

That no man shall have private conference,  
Of what degree soever,<sup>1</sup> with your brother.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Even so. An't<sup>e</sup> please your worship, Brackenbury;

You may partake of anything we say.

90 We speak no treason, man. We say the King

Is wise and virtuous, and his noble Queen

Well struck<sup>o</sup> in years, fair, and not jealous.

We say that Shore's wife hath a pretty foot,

A cherry lip,

95 A bonny eye, a passing<sup>o</sup> pleasing tongue,

And that the Queen's kin are made gentlefolks.

How say you, sir? Can you deny all this?

BRACKENBURY With this, my lord, myself have naught<sup>o</sup> to do.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Naught<sup>2</sup> to do with Mrs Shore? I tell thee, fellow:

100 He that doth naught with her—excepting one—

Were best to do it secretly alone.

BRACKENBURY What one, my lord?

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Her husband, knave. Wouldst thou betray me?

BRACKENBURY I beseech your grace to pardon me; and do withal<sup>o</sup>.

105 Forbear your conference with the noble Duke.

CLARENCE We know thy charge, Brackenbury, and will obey.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER We are the Queen's objects,<sup>o</sup> and must obey.

Brother, farewell. I will unto the King,

And whatsoever you will employ me in—

110 Were it to call King Edward's widow<sup>o</sup> 'sister'—

I will perform it to enfranchise<sup>o</sup> you.

Meantime, this deep disgrace in brotherhood

Touches me dearer<sup>3</sup> than you can imagine.

CLARENCE I know it pleaseth neither of us well.

115 RICHARD GLOUCESTER Well, your imprisonment shall not be long.

I will deliver you or lie for you.<sup>4</sup>

Meantime, have patience.

CLARENCE I must perforce.<sup>o</sup> Farewell.

*Exeunt CLARENCE [ , BRACKENBURY, and guard, to the Tower ]*

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Go tread the path that thou shalt ne'er return.

Simple plain Clarence, I do love thee so

120 That I will shortly send thy soul to heaven,

If heaven will take the present at<sup>o</sup> our hands.

But who comes here? The new-delivered<sup>o</sup> Hastings?

*Enter LORD HASTINGS [from the Tower].*

LORD HASTINGS Good time of day unto my gracious lord.

125 RICHARD GLOUCESTER As much unto my good Lord Chamberlain.

Well are you welcome to the open air.

How hath your lordship brooked<sup>o</sup> imprisonment?

LORD HASTINGS With patience, noble lord, as prisoners must.

But I shall live, my lord, to give them thanks

That were the cause of my imprisonment.

130 RICHARD GLOUCESTER 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.

1. no ... soever: that is, despite Richard's high rank ("degree"), he must not speak with the prisoner.

2. Wickedness; here, specifically sexual intercourse.

3. Wounds me more, but also (as a hidden meaning),

implicates me more.

4. In prison, in place of Clarence (with a pun on "lie" as "tell falsehoods about"). "Deliver" and "lie for" rhyme.

LORD HASTINGS More pity that the eagles should be mewed

While kites<sup>o</sup> and buzzards prey at liberty.

135 RICHARD GLOUCESTER What news abroad?<sup>o</sup>

LORD HASTINGS No news so bad abroad as this at home:

The King is sickly, weak, and melancholy;

And his physicians fear<sup>o</sup> him mightily.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Now by Saint Paul, that news is bad indeed.

140 O he hath kept an evil diet<sup>o</sup> long,

And overmuch consumed his royal person.<sup>5</sup>

'Tis very grievous to be thought upon:

Where is he? In his bed?

LORD HASTINGS He is.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Go you before and I will follow you.

*Exit HASTINGS.*

145 He cannot live, I hope, and must not die

Till George be packed with post-haste<sup>o</sup> up to heaven.

I'll in to urge his hatred more to Clarence,

With lies well steeled<sup>o</sup> with weighty arguments.

And if I fail not in my deep intent,

150 Clarence hath not another day to live—

Which done, God take King Edward to his mercy

And leave the world for me to bustle in.

