

RICHARD III

The RSC Shakespeare

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Richard III

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

RICHARD III

Edited by

Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen

Introduced by Jonathan Bate

Macmillan

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Published 2008 by
MACMILLAN PUBLISHERS LTD
Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS
Companies and representatives throughout the world

ISBN-13 978-0-230-22110-9 hardback
ISBN-13 978-0-230-22111-6 paperback

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 09 08

Printed in China

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INTRODUCTION

THE CYCLE OF HISTORY

Shakespeare's first group of historical plays comes to a harmonious conclusion with the defeat of wicked King Richard at the battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. The victorious Henry, Earl of Richmond, belongs to the House of Lancaster. He marries the Princess Elizabeth, of the House of York, thus unifying the nobility and bringing to an end the Wars of the Roses. In the final scene of *Richard the Third*, the Lord Stanley, Earl of Derby, places the crown on Richmond's head and he becomes King Henry VII, inaugurator of the Tudor dynasty. The play closes with a speech in which Henry looks back on the civil strife that has been the subject not just of this play but also of the *Henry the Sixth* sequence. It also looks forward to the golden age over which his wife's namesake, Queen Elizabeth, liked to believe that she reigned:

England hath long been mad, and scarred herself;
The brother blindly shed the brother's blood,
The father rashly slaughtered his own son,
The son, compelled, been butcher to the sire:
All this divided York and Lancaster,
Divided in their dire division.
O, now let Richmond and Elizabeth,
The true succeeders of each royal house,
By God's fair ordinance conjoin together.
And let thy heirs—God, if thy will be so—
Enrich the time to come with smooth-faced peace,
With smiling plenty and fair prosperous days!

On hearing these lines, Shakespeare's audience would themselves have looked both forward and back: back to a bloody period in the nation's history, with relief at how it was providentially ended by the Tudor dispensation; forward to an uncertain

future, in the knowledge that the queen was now too old to sustain the line.

Historians still debate the question of how villainous Richard III really was, and in particular whether he personally ordered the slaying of the princes in the Tower. What is not in doubt is that it was convenient for the Tudors to paint him as a villain, in order to make his opponent, the future Henry VII, into a hero and a saint. Sir Thomas More played a major part in the process with his *History of King Richard III*, written at the court of Richmond's son, Henry VIII. Shakespeare finished the work in the public theatre of Henry VIII's younger daughter, immortalizing Richard as the scheming Crookback. The English are notorious for getting their theology from Milton and their history from Shakespeare, rather than from more orthodox sources. The endurance of the image of a Richard who is 'determinèd to prove a villain' is proof of the power of drama to be more memorable than written history. *Richard the Third* is one of those core Shakespearean plays that everybody has heard of, even if they have never read it. The success of two film versions – first Sir Laurence Olivier's and subsequently Sir Ian McKellen's dazzling update to the fascist 1930s – has assured its continuing life.

As in the *Henry the Sixth* plays, the language is frequently elevated and highly rhetorical. The combination of formal language and a sense of symmetry in the events – action leading to reaction, bloody violence to revenge, a slippery rise followed by a crashing fall as the wheel of fortune turns – places the play in the tradition of the Roman tragedian Seneca. The influence on Shakespeare was probably both direct – Seneca had been published in English translation in the 1580s – and indirect, via the multi-authored *Mirror for Magistrates*, a highly Senecan collection of 'complaint' poems, telling of misfortunes and wickedness, written in the voices of the victims of history, including both King Richard's brother George, Duke of Clarence, and King Edward IV's mistress, Jane Shore.

