

15. Richard III Short extracts from set scenes

Extract 1 Act III scene iv

Re-enter RICHARD *and* BUCKINGHAM.

RICHARD I pray you all, tell me what they deserve
That do conspire my death with devilish plots
Of damnèd witchcraft – and that have prevailed 60
Upon my body with their hellish charms?

HASTINGS The tender love I bear your Grace, my lord,
Makes me most forward in this princely presence
To doom th' offenders – whosoe'er they be.
I say, my lord, they have deservèd death. 65

RICHARD Then be your eyes the witness of their evil.
Look how I am bewitched! Behold, mine arm
Is like a blasted sapling withered up!
And this is Edward's wife, that monstrous witch,
Consorted with that harlot strumpet Shore, 70
That by their witchcraft thus have markèd me!

HASTINGS If they have done this deed, my noble lord –

RICHARD If? – Thou protector of this damnèd strumpet!
Talk'st thou to me of ifs? Thou art a traitor!
Off with his head! Now by Saint Paul I swear 75
I will not dine until I see the same.
Lovell and Ratcliffe, look that it be done.
The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

Extract 2 Act IV scene ii

BUCKINGHAM My lord, I have considered in my mind
The late request that you did sound me in.

RICHARD Well, let that rest. Dorset is fled to Richmond. 85

BUCKINGHAM I hear the news, my lord.

RICHARD Stanley, he is your wife's son! Well, look unto it.

BUCKINGHAM My lord, I claim the gift, my due by promise,
For which your honour and your faith is pawned:
Th' earldom of Hereford and the movables 90
Which you have promised I shall possess.

RICHARD Stanley, look to your wife! If she convey
Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.

BUCKINGHAM What says your Highness to my just request?

RICHARD I do remember me: Henry the Sixth 95
 Did prophesy that Richmond should be King,
 When Richmond was a little peevish boy.
 A king! – perhaps –

BUCKINGHAM My lord –

RICHARD How chance the prophet could not at that time 100
 Have told me, I being by, that I should kill him?

BUCKINGHAM My lord, your promise for the earldom –

RICHARD Richmond! When last I was at Exeter,
 The Mayor in courtesy showed me the castle
 And called it Rougemont – at which name I started, 105
 Because a bard of Ireland told me once
 I should not live long after I saw Richmond.

BUCKINGHAM My lord –

RICHARD Ay – what's o'clock?

BUCKINGHAM I am thus bold to put your Grace in mind 110
 Of what you promised me.

RICHARD Well – but what's o'clock?

BUCKINGHAM Upon the stroke of ten.

RICHARD Well, let it strike.

BUCKINGHAM Why let it strike?

RICHARD Because that like a Jack thou keep'st the stroke
 Betwixt thy begging and my meditation! 115
 I am not in the giving vein today.