For then I'll marry Warwick's youngest daughter.<sup>6</sup>

What though I killed her husband and her father?<sup>7</sup>

155 The readiest way to make the wench amend

Is to become her husband and her father,

The which will I: not all so much for love;

As for another secret close intent,<sup>o</sup>

By marrying her, which I must reach unto:

160 But yet I run before my horse to market.

Clarence still breathes, Edward still lives and reigns;

When they are gone, then must I count my gains.

*Exit*

## 1.2

*Enter [gentlemen, bearing] the corpse of [King] Henry*

*VI [in an open coffin], with halberdiers<sup>1</sup> to guard it,*

*LADY ANNE being the mourner*

LADY ANNE Set down, set down your honourable load,

If honour may be shrouded in a hearse,<sup>o</sup>

Whilst I a while obsequiously<sup>o</sup> lament

Th'untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster.<sup>2</sup>

*[They set the coffin down.]*

5 Poor key-cold<sup>3</sup> 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<sup>4</sup>

To hear the lamentations of poor Anne,

10 Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughtered son,

5. And has been weakened by extravagant living.

6. Lady Anne Neville, who had been betrothed (but not married) to Edward, Prince of Wales, the son of King Henry VI. Shakespeare, however, writes of Anne as Edward's widow.

7. her father: Edward; actually father-in-law to Henry VI.

1.2. Location: A street in London.

1. Men carrying halberds (a spearlike weapon with a

blade as well as a point).

2. Henry VI, of the house of Lancaster, was deposed and murdered by the Yorkists; the dynastic quarrel dates from the deposition of Richard II and is dramatized in Shakespeare's three *Henry VI* plays.

3. Proverbial for "cold as death."

4. Conjuring of spirits was generally condemned. *invoke*: invoke.

Stabbed by the selfsame hand that made these wounds.  
 Lo, in these windows<sup>5</sup> that let forth thy life,  
 I pour the helpless<sup>o</sup> balm of my poor eyes.  
 O cursèd be the hand that made these holes,  
 15 Cursèd the blood that let this blood from hence,  
 Cursèd the heart that had the heart to do it.  
 More direful hap betide<sup>o</sup> 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<sup>o</sup> be it,  
 Prodigious,<sup>o</sup> and untimely brought to light,  
 Whose ugly and unnatural aspect<sup>o</sup>  
 May fright the hopeful mother at the view,  
 25 And that be heir to his unhappiness.<sup>6</sup>  
 If ever he have wife, let her be made  
 More miserable by the death of him  
 Than I am made by my young lord and thee.<sup>7</sup>—  
 Come now towards Chertsey<sup>o</sup> with your holy load,  
 30 Taken from Paul's<sup>8</sup> to be interrèd there,  
 [The gentlemen lift the coffin]  
 And still as<sup>o</sup> you are weary of this weight  
 Rest you, whiles I lament King Henry's corpse.  
 Enter RICHARD Duke of GLOUCESTER

RICHARD GLOUCESTER [to the gentlemen] Stay, you that bear  
 the corpse, and set it down.  
 LADY ANNE What black magician conjures up this fiend  
 35 To stop devoted charitable deeds?  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER [to the gentlemen] Villains,<sup>o</sup> set down  
 the corpse, or by Saint Paul  
 I'll make a corpse of him that disobeys.  
 HALBERDIER My lord, stand back and let the coffin pass.  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER Unmannered dog, stand thou when I command.  
 40 Advance<sup>o</sup> thy halberd higher than my breast,  
 Or by Saint Paul I'll strike thee to my foot<sup>o</sup>  
 And spurn<sup>o</sup> upon thee, beggar, for thy boldness.  
 [They set the coffin down]

LADY ANNE [to gentlemen and halberdiers] What, do you tremble?  
 Are you all afraid?  
 Alas, I blame you not, for you are mortal,  
 45 And mortal eyes cannot endure the devil.—  
 Ayaunt,<sup>o</sup> thou dreadful minister of hell.  
 Thou hadst but power over his mortal body;  
 His soul thou canst not have; therefore be gone.  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER Sweet saint, for charity be not so cursèd.<sup>o</sup>