The Senecan symmetry is taken to an extreme in the role of Queen Margaret, the widow of King Henry VI, who had been such a powerful force throughout the Wars of the Roses plays. In Act 1 scene 3, she formally curses Rivers, Dorset, Hastings, Buckingham and Richard

himself. All her curses are fulfilled and as each character dies, Richard realizes that this is the case. Senecan tragedy traditionally began with a ghost returning from the underworld and demanding revenge for his or her murder. In an elegant variation, Shakespeare withholds the ghosts for the climax of the play, bringing them on to taunt King Richard in his tent on the eve of the battle that will be his downfall. The scene in which Richard confronts those ghosts would duly become one of the great set-pieces of the English stage: this was the play, and the moment within the play, chosen in the eighteenth century by the actor David Garrick and the painter William Hogarth for the portrait that immortalized Garrick and showed that Shakespeare was a fit subject for art of high moral and historical seriousness.



1. Engraving after William Hogarth's 1745 portrait of the actor David Garrick as Richard facing the ghosts on the night before the battle of Bosworth Field. Executed in the artist's studio, but influenced by the elaborate stage design of the period, this painting inaugurated the tradition of representing great moments in Shakespeare in the style of 'history painting' that had hitherto been reserved for elevated biblical and classical stories. The original portrait is in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

RICHARD THE PLAYER

Whereas nearly everybody in the *Henry the Sixth* plays appears to be caught up in a maelstrom of historical events that they are not able to control, Richard attempts to take command of his own and his country's destiny. There is little doubt that the part was written for Richard Burbage, just as he was becoming Shakespeare's closest friend in the theatre world. *Richard the Third* is the first of the small group of Shakespearean plays that are not ensemble pieces – as the *Henry the Sixth* plays so clearly were – but star vehicles, in which the leading player has three times as many lines as anybody else. This play was the making of both the writer and the star. It accounts for their nicknames in a well-attested theatrical anecdote that has them as rivals in the bed of a theatre-crazed citizen's wife: Burbage is 'Richard the Third' and Shakespeare 'William the Conqueror'.

The trick that they seem to have worked out together was to make the leading character into the apparent author of his own script. From the very opening soliloquy, Richard takes the audience into his confidence and shares with them the role he will adopt and the plot of the drama that he intends to act out, which might be entitled 'an unlovely but clever man plans his ascent to the throne, not letting anybody – even an innocent child – get in his way'. He is master of the wink and the aside; he rejoices in playing the role of Iniquity, the Vice in the old tradition of morality plays. The audience enjoys his performance exactly because they know it is a performance.

The master actor needs a 'straight man'. For Richard, this role is played by Buckingham, who assists him as he stage-manages his public image for his appearance before the Lord Mayor and citizens of London:

Enter Richard aloft, between two Bishops

MAYOR See, where his grace stands 'tween two clergymen.

BUCKINGHAM Two props of virtue for a Christian prince,

To stay him from the fall of vanity:

And, see, a book of prayer in his hand,

True ornaments to know a holy man.—

Famous Plantagenet, most gracious prince,

Lend favourable ear to our requests,
 And pardon us the interruption
 Of thy devotion and right Christian zeal.

In the previous play in the sequence, Henry VI's prayer-book was a sign that he did not want to be king. Richard's is a sign that he is pretending not to want to be king, thus leading the Londoners to beg him to take on the office. 'Will you enforce me to a world of cares?' he says, feigning reluctance – and in the next breath he whispers 'Call them again', ensuring that the offer is renewed so that this time it can be accepted. In all this, he is, as always, the consummate actor.

There are two key turning points for Richard. One is when he contrives to lose his right-hand man, Buckingham. The comedian begins to flounder without his stooge. The other is when the lamenting women who serve as a kind of Greek chorus to the action come together and confront him in the enormously long fourth scene of the fourth act. Richard's bravura seduction of the Lady Anne had revealed his skill with words, but now his verbal power is matched by the combined forces of Queen Margaret and Queen Elizabeth. If one innovation in the writing of *Richard the Third* was the conversion of the ensemble chronicle play into a star vehicle for a single huge theatrical personality, the other was the feminization of this traditionally masculine form. In Shakespeare's earlier history plays, in those of other authors, and indeed in the tragedies of Marlowe, women are bit-part players. Here, however, the boy-actors who play Elizabeth, Margaret and Anne are given larger parts and more richly inflected rhetoric than all of their adult colleagues save the leading three who play Richard, Buckingham and Clarence. Symbolically, given that Richard explains his own lust for power as a consequence of his inadequacy in the arts of love, it is fitting that he meets his match in the form of women and boys.

