

Richard III abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 2

Proposal

Situation: The unimaginably cool Richard, acknowledging to Lady Anne that he had indeed murdered her father-in-law (Henry VI), misleadingly telling her that her husband (Henry VI's son, Prince Edward) was slain by his brother, also has the audacity to tell her that "your beauty was the cause of that consequence," disbelievably winning her hand, she accepting his ring.

ANNE: Out of my sight! Thou dost infect mine eyes.

RICHARD: Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.

ANNE: Would they were snakes to strike thee dead.

RICHARD: I would they were, that I might die at once, for now they kill me with a living death. Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears.

Richard to Anne

**Neither when with less than manly eyes shown,
My father York and Edward, at the moan
Made by the piteous cry from Rutland,
Wept; when black-faced Clifford shook his sword at
Him, nor when thy father Warwick, the hand
That led this weak king, childishly told that
Sad story of my father's death, and I
Saw him pause too many times to sob, my
Eyes scorned a tear. What death could not exhale,
Thy beauty makes mine eyes blind with weeping.
I humbly beg death, for my soul did fail
To keep my killing Henry and stabbing
Your young Edward. It was thy heavenly
Face that did provoke and set upon me.**

RICHARD: My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing word. But now thy beauty prompts my tongue to speak.

She looks scornfully at him.

RICHARD: Teach not thy lip such scorn, for it was made for kissing, lady, not for such contempt.

He kneels. She holds up a sword.

RICHARD: 'Twas thy beauty that provoked me. 'Twas I that stabbed young Edward --- but 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.

ANNE: Though I wish thy death, I will not be thy executioner. I would I knew thy heart.