50 LADY ANNE Foul devil, for God's sake hence and trouble us not,  
 For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,  
 Filled it with cursing cries and deep exclaims.  
 If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,  
 Behold this pattern<sup>o</sup> of thy butcheries.—  
 55 O gentlemen, see, see! Dead Henry's wounds

Ope their congealèd mouths and bleed afresh.<sup>1</sup>—  
 Blush, blush, thou lump of foul deformity,  
 For 'tis thy presence that ex-hales<sup>o</sup> this blood  
 From cold and empty veins where no blood dwells.  
 60 Thy deed, inhuman and unnatural,  
 Provokes this deluge supernatural.<sup>2</sup>  
 O God, which this blood mad'st, revenge his death.  
 O earth, which this blood drink'st, revenge his death.  
 Either heav'n with lightning strike the murd'rer dead;  
 65 Or earth gape open wide and eat him quick<sup>o</sup>  
 As thou dost swallow up this good king's blood,  
 Which his hell-governèd arm hath butcherèd.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Lady, you know no rules of charity,  
 Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.  
 70 LADY ANNE Villain, thou know'st no law of God nor man.  
 No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER But I know none, and therefore am no beast.  
 LADY ANNE O wonderful, when devils tell the truth!<sup>3</sup>  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER More wonderful, when angels are so angry.  
 75 Vouchsafe,<sup>o</sup> divine perfection of a woman,  
 Of these supposed crimes to give me leave  
 By circumstance<sup>o</sup> but to acquit myself.  
 LADY ANNE Vouchsafe, diffused infection<sup>4</sup> of a man,  
 Of these known evils but to give me leave  
 80 By circumstance t'accuse thy cursèd self.  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER Fairer than tongue can name thee, let me have  
 Some patient leisure to excuse myself.  
 LADY ANNE Fouler than heart can think thee, thou canst make  
 No excuse current<sup>o</sup> but to hang thyself.  
 85 RICHARD GLOUCESTER By such despair I should accuse myself.  
 LADY ANNE And by despairing shalt thou stand excused,  
 For doing worthy vengeance on thyself  
 That didst unworthy slaughter upon others.  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER Say that I slew them not;  
 LADY ANNE Then say they were not slain.  
 90 But dead they are—and, devilish slave, by thee.  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER I did not kill your husband.  
 LADY ANNE Why, then he is alive.  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER Nay, he is dead, and slain by Edward's hand.  
 LADY ANNE In thy foul throat thou liest. Queen Margaret saw  
 Thy murd'rous falchion<sup>o</sup> smoking in his blood,<sup>5</sup>  
 95 The which thou once didst bend against<sup>o</sup> her breast,  
 But that thy brothers beat aside the point.  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER I was provokèd by her sland'rous tongue,  
 That laid their guilt upon my guiltless shoulders.  
 LADY ANNE Thou wast provokèd by thy bloody mind,  
 100 That never dream'st on aught<sup>o</sup> but butcheries.  
 Didst thou not kill this king?  
 RICHARD GLOUCESTER I grant ye.

