy right of sanctuary,
This would double divine treason wrought.
The sin of it would England ever bear
From son to son, from heir to bloody heir,
Until some awful sacrifice should purge it
From our stained soil.

LANCASTER You invoke the power
Of a king, but a king you are no more!
In this convocation of battle, we strip you
Of crown and right alike, so that it might
Unto some other worthy heir of conq'ring
Edward be depended!

YORK Hold, noble Arundel;
Let not the crown be hollowed of a right king's brow.
Brother Lancaster, the king points to thee
And names thee rage's wrathful harbinger.
Would ye prove him true? Step back from forth the brink.
Let us not wrong our brother Woodstock's memory
By turning all against those holy rights
He held in holy heart and holy mind.
Let's make of him a martyr true and dear,
And from his blood work rite to restore England's fame.

We wished a king who wished for country's good,
And here upon this plain have we found such a king
In Richard's words and acts, his laws and gifts.
Sunder'd from those tongues that guided ill,
He is our king again. And though he learns
That not all dice are loaded to his favor,
Yet still the grace of God lies upon his brow,
Wreathing it with blessing no less than crown.

LANCASTER Your words speak wisdom true and just, I think.
Let none doubt this strife was fought for justice,
Not for gain. Richard's now is crown and realm;
And Richard alone must answer for its good.

RICHARD For this we thank ye kindly, gentle uncles,
And to further quell your doubts, I offer this:
Lest any doubt Edward's blood runs through my vein,
I now pledge to put my body into pain,
To deliver town and stronghold on campaign.
To Ireland shall we muster county's force,
So that in victory we can right fair England's course.

YORK It is well said and well bethought. Come now,
We shall in triumph march through London's street.

RICHARD Go forth and make such preparations now
As shall make celebration most fit and meet.

*Exeunt.
Manet Richard.*

Richard survives, but all alone doth Richard live.
My tears for Anne a Beame I quenched in flame,
And those for fairest Greene are lost in shame,
But no tears come at all for this fresh loss
Of Bagot, Bushy, and our dear friend Scroop.
Is it loss at all if yet they live? Yea,

And a loss more dearly felt at coldest length.
In the arms of friends comfort should we find,
Not keep at bay those closest to our kind.
Yet friends are worthy to be 'voided at the court,
For what is't but poison to be courted Richard's friend?
Never more shall that close comradeship we know
Which makes it worthy to bear the burden life,
For all those mortal props of royalty
Have bent to bursting beneath my rampant heart.
I will unto the gilded halls of Westminster,
And richly there commission fresh delights
To match the bitter moods which graven thoughts.
There from a mirror's image will I carve
A tomb and effigy unto myself,
To leave the world in 'ternal monument
The testament of poor King Richard's strife:
Now am I stripped of cares, and care strips me,
And in the barren remnant left behind
My heart's become as hollow as my mind.

Exit.]

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