It is Richard's theatrical self-consciousness that ultimately sets his play above the three parts of *Henry the Sixth*. In *The First Part of Henry the Sixth*, Talbot is a manly hero and Joan an intriguing semi-comic villain; in *The Second Part*, there is splendid energy (Queen Margaret running amok) and variety (Jack Cade and the

voice of the discontented commons); in *The Third Part*, we witness a scene of high drama when York is taunted with a paper crown before being stabbed to death. But it is not until Richard of Gloucester gets into his stride that we meet a figure with the compelling theatrical presence of a Falstaff or an Iago. At the climax of his first long soliloquy in Act 3 of *The Third Part of Henry the Sixth* – a speech that the theatrical tradition has often imported into *Richard the Third* – he announces that he will ‘play the orator’, ‘add colours to the chameleon’, and ‘change shapes with Proteus for advantages’. Each image is of the art of the actor, with his persuasive tongue and power of self-transformation.

BEYOND MARLOWE

Richard adds that he will ‘set the murderous Machevil to school’. In his black farce *The Jew of Malta*, Christopher Marlowe had brought on a representation of Machiavelli, the Renaissance archetype of the scheming politician, to speak the prologue. As soon as the Prologue leaves the stage, Barabas the Jew is revealed, speaking his opening soliloquy. The audience thus makes the equation that Barabas is a machiavellian schemer. In *Richard the Third*, Shakespeare made a bold advance on this device. He dispensed with a prologue and began the action with Richard’s riveting soliloquy, ‘Now is the winter of our discontent’. Where Marlowe had cast Barabas in the role of the machiavel by means of a pointed structural device, Shakespeare’s Richard casts himself. He announces that since his crookback prevents him from playing the role of a stage lover, he will self-consciously adopt that of a stage villain. For good measure, he goes on in the second scene to show that he can in fact play the lover – with such accomplishment that he successfully woos Lady Anne over the very corpse of her father-in-law when she knows that he has been responsible for the murder of her first husband. As promised, he plays the orator to supreme effect. By the third act, he is changing shapes with Proteus and, as we have seen, appearing between two bishops in the colour of a holy man. By means of the orator’s art of saying the opposite of what he means – ‘I cannot, nor

THE TRAGEDY OF RICHARD THE THIRD: with the Landing of Earl Richmond and the Battle at Bosworth Field

- RICHARD**, Duke of Gloucester, later King **RICHARD III**
Duke of **CLARENCE**, his brother
Duke of **BUCKINGHAM**
Lord **HASTINGS**, the Lord Chamberlain
Sir William **CATESBY**
Sir Richard **RATCLIFFE**
Lord **LOVELL**
BRACKENBURY, Lord Lieutenant of the Tower
Lord Stanley, Earl of **DERBY**
(sometimes addressed as Derby and sometimes as Stanley, here given speech prefix Derby)
KING EDWARD IV, Gloucester's older brother
QUEEN ELIZABETH, his wife
PRINCE EDWARD, their older son
Duke of **YORK**, their younger son
Lord **RIVERS**, Elizabeth's brother
Lord **GREY**, Elizabeth's son by her first husband
Marquis of **DORSET**, his brother
Sir Thomas **VAUGHAN**
- Lady **ANNE**, widow of Edward, Prince of Wales, later Duchess of Gloucester
QUEEN MARGARET, widow of Henry VI
DUCHESS OF YORK, mother to Gloucester, Clarence, Edward IV
BOY } Clarence's
DAUGHTER } children
Earl of **RICHMOND**, later King Henry VII
Earl of **OXFORD**
Sir **JAMES BLUNT**
Sir **WALTER HERBERT**
Sir **WILLIAM BRANDON**
Duke of **NORFOLK**
Earl of **SURREY**
CARDINAL, Archbishop of Canterbury
ARCHBISHOP OF YORK
BISHOP OF ELY
SIR CHRISTOPHER, a priest
Sir John, a **PRIEST**
Lord **MAYOR** of London

