

Richard III abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 3

Resentment

Situation: As Richard, Queen Elizabeth and Rivers (her brother) are verbally sparing, Queen Margaret quietly enters, offering them a piece of her mind. She is immediately attacked by Richard who says, "Foul, wrinkled witch, what mak'st thou in my sight?" His outlandishness is followed by Queen Elizabeth's and Hastings' less taunting comments.

QUEEN MARGARET: What, were you snarling all before I came, ready to catch each other by the throat, and turn you all your hatred now on me? Did York's dread curse prevail so much with heaven that Henry's death, my lovely Edward's death, their kingdom's loss, my woeful banishment, should all but answer for that peevish brat?

Margaret to Elizabeth and Richard

Elizabeth, thyself a queen, like my
Wretched self that was a queen, mayst thy
Outlive thy glory to wail thy sons' deaths
And see another, as I see thee, decked
In thy rights, thou stalled in mine. May your breathes
Be pained with sullen grief from a life wrecked,
Dieing neither mother, wife, nor England's
Queen. Richard, if justice lies in the hands
Of God, let heaven hold any harsh plagues
That exceed those scourges I will have sought
Till your risks are great and your cruel heart begs
Peace. May conscience gnaw your soul. May you not
Close up your deadly eyes unless sleep beam
In thy spiteful mind some tormenting dream.

RICHARD: Margaret.

QUEEN MARGARET: Richard!

RICHARD: Ha?

QUEEN MARGARET: I call thee not.

RICHARD: I beg your pardon.

QUEEN MARGARET: Why, so I did, but looked for no reply.

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO QUEEN MARGARET: Thus have you breathed your curse against yourself.

QUEEN MARGARET: Poor painted queen, vain flourish of my fortune, why strew'st thou sugar on that bottled spider, whose deadly web ensnareth thee about? Fool, fool, thou whet'st a knife to kill thyself.