

Richard III abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 4

Despair

Situation: Richard duke of Gloucester issues final instructions to the two murderers, instructing them to murder his imprisoned brother George duke of Clarence. Clarence describes to his jailer his night before's frightful dream.

KEEPER: Why looks your Grace so heavily today?

CLARENCE: O, I have passed a miserable night, so full of fearful dreams, of ugly sights, that I would not spend another such a night though 'twere to buy a world of happy days, so full of dismal terror was the time.

KEEPER: What was your dream, my lord? I pray you tell me.

Clarence to Jailer

**Methought Gloucester fell overboard taking
Me stumbling with him into the tumbling
Billows of the sea. Methought what a pain
Drowning was, as I passed the flood and saw
The kingdom of eternal night. My bane
Was first greeted by my father-in-law,
The renowned Warwick, who spake, "What scourge for
Falseness can this dark kingdom bring before
Clarence?" Then he vanished. Then a shadow,
With bright hair dabbled in blood, wand'ring by
Shrieking out aloud "Clarence is come, so
False, stabbing me at Tewkesbury." Then I
Trembled awake under the ocean's swell,
And for awhile believed I was in hell.**

KEEPER: No marvel, lord, though it frightened you. I am afraid, methinks, to hear you tell it.

CLARENCE: O God, spare my guiltless wife and poor children! Keeper, I prithee sit by me awhile.

Clarence sleeps. Brakenbury, the Lieutenant of the Tower, enters.