List of parts **GREY** . . . **DORSET** in the early scenes, these two may be treated as one figure **widow** historically she was betrothed, not married, to Prince Edward (son of King Henry VI), but in the play (following Hall's chronicle) she is described as his wife/widow

20 RICHARD III

Three **CITIZENS**

JAMES TYRRELL

Two **MURDERERS**

MESSENGERS

KEEPER

PURSUIVANT

PAGE

Ghost of **KING HENRY VI**

Ghost of **EDWARD**, his son

Two Bishops, Soldiers, Halberdiers,
Gentlemen, Lords, Citizens,
Attendants

Act 1 Scene 1

*running scene 1**Enter Richard, Duke of Gloucester, solus*

RICHARD Now is the winter of our discontent
 Made glorious summer by this son of York:
 And all the clouds that loured upon our house
 In the deep bosom of the ocean buried.
 5 Now are our brows bound with victorious wreaths,
 Our bruised arms hung up for monuments,
 Our stern alarums changed to merry meetings,
 Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.
 Grim-visaged war hath smoothed his wrinkled front,
 10 And now, instead of mounting barbèd steeds
 To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
 He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber
 To the lascivious pleasing of a lute.
 But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,
 15 Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass:
 I, that am rudely stamped, and want love's majesty
 To strut before a wanton ambling nymph:
 I, that am curtailed of this fair proportion,
 Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
 20 Deformed, unfinished, sent before my time
 Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,
 And that so lamely and unfashionable
 That dogs bark at me as I halt by them —
 Why, I, in this weak piping time of peace,
 25 Have no delight to pass away the time,
 Unless to see my shadow in the sun

1.1 *Location: near the Tower of London solus* alone 2 *son of York* i.e. Edward IV, whose father was Richard Duke of York (puns on 'sun', the emblem of the House of York) 3 *loured* frowned threateningly
 house family (of York) 6 *arms* armour, weapons for as 7 *alarums* calls to arms/sudden attacks
 8 *dreadful* fearsome, inspiring dread measures stately dances 9 *front* forehead 10 *barbèd* armoured
 11 *fearful* frightened (or possibly 'frightening') 12 *capers* dances with leaping movements/has sex
 chamber plays on the sense of 'vagina' 13 *pleasing* attraction, delight 14 *sportive* pleasurable/
 amorous/sexual tricks behaviour, skills/sexual acts 15 *court*... *looking-glass* i.e. gaze lovingly at
 myself in a mirror, flirt with my own reflection 16 *rudely stamped* crudely formed, roughly printed with
 an image want lack 17 *wanton* flirtatious, lascivious *ambling* sauntering, walking with a sexy rolling
 gait 18 *curtailed* deprived, cut short (literally refers to the docking of a dog's tail) 19 *feature* a pleasing
 shape *dissembling* cheating, deceitful 20 *sent*... *time* i.e. born prematurely 21 *made up* fully formed
 22 *unfashionable* odd-looking, inelegant/poorly shaped 23 *halt* limp 24 *piping* characterized by
 pastoral pipes, rather than warlike instruments/shrill, weak, contemptible

And descant on mine own deformity.
 And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,
 To entertain these fair well-spoken days,
 30 I am determinèd to prove a villain
 And hate the idle pleasures of these days.
 Plots have I laid, inductions dangerous,
 By drunken prophecies, libels and dreams,
 To set my brother Clarence and the king
 35 In deadly hate the one against the other.
 And if King Edward be as true and just
 As I am subtle, false and treacherous,
 This day should Clarence closely be mew'd up,
 About a prophecy, which says that 'G'
 40 Of Edward's heirs the murderer shall be.
 Dive, thoughts, down to my soul: here Clarence
 comes.—

Enter Clarence, guarded, and Brackenbury

Brother, good day. What means this armèd guard
 That waits upon your grace?