5. Stab wounds (possibly referring to the custom of opening the windows to let a dying soul pass).

6. Evil nature; ill fortune.

7. By the deaths of Prince Edward and King Henry VI.

8. St. Paul's, cathedral of the City of London.

9. Raise upright (rather than hold it pointing at Richard)

1. A murdered victim's wounds were supposed to bleed again in the presence of the murderer.

2. Q, F: most unnatural. The emendation underscores Anne's call (in the next line) for divine intervention.

3. That is, Richard is a devil, not man or beast.

4. Misshapen, but also an infection whose harmful effects are dispersed widely.

5. In *Richard Duke of York* (3 Henry VI) 5.5, King Edward stabbed the Prince first, and Richard followed.

- LADY ANNE Dost grant me, hedgehog?<sup>6</sup> Then God grant me, too;  
Thou mayst be damnèd for that wicked deed.  
O he was gentle, mild, and virtuous.
- 105 RICHARD GLOUCESTER The better for the King of Heaven that hath him.  
LADY ANNE He is in heaven, where thou shalt never come.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER Let him thank me that holp<sup>o</sup> to send him thither;  
For he was fitter for that place than earth.
- LADY ANNE And thou unfit for any place but hell.  
110 RICHARD GLOUCESTER Yes, one place else, if you will hear me: name it.  
LADY ANNE Some dungeon.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER Your bedchamber.  
LADY ANNE Ill rest betide<sup>o</sup> the chamber where thou liest.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER So will it, madam, till I lie with you.  
LADY ANNE I hope so.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER I know so: But gentle Lady Anne,  
115 To leave this keen encounter of our wits  
And fall something into a slower method,<sup>7</sup>  
Is not the causer of the timeless<sup>o</sup> deaths  
Of these Plantagenets, Henry and Edward,  
As blameful as the executioner?
- 120 LADY ANNE Thou wast the cause of that accursed effect.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER Your beauty was the cause of that effect—  
Your beauty that did haunt me in my sleep  
To undertake the death of all the world  
So I might live one hour in your sweet bosom.
- 125 LADY ANNE If I thought that, I tell thee, homicide,<sup>8</sup>  
These nails should rend that beauty from my cheeks.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER These eyes could not endure sweet beauty's wreck.  
You should not blemish it if I stood by.  
As all the world is cheerèd by the sun,  
130 So I by that: it is my day, my life.  
LADY ANNE Black night o'ershade thy day, and death thy life.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER Curse not thyself, fair creature: thou art both.  
LADY ANNE I would I were, to be revenged on thee.<sup>8</sup>  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER It is a quarrel most unnatural,  
135 To be revenged on him that loveth you.  
LADY ANNE It is a quarrel just and reasonable,  
To be revenged on him that killed my husband.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER He that bereft thee, lady, of thy husband,  
Did it to help thee to a better husband.
- 140 LADY ANNE His better doth not breathe upon the earth.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER He lives that loves thee better than he<sup>o</sup> could.  
LADY ANNE Name him.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER Plantagenet.  
LADY ANNE Why, that was he.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER The selfsame name, but one of better nature.  
LADY ANNE Where is he?  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER Here.  
*She spits at him*
- 145 LADY ANNE Would it were mortal poison for thy sake.  
Why dost thou spit at me?

6. Term of abuse applied to someone who pays no attention to others' feelings; alluding to Richard's hunchback and his heraldic badge, the boar.

7. And argue somewhat less hastily.

8. That is, if Anne were Richard's day and his life, could end both and thus be revenged on him.

- RICHARD GLOUCESTER Never came poison from so sweet a place.  
LADY ANNE Never hung poison on a fouler toad.<sup>9</sup>  
Out of my sight! Thou dost infect mine eyes.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER Thine eyes, sweet lady, have infected mine.  
150 LADY ANNE Would<sup>o</sup> they were basilisks<sup>1</sup> to strike thee dead. *I wish that once and for all*  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER I would they were, that I might die at once,<sup>o</sup>  
For now they kill me with a living death.  
Those eyes of thine from mine have drawn salt tears,  
Shamed their aspects<sup>o</sup> with store of childish drops.<sup>2</sup> *appearance*
- 154.1 *These eyes, which never shed remorseful tear—  
No, when my father York and Edward<sup>3</sup> wept  
To hear the piteous moan that Rutland<sup>4</sup> made  
When black-faced<sup>o</sup> Clifford shook his sword at him; *threatening*  
Nor when thy warlike father<sup>o</sup> like a child *(Warwick)*  
Told the sad story of my father's death  
And twenty times made pause to sob and weep,  
That all the standers-by had wet their cheeks  
Like trees bedashed with rain. In that sad time  
154.10 My manly eyes did scorn an humble tear,  
And what these sorrows could not thence exhale<sup>o</sup> *draw out*  
Thy beauty hath, and made them blind with weeping.*
- 155 I never sued<sup>o</sup> to friend nor enemy;  
My tongue could never learn sweet smoothing<sup>o</sup> word; *petitioned*  
But now thy beauty is proposed my fee,<sup>o</sup> *flattering*  
My proud heart sues and prompts my tongue to speak. *recompense*  
*She looks scornfully at him*  
Teach not thy lip such scorn, for it was made  
For kissing, lady, not for such contempt.  
If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,  
160 *[He kneels and offers her his sword]*  
Lo, here I lend thee this sharp-pointed sword,  
Which if thou please to hide in this true breast  
And let the soul forth that adareth thee,  
165 I lay it naked to the deadly stroke  
And humbly beg the death upon my knee.  
*He lays his breast open; she offers<sup>o</sup> at [it] with his sword* *bare / thrusts*  
Nay, do not pause, for I did kill King Henry;  
But 'twas thy beauty that provokèd me.  
Nay, now dispatch: 'twas I that stabbed young Edward;  
170 But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.  
*She lets fall the sword*  
Take up the sword again, or take up me.  
LADY ANNE Arise, dissembler.  
*[He rises]*  
Though I wish thy death,
- I will not be thy executioner.  
RICHARD GLOUCESTER Then bid me kill myself, and I will do it.  
LADY ANNE I have already.  
175 RICHARD GLOUCESTER That was in thy rage:  
Speak it again, and even with the word

