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THE THIRD PART OF KING HENRY THE SIXTH

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QUEEN MARGARET
O Ned, sweet Ned, speak to thy mother, boy.
Canst thou not speak? O traitors! murderers!
They that stabbed Caesar shed no blood at all,
Did not offend, nor were not worthy blame,
55 If this foul deed were by, to equal it.
56 He was a man; this (in respect) a child,
And men ne'er spend their fury on a child.
What's worse than murderer, that I may name it?
No, no, my heart will burst an if I speak.
And I will speak, that so my heart may burst.
Butchers and villains, bloody cannibals,
How sweet a plant have you untimely cropped.
You have no children, butchers; if you had,
The thought of them would have stirred up remorse;
But if you ever chance to have a child,
Look in his youth to have him so cut off
67 As, deathsmen, you have rid this sweet young prince

KING EDWARD
Away with her! Go bear her hence perforce!

QUEEN MARGARET
Nay, never bear me hence, dispatch me here.
Here sheathe thy sword, I'll pardon thee my death.
What, wilt thou not? Then, Clarence, do it thou.

CLARENCE
By heaven, I will not do thee so much ease.

QUEEN MARGARET
Good Clarence, do! Sweet Clarence, do thou do it!

CLARENCE
Didst thou not hear me swear I would not do it?

QUEEN MARGARET
75 Ay, but thou usest to forswear thyself.
'Twas sin before, but now 'tis charity.
What, wilt thou not? Where is that devil's butcher,
78 Hard-favored Richard? Richard, where art thou?
79 Thou art not here. Murder is thy almsdeed.
80 Petitioners for blood thou ne'er put'st back.

KING EDWARD
Away, I say. I charge ye bear her hence.

QUEEN MARGARET
So come to you and yours as to this prince.
Exit Queen [Margaret, guarded].

KING EDWARD
Where's Richard gone?

CLARENCE
84 To London, all in post; and, as I guess,
To make a bloody supper in the Tower.

KING EDWARD
He's sudden if a thing comes in his head.
87 Now march we hence, discharge the common sor,
With pay and thanks, and let's away to London
And see our gentle queen how well she fares.
90 By this, I hope, she hath a son for me.
Exit [King Edward with his company].

V, vi *Enter [King] Henry the Sixth and Richard, with the Lieutenant in the Tower.*

RICHARD
1 Good day, my lord. What, at your book so hard?

KING HENRY
Ay, my good lord - 'my lord' I should say rather.
'Tis sin to flatter. 'Good' was little better.
'Good Gloucester' and 'good devil' were alike,

And both preposterous. Therefore, not 'good lord.' 5

RICHARD
Sirrah, leave us to ourselves; we must confer.
[Exit Lieutenant.]

KING HENRY
So flies the reckless shepherd from the wolf;
So first the harmless sheep doth yield his fleece,
And next his throat unto the butcher's knife.
What scene of death hath Roscius now to act?

RICHARD
Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind;
The thief doth fear each bush an officer.

KING HENRY
The bird that hath been limed in a bush
With trembling wings misdoubteth every bush;
And I, the hapless male to one sweet bird,
Have now the fatal object in my eye
Where my poor young was limed, was caught, and killed.

RICHARD
Why, what a peevish fool was that of Crete
That taught his son the office of a fowl.
And yet, for all his wings, the fool was drowned.

KING HENRY
I, Daedalus; my poor boy, Icarus;
Thy father, Minos, that denied our course,
The sun that seared the wings of my sweet boy,
Thy brother Edward; and thyself, the sea
Whose envious gulf did swallow up his life.
Ah, kill me with thy weapon, not with words.
My breast can better brook thy dagger's point
Than can my ears that tragic history.
But wherefore dost thou come? Is't for my life?

RICHARD
Think'st thou I am an executioner?

KING HENRY
A persecutor I am sure thou art.
If murdering innocents be executing,
Why, then thou art an executioner.

RICHARD
Thy son I killed for his presumption.

KING HENRY
Hadst thou been killed when first thou didst presume,
Thou hadst not lived to kill a son of mine.
And thus I prophesy, that many a thousand
Which now mistrust no parcel of my fear,
And many an old man's sigh and many a widow's,
And many an orphan's water-standing eye -
Men for their sons, wives for their husbands,
Orphans for their parents' timeless death -
Shall rue the hour that ever thou wast born.
The owl shrieked at thy birth, an evil sign;

55 equal compare with 56 in respect by comparison 67 rid killed 75 thou . . . to forswear you have the habit of forswearing 78 Hard-favored grim in appearance 79 almsdeed charity 80 Petitioners . . . back you never turn away those who ask for blood 84 post haste 87 common sort ordinary soldiers 90 this this time
V, vi The Tower of London 1 book (of devotions) 5 preposterous unnatural 7 reckless heedless 10 Roscius famous Roman actor (died 62 B.C.) supposed by the Elizabethans to be a tragedian 13 limed caught with birdlime 14 misdoubteth suspects 15 male father; bird chick 18-25 fool . . . life (Daedalus wished to escape from Crete, having been imprisoned there by King Minos. He devised wings for himself and his son Icarus, fastening them on with wax. The father flew to safety, but Icarus rose too near the sun; the heat melted the wax, and Icarus fell into the sea and drowned.) 25 envious gulf hateful gullet 27 brook tolerate 38 mistrust no parcel do not suspect any part 40 water-standing full of tears 42 timeless untimely

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V, vi

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The night crow cried, aboding luckless time;
 Dogs howled and hounds tempest shook down trees;
 The raven rooked her on the chimney's top,
 And chattering pies in dismal discords sung.
 Thy mother felt more than a mother's pain,
 And yet brought forth less than a mother's hope,
 To wit, an indigested and deformed lump,
 Not like the fruit of such a goodly tree.
 Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wast born,
 To signify thou cam'st to bite the world;
 And, if the rest be true which I have heard,
 Thou cam'st -

RICHARD

I'll hear no more. Die, prophet, in thy speech.