CLARENCE His majesty,
 45 Tend'ring my person's safety, hath appointed
 This conduct to convey me to th'Tower.

RICHARD Upon what cause?

CLARENCE Because my name is George.

RICHARD Alack, my lord, that fault is none of yours.
 50 He should, for that, commit your godfathers.
 O, belike his majesty hath some intent
 That you should be new-christened in the Tower.
 But what's the matter, Clarence, may I know?

CLARENCE Yea, Richard, when I know, but I protest
 55 As yet I do not. But, as I can learn,
 He hearkens after prophecies and dreams,
 And from the cross-row plucks the letter G,
 And says a wizard told him that by 'G'
 His issue disinherited should be:

27 **descant** improvise variations on (musical term), i.e. ponder, comment 29 **entertain** pass enjoyably
well-spoken courteous, harmonious 30 **determinèd** resolved/destined 32 **inductions** initial steps,
 preparations 37 **subtle** cunning, sly **false** dishonest, disloyal 38 **mew'd up** imprisoned, cooped up
 (like a caged bird of prey) 39 **About** as a result of 'G' Clarence's first name is George; Richard, however, is
 the Duke of Gloucester 43 **waits upon** attends 45 **Tend'ring** holding dear, being concerned for (ironic)
 46 **conduct** escort **th'Tower** the Tower of London 50 **commit** imprison **godfathers** sometimes
 responsible for the naming of the child at baptism 51 **belike** probably/perhaps 52 **new-christened** a
 grim anticipation of Clarence's death by drowning 53 **matter** reason 54 **protest** declare 56 **hearkens**
after listens to 57 **cross-row** alphabet (prefixed by a cross in children's primers) 59 **issue** children

- 60 And, for my name of George begins with G,
It follows in his thought that I am he.
These, as I learn, and such like toys as these,
Hath moved his highness to commit me now.
- RICHARD** Why, this it is when men are ruled by women:
- 65 'Tis not the king that sends you to the Tower,
My lady Grey his wife, Clarence, 'tis she
That tempts him to this harsh extremity.
Was it not she and that good man of worship,
Anthony Woodville, her brother there,
- 70 That made him send Lord Hastings to the Tower,
From whence this present day he is delivered?
We are not safe, Clarence, we are not safe.
- CLARENCE** By heaven, I think there is no man secure
But the queen's kindred and night-walking heralds
- 75 That trudge betwixt the king and Mistress Shore.
Heard you not what an humble suppliant
Lord Hastings was to her, for his delivery?
- RICHARD** Humbly complaining to her deity
Got my Lord Chamberlain his liberty.
- 80 I'll tell you what: I think it is our way,
If we will keep in favour with the king,
To be her men and wear her livery.
The jealous o'erworn widow and herself,
Since that our brother dubbed them gentlewomen,
- 85 Are mighty gossips in our monarchy.
- BRACKENBURY** I beseech your graces both to pardon me:
His majesty hath straitly given in charge
That no man shall have private conference,
Of what degree soever, with your brother.
- 90 **RICHARD** Even so, an please your worship, Brackenbury,
You may partake of anything we say.
We speak no treason, man: we say the king
Is wise and virtuous, and his noble queen

