

Richard III abbreviated

Act 4, Scene 1

Despair

Situation: As Queen Elizabeth (King Edward IV's widow), the Duchess of York (the Plantagenet brothers' mother), and Lady Anne (now Richard's wife) are denied access to London's Tower to visit Queen Elizabeth's two sons, Stanley enters to tell Lady Anne "Come, madam, you must straight to Westminster, there to be crowned Richard's royal queen."

DORSET TO QUEEN ELIZABETH: Be of good cheer, mother.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: O Dorset, speak not to me. Get thee gone. If thou wilt outstrip death, go, cross the seas, and live with Richmond.

STANLEY TO DORSET: Take all the swift advantage of the hours. You shall have letters from me to my stepson. Be not ta'en tardy by unwise delay.

DUCHESS OF YORK: O ill-dispersing wind of misery!

STANLEY TO ANNE: Come, madam, come. I in all haste was sent.

ANNE: And I with all unwillingness will go.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: Go, go, poor soul. I envy not thy glory.

Anne to the others

O, let me die. My wish has been the same,
Ever since he that is my husband came
To me as I followed Henry's corpse: be
Thou accursed for making me a widow,
And when thou wedd'st, may the wife of thee
Suffer more grief and miserable woe
Than thou hast brought to me by my lord's death.
Lo, before I could take another breath,
My woman's heart grossly grew captive to
His honey words and proved the subject of
Mine own soul's curse, denying me the dew
Of sleep, and the peace that was Edward's love.
Then methinks, besides, he hates me for my
Father Warwick, and for that I'll soon die.

QUEEN ELIZABETH: Poor heart, adieu. I pity thy complaining.

DORSET: Farewell, thou woeful welcomer of glory.