Stabs him.

For this (amongst the rest) was I ordained.

KING HENRY

Ay, and for much more slaughter after this.
 O, God forgive my sins and pardon thee.

Dies.

RICHARD

What? Will the aspiring blood of Lancaster
 Sink in the ground? I thought it would have mounted.
 See how my sword weeps for the poor king's death.
 O may such purple tears be always shed
 From those that wish the downfall of our house.
 If any spark of life be yet remaining,
 Down, down to hell, and say I sent thee thither,
Stabs him again.

I, that have neither pity, love, nor fear.
 Indeed 'tis true that Henry told me of;
 For I have often heard my mother say
 I came into the world with my legs forward.
 Had I not reason, think ye, to make haste
 And seek their ruin that usurped our right?
 The midwife wondered, and the women cried,
 'O, Jesus bless us! He is born with teeth!'
 And so I was; which plainly signified
 That I should snarl and bite and play the dog.
 Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so,
 Let hell make crook'd my mind to answer it.
 I have no brother, I am like no brother;
 And this word 'love,' which greybeards call divine,
 Be resident in men like one another,
 And not in me. I am myself alone.

Clarence, beware. Thou keep'st me from the light;
 But I will sort a pitchy day for thee;
 For I will buzz abroad such prophecies
 That Edward shall be fearful of his life;
 And then, to purge his fear, I'll be thy death.
 King Henry and the prince his son are gone.
 Clarence, thy turn is next, and then the rest,
 Counting myself but bad till I be best.
 I'll throw thy body in another room

15 night crow nightjar or owl; aboding foreboding 47 rooked her squatted
 48 pies magpies 64 purple i.e. bloody 79 answer accord with 85 sort
 86 buzz (as being befitting); pitchy black 86 buzz whisper (scandal)
 1, vii The royal palace in London 3 corn wheat 6 undoubted fearless
 10 to wit 9 coursers war horses 10 bears (the bear was the emblem of
 the Nevils) 13 suspicion apprehension 17 marched stayed awake during
 18 laid laid down (dead) 22 looked on respected 25 thou . . . thou (he
 indicates his head and his arm or shoulder) 29 seal pledge 41 waft convey
 41 triumphs festivities

And triumph, Henry, in thy day of doom.

Exit [with the body].

Flourish. Enter King [Edward], Queen [Elizabeth], Clarence, Richard, Hastings, Nurse [with the young Prince], and Attendants.

KING EDWARD

Once more we sit in England's royal throne,
 Repurchased with the blood of enemies.
 What valiant foemen, like to autumn's corn,
 Have we mowed down in tops of all their pride.
 Three Dukes of Somerset, threefold renowned
 For hardy and undoubted champions;
 Two Cliffords, as the father and the son;
 And two Northumberlands - two braver men
 Ne'er spurred their coursers at the trumpet's sound;
 With them, the two brave bears, Warwick and
 Montague,

That in their chains fettered the kingly lion
 And made the forest tremble when they roared.
 Thus have we swept suspicion from our seat
 And made our footstool of security.
 Come hither, Bess, and let me kiss my boy.
 Young Ned, for thee thine uncles and myself
 Have in our armors watched the winter's night,
 Went all afoot in summer's scalding heat,
 That thou mightst repossess the crown in peace;
 And of our labors thou shalt reap the gain.

RICHARD [aside]

I'll blast his harvest, if your head were laid;
 For yet I am not looked on in the world.
 This shoulder was ordained so thick to heave,
 And heave it shall some weight or break my back.
 Work thou the way, and thou shalt execute.

KING EDWARD

Clarence and Gloucester, love my lovely queen,
 And kiss your princely nephew, brothers both.

CLARENCE

The duty that I owe unto your majesty
 I seal upon the lips of this sweet babe.

QUEEN ELIZABETH

Thanks, noble Clarence; worthy brother, thanks.

RICHARD

And that I love the tree from whence thou sprang'st
 Witness the loving kiss I give the fruit.

[Aside]

To say the truth, so Judas kissed his master
 And cried 'All hail!' when as he meant all harm.

KING EDWARD

Now am I seated as my soul delights,
 Having my country's peace and brothers' loves.

CLARENCE

What will your grace have done with Margaret?
 Reignier, her father, to the King of France
 Hath pawned the Sicils and Jerusalem,
 And hither have they sent it for her ransom.

KING EDWARD

Away with her, and waft her hence to France.
 And now what rests but that we spend the time
 With stately triumphs, mirthful comic shows,
 Such as befits the pleasure of the court?
 Sound drums and trumpets! Farewell sour annoy!

For here I hope begins our lasting joy. *Exeunt omnes.*