

# The Life and Death of Richard the Second

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## SCENE IV. LANGLEY. The DUKE OF YORK's garden.

*Enter the QUEEN and two Ladies*

**QUEEN**

What sport shall we devise here in this garden,  
To drive away the heavy thought of care?

**Lady**

Madam, we'll play at bowls.

**QUEEN**

'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs,  
And that my fortune rubs against the bias.

**Lady**

Madam, we'll dance.

**QUEEN**

My legs can keep no measure in delight,  
When my poor heart no measure keeps in grief:  
Therefore, no dancing, girl; some other sport.

**Lady**

Madam, we'll tell tales.

**QUEEN**

Of sorrow or of joy?

**Lady**

Of either, madam.

**QUEEN**

Of neither, girl:  
For of joy, being altogether wanting,  
It doth remember me the more of sorrow;  
Or if of grief, being altogether had,  
It adds more sorrow to my want of joy:

For what I have I need not to repeat;  
And what I want it boots not to complain.

**Lady**

Madam, I'll sing.

**QUEEN**

'Tis well that thou hast cause  
But thou shouldst please me better, wouldst thou weep.

**Lady**

I could weep, madam, would it do you good.

**QUEEN**

And I could sing, would weeping do me good,  
And never borrow any tear of thee.

*Enter a Gardener, and two Servants*

But stay, here come the gardeners:  
Let's step into the shadow of these trees.  
My wretchedness unto a row of pins,  
They'll talk of state; for every one doth so  
Against a change; woe is forerun with woe.

*QUEEN and Ladies retire*

**Gardener**

Go, bind thou up yon dangling apricocks,  
Which, like unruly children, make their sire  
Stoop with oppression of their prodigal weight:  
Give some supportance to the bending twigs.  
Go thou, and like an executioner,  
Cut off the heads of too fast growing sprays,  
That look too lofty in our commonwealth:  
All must be even in our government.  
You thus employ'd, I will go root away  
The noisome weeds, which without profit suck  
The soil's fertility from wholesome flowers.

**Servant**

Why should we in the compass of a pale  
Keep law and form and due proportion,  
Showing, as in a model, our firm estate,  
When our sea-walled garden, the whole land,  
Is full of weeds, her fairest flowers choked up,  
Her fruit-trees all upturned, her hedges ruin'd,

Her knots disorder'd and her wholesome herbs  
Swarming with caterpillars?

**Gardener**

Hold thy peace:  
He that hath suffer'd this disorder'd spring  
Hath now himself met with the fall of leaf:  
The weeds which his broad-spreading leaves did shelter,  
That seem'd in eating him to hold him up,  
Are pluck'd up root and all by Bolingbroke,  
I mean the Earl of Wiltshire, Bushy, Green.

**Servant**

What, are they dead?

**Gardener**

They are; and Bolingbroke  
Hath seized the wasteful king. O, what pity is it  
That he had not so trimm'd and dress'd his land  
As we this garden! We at time of year  
Do wound the bark, the skin of our fruit-trees,  
Lest, being over-proud in sap and blood,  
With too much riches it confound itself:  
Had he done so to great and growing men,  
They might have lived to bear and he to taste  
Their fruits of duty: superfluous branches  
We lop away, that bearing boughs may live:  
Had he done so, himself had borne the crown,  
Which waste of idle hours hath quite thrown down.

**Servant**

What, think you then the king shall be deposed?

**Gardener**

Depress'd he is already, and deposed  
'Tis doubt he will be: letters came last night  
To a dear friend of the good Duke of York's,  
That tell black tidings.

**QUEEN**

O, I am press'd to death through want of speaking!

*Coming forward*

Thou, old Adam's likeness, set to dress this garden,  
How dares thy harsh rude tongue sound this displeasing news?  
What Eve, what serpent, hath suggested thee

To make a second fall of cursed man?  
Why dost thou say King Richard is deposed?  
Darest thou, thou little better thing than earth,  
Divine his downfall? Say, where, when, and how,  
Camest thou by this ill tidings? speak, thou wretch.

## **Gardener**

Pardon me, madam: little joy have I  
To breathe this news; yet what I say is true.  
King Richard, he is in the mighty hold  
Of Bolingbroke: their fortunes both are weigh'd:  
In your lord's scale is nothing but himself,  
And some few vanities that make him light;  
But in the balance of great Bolingbroke,  
Besides himself, are all the English peers,  
And with that odds he weighs King Richard down.  
Post you to London, and you will find it so;  
I speak no more than every one doth know.

## **QUEEN**

Nimble mischance, that art so light of foot,  
Doth not thy embassy belong to me,  
And am I last that knows it? O, thou think'st  
To serve me last, that I may longest keep  
Thy sorrow in my breast. Come, ladies, go,  
To meet at London London's king in woe.  
What, was I born to this, that my sad look  
Should grace the triumph of great Bolingbroke?  
Gardener, for telling me these news of woe,  
Pray God the plants thou graft'st may never grow.

*Exeunt QUEEN and Ladies*

## **GARDENER**

Poor queen! so that thy state might be no worse,  
I would my skill were subject to thy curse.  
Here did she fall a tear; here in this place  
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace:  
Rue, even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,  
In the remembrance of a weeping queen.

*Exeunt*