60 for because 62 toys whims, trifles 66 lady Grey Elizabeth's title before her marriage to Edward; Richard is being contemptuous 68 worship repute, honour 69 Anthony Woodville i.e. Earl Rivers 71 delivered released 74 night-walking heralds secret, night-time messengers (a night-walker also meant a thief or a prostitute) 75 trudge betwixt go to and fro between Mistress Shore Jane Shore, wife of a London goldsmith and Edward IV's lover; she later became Hastings' mistress Mistress usual title for a woman; perhaps here with suggestive play on the sense of 'lover' or even 'female master' 76 suppliant petitioner 77 delivery release from prison 78 complaining appealing, lamenting, pleading her deity a mocking title for Mistress Shore 79 Lord Chamberlain i.e. Hastings 82 men servants (perhaps with sexual connotations) livery uniform indicating whom one served (wear her livery may play on a sense of 'have sex with her') 83 o'erworn worn out (like old clothing/sexually) widow i.e. Queen Elizabeth 84 dubbed them conferred on them the rank of 85 gossips chatters/godparents 87 straitly... charge strictly ordered 89 Of...soever regardless of social rank 90 an if it

- Well struck in years, fair and not jealous.
 95 We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,
 A cherry lip, a bonny eye, a passing pleasing tongue,
 And that the queen's kindred are made gentlefolks.
 How say you sir? Can you deny all this?
BRACKENBURY With this, my lord, myself have nought
 to do.
- 100 **RICHARD** Naught to do with Mistress Shore? I tell thee,
 fellow,
 He that doth naught with her, excepting one,
 Were best to do it secretly, alone.
BRACKENBURY What one, my lord?
RICHARD Her husband, knave. Wouldst thou betray me?
 105 **BRACKENBURY** I do beseech your grace to pardon me,
 and withal
 Forbear your conference with the noble duke.
CLARENCE We know thy charge, Brackenbury, and will
 obey.
RICHARD We are the queen's abjects, and must obey.—
 Brother, farewell. I will unto the king,
 110 And whatsoever you will employ me in,
 Were it to call King Edward's widow sister,
 I will perform it to enfranchise you.
 Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood
 Touches me deeper than you can imagine. *Embraces him*
- 115 **CLARENCE** I know it pleaseth neither of us well.
RICHARD Well, your imprisonment shall not be long.
 I will deliver you or else lie for you.
 Meantime, have patience.
CLARENCE I must perforce. Farewell.
Exit Clarence [led by Brackenbury and Guards]
- 120 **RICHARD** Go, tread the path that thou shalt ne'er return.
 Simple, plain Clarence, I do love thee so
 That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,
 If heaven will take the present at our hands.
 But who comes here? The new-delivered Hastings?
Enter Lord Hastings
- 125 **HASTINGS** Good time of day unto my gracious lord.

94 Well . . . years well advanced in age (Richard seems to pretend to mean 'mature, wise' or 'well-preserved')
 fair attractive/just 96 passing surpassingly, exceptionally 101 doth naught Richard shifts the sense to
 'sexually penetrates her vagina' 104 betray me i.e. by making me name the king as Shore's lover
 105 withal moreover 106 Forbear restrain, cease 107 charge duty, instructions 108 abjects varies
 'subjects' to incorporate sense of 'contemptible outcasts' 112 enfranchise free 114 Touches affects
 117 lie for you take your place in prison (playing on the sense of 'lie about you') 119 perforce of necessity
 ('patience perforce' was proverbial) 123 present gift 124 new-delivered recently released

RICHARD As much unto my good Lord Chamberlain.
 Well are you welcome to this open air.
 How hath your lordship brooked imprisonment?
 HASTINGS With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must.
 130 But I shall live, my lord, to give them thanks
 That were the cause of my imprisonment.
 RICHARD No doubt, no doubt. And so shall Clarence too,
 For they that were your enemies are his,
 And have prevailed as much on him as you.
 135 HASTINGS More pity that the eagles should be mewed,
 Whiles kites and buzzards play at liberty.
 RICHARD What news abroad?
 HASTINGS No news so bad abroad as this at home:
 The king is sickly, weak and melancholy,
 140 And his physicians fear him mightily.
 RICHARD Now, by Saint John, that news is bad indeed.
 O, he hath kept an evil diet long,
 And overmuch consumed his royal person.
 'Tis very grievous to be thought upon.
 145 Where is he, in his bed?
 HASTINGS He is.
 RICHARD Go you before, and I will follow you.

