

The Life and Death of Richard the Second

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SCENE II. The palace.

Enter QUEEN, BUSHY, and BAGOT

BUSHY

Madam, your majesty is too much sad:
You promised, when you parted with the king,
To lay aside life-harming heaviness
And entertain a cheerful disposition.

QUEEN

To please the king I did; to please myself
I cannot do it; yet I know no cause
Why I should welcome such a guest as grief,
Save bidding farewell to so sweet a guest
As my sweet Richard: yet again, methinks,
Some unborn sorrow, ripe in fortune's womb,
Is coming towards me, and my inward soul
With nothing trembles: at some thing it grieves,
More than with parting from my lord the king.

BUSHY

Each substance of a grief hath twenty shadows,
Which shows like grief itself, but is not so;
For sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears,
Divides one thing entire to many objects;
Like perspectives, which rightly gazed upon
Show nothing but confusion, eyed awry
Distinguish form: so your sweet majesty,
Looking awry upon your lord's departure,
Find shapes of grief, more than himself, to wail;
Which, look'd on as it is, is nought but shadows
Of what it is not. Then, thrice-gracious queen,
More than your lord's departure weep not: more's not seen;
Or if it be, 'tis with false sorrow's eye,
Which for things true weeps things imaginary.

QUEEN

It may be so; but yet my inward soul
Persuades me it is otherwise: howe'er it be,
I cannot but be sad; so heavy sad
As, though on thinking on no thought I think,
Makes me with heavy nothing faint and shrink.

BUSHY

'Tis nothing but conceit, my gracious lady.

QUEEN

'Tis nothing less: conceit is still derived
From some forefather grief; mine is not so,
For nothing had begot my something grief;
Or something hath the nothing that I grieve:
'Tis in reversion that I do possess;
But what it is, that is not yet known; what
I cannot name; 'tis nameless woe, I wot.

Enter GREEN

GREEN

God save your majesty! and well met, gentlemen:
I hope the king is not yet shipp'd for Ireland.

QUEEN

Why hopest thou so? 'tis better hope he is;
For his designs crave haste, his haste good hope:
Then wherefore dost thou hope he is not shipp'd?

GREEN

That he, our hope, might have retired his power,
And driven into despair an enemy's hope,
Who strongly hath set footing in this land:
The banish'd Bolingbroke repeals himself,
And with uplifted arms is safe arrived
At Ravenspurgh.

QUEEN

Now God in heaven forbid!

GREEN

Ah, madam, 'tis too true: and that is worse,
The Lord Northumberland, his son young Henry Percy,
The Lords of Ross, Beaumont, and Willoughby,
With all their powerful friends, are fled to him.

BUSHY

Why have you not proclaim'd Northumberland
And all the rest revolted faction traitors?

GREEN

We have: whereupon the Earl of Worcester
Hath broke his staff, resign'd his stewardship,
And all the household servants fled with him
To Bolingbroke.

QUEEN

So, Green, thou art the midwife to my woe,
And Bolingbroke my sorrow's dismal heir:
Now hath my soul brought forth her prodigy,
And I, a gasping new-deliver'd mother,
Have woe to woe, sorrow to sorrow join'd.

BUSHY

Despair not, madam.

QUEEN

Who shall hinder me?
I will despair, and be at enmity
With cozening hope: he is a flatterer,
A parasite, a keeper back of death,
Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,
Which false hope lingers in extremity.

Enter DUKE OF YORK

GREEN

Here comes the Duke of York.

QUEEN

With signs of war about his aged neck:
O, full of careful business are his looks!
Uncle, for God's sake, speak comfortable words.

DUKE OF YORK

Should I do so, I should belie my thoughts:
Comfort's in heaven; and we are on the earth,
Where nothing lives but crosses, cares and grief.
Your husband, he is gone to save far off,
Whilst others come to make him lose at home:
Here am I left to underprop his land,
Who, weak with age, cannot support myself:
Now comes the sick hour that his surfeit made;
Now shall he try his friends that flatter'd him.

Enter a Servant

Servant

My lord, your son was gone before I came.

DUKE OF YORK

He was? Why, so! go all which way it will!
The nobles they are fled, the commons they are cold,
And will, I fear, revolt on Hereford's side.
Sirrah, get thee to Plashy, to my sister Gloucester;
Bid her send me presently a thousand pound:
Hold, take my ring.

Servant

My lord, I had forgot to tell your lordship,
To-day, as I came by, I called there;
But I shall grieve you to report the rest.

DUKE OF YORK

What is't, knave?

Servant

An hour before I came, the duchess died.

DUKE OF YORK

God for his mercy! what a tide of woes
Comes rushing on this woeful land at once!
I know not what to do: I would to God,
So my untruth had not provoked him to it,
The king had cut off my head with my brother's.
What, are there no posts dispatch'd for Ireland?
How shall we do for money for these wars?
Come, sister,--cousin, I would say--pray, pardon me.
Go, fellow, get thee home, provide some carts
And bring away the armour that is there.

Exit Servant

Gentlemen, will you go muster men?
If I know how or which way to order these affairs
Thus thrust disorderly into my hands,
Never believe me. Both are my kinsmen:
The one is my sovereign, whom both my oath
And duty bids defend; the other again
Is my kinsman, whom the king hath wrong'd,
Whom conscience and my kindred bids to right.
Well, somewhat we must do. Come, cousin, I'll
Dispose of you.
Gentlemen, go, muster up your men,

And meet me presently at Berkeley.
I should to Plashy too;
But time will not permit: all is uneven,
And every thing is left at six and seven.

Exeunt DUKE OF YORK and QUEEN

BUSHY

The wind sits fair for news to go to Ireland,
But none returns. For us to levy power
Proportionable to the enemy
Is all impossible.

GREEN

Besides, our nearness to the king in love
Is near the hate of those love not the king.

BAGOT

And that's the wavering commons: for their love
Lies in their purses, and whoso empties them
By so much fills their hearts with deadly hate.

BUSHY

Wherein the king stands generally condemn'd.

BAGOT

If judgement lie in them, then so do we,
Because we ever have been near the king.

GREEN

Well, I will for refuge straight to Bristol castle:
The Earl of Wiltshire is already there.

BUSHY

Thither will I with you; for little office
The hateful commons will perform for us,
Except like curs to tear us all to pieces.
Will you go along with us?

BAGOT

No; I will to Ireland to his majesty.
Farewell: if heart's presages be not vain,
We three here art that ne'er shall meet again.

BUSHY

That's as York thrives to beat back Bolingbroke.

GREEN

Alas, poor duke! the task he undertakes
Is numbering sands and drinking oceans dry:
Where one on his side fights, thousands will fly.
Farewell at once, for once, for all, and ever.

BUSHY

Well, we may meet again.

BAGOT

I fear me, never.

Exeunt

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