Exit Hastings

He cannot live, I hope, and must not die
 Till George be packed with post-horse up to heaven.
 150 I'll in to urge his hatred more to Clarence,
 With lies well steeled with weighty arguments.
 And, if I fail not in my deep intent,
 Clarence hath not another day to live:
 Which done, God take King Edward to his mercy,
 155 And leave the world for me to bustle in.
 For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter.
 What though I killed her husband and her father?
 The readiest way to make the wench amend
 Is to become her husband and her father:
 160 The which will I, not all so much for love
 As for another secret close intent,

128 brooked tolerated 130 give them thanks i.e. pay them back, have revenge 135 mewed caged
 136 kites and buzzards inferior birds of prey 137 abroad in the world 140 him for him 142 diet
 lifestyle 149 packed packed off, dispatched post-horse all possible speed 151 steeled strengthened
 with steel, reinforced 152 deep cunning/secret 155 bustle busy myself, be active 156 Warwick's
 youngest daughter i.e. Lady Anne Neville; having changed sides, the Earl of Warwick died fighting against
 the House of York 157 her husband Anne Neville was not in fact married to Prince Edward (Henry VI's
 son) although she had been betrothed to him before his death father father-in-law, i.e. Henry VI
 161 close concealed

By marrying her which I must reach unto.
 But yet I run before my horse to market:
 Clarence still breathes, Edward still lives and reigns.
 165 When they are gone, then must I count my gains.

Exit

Act 1 Scene 2

running scene 1 continues

*Enter the corpse of Henry the Sixth with [Gentlemen bearing]
 halberds to guard it, Lady Anne being the mourner*

ANNE Set down, set down your honourable load —
 If honour may be shrouded in a hearse —
 Whilst I awhile obsequiously lament
 Th'untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster. *They set down the coffin*
 5 Poor key-cold figure of a holy king,
 Pale ashes of the House of Lancaster,
 Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood,
 Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost,
 To hear the lamentations of poor Anne,
 10 Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughtered son,
 Stabbed by the selfsame hand that made these
 wounds.
 Lo, in these windows that let forth thy life,
 I pour the helpless balm of my poor eyes.
 O, cursèd be the hand that made these holes:
 15 Cursèd the heart that had the heart to do it:
 Cursèd the blood that let this blood from hence!
 More direful hap betide that hated wretch
 That makes us wretched by the death of thee
 Than I can wish to wolves, to spiders, toads,
 20 Or any creeping venomèd thing that lives.
 If ever he have child, abortive be it,
 Prodigious, and untimely brought to light,
 Whose ugly and unnatural aspect
 May fright the hopeful mother at the view,

162 reach unto strive to carry out 163 run . . . market i.e. get ahead of myself (proverbial)

1.2 *Location: a London street halberds* long-handled weapons with axe-like heads 2 *shrouded* concealed/wrapped in a shroud *hearse* probably here an open coffin, or litter beneath a frame supporting a funeral cloth 3 *obsequiously* in a manner proper to the dead 4 *Lancaster* i.e. Henry VI, former head of the House of Lancaster 5 *key-cold* cold as a metal key (proverbial) 6 *ashes* i.e. remains, lifeless body 8 *Be it* let it be *invoke* invoke, call upon 12 *Lo* look *windows* vents, i.e. wounds 13 *balm* healing ointment/substance with which the dead are anointed (i.e. tears) 17 *direful hap* dreadful fortune *betide* befall, happen to 19 *spiders, toads* thought to be poisonous 21 *abortive* monstrous, deformed 22 *Prodigious* unnatural/ill-omened 23 *aspect* appearance