9. Toads were popularly regarded as "ugly and venomous" (*As You Like It* 2.1.13).

1. Legendary monsters, supposed to kill with a glance.

2. The indented passage that follows, 154.1–154.12, appears only in F.

3. His brother, now the King.

4. Historically, Rutland was Richard's older brother. Shakespeare unhistorically makes him a child. His death is dramatized in *Richard Duke of York* 1.3–2.1.

This hand—which for thy love did kill thy love—  
Shall, for thy love, kill a far truer love.  
To both their deaths shalt thou be accessory.

180 LADY ANNE I would I knew thy heart.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER 'Tis figured in my tongue.

LADY ANNE I fear me both are false.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Then never man was true.

LADY ANNE Well, well, put up your sword.

185 RICHARD GLOUCESTER Say then my peace is made.

LADY ANNE That shalt thou know hereafter.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER But shall I live in hope?

LADY ANNE All men, I hope, live so.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Vouchsafe<sup>5</sup> to wear this ring.

190 LADY ANNE To take is not to give.<sup>5</sup>

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Look how my ring encompasseth<sup>6</sup> thy finger;

Even so thy breast encloseth my poor heart.

Wear both of them, for both of them are thine.

And if thy poor devoted servant<sup>6</sup> may

195 But beg one favour at thy gracious hand,

Thou dost confirm his happiness for ever.

LADY ANNE What is it?

RICHARD GLOUCESTER That it may please you leave these sad designs?

To him that hath most cause to be a mourner,

200 And presently<sup>6</sup> repair to Crosby House,<sup>6</sup>

Where—after I have solemnly interred

At Chertsey monast'ry this noble king,

And wet his grave with my repentant tears—

I will with all expedient<sup>6</sup> duty see you.

205 For divers unknown<sup>6</sup> reasons, I beseech you

Grant me this boon.<sup>6</sup>

LADY ANNE With all my heart—and much it joys me, too,

To see you are become so penitent.

Tressell and Berkeley, go along with me.

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Bid me farewell.

210 LADY ANNE 'Tis more than you deserve.<sup>7</sup>

But since you teach me how to flatter you,

Imagine I have said farewell already. *Exeunt two with ANNE*

RICHARD GLOUCESTER Sirs, take up the corpse.

GENTLEMAN Towards Chertsey, noble lord?

RICHARD GLOUCESTER No, to Blackfriars; there attend<sup>6</sup> my coming.

*Exeunt [with] corpse. Manet<sup>6</sup> GLOUCESTER*

215 Was ever woman in this humour<sup>6</sup> wooed?

Was ever woman in this humour won?

I'll have her, but I will not keep her long.

What, I that killed her husband and his father,

To take her in her heart's extremest hate,

220 With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,

The bleeding witness of my hatred by,

Having God, her conscience, and these bars<sup>6</sup> against me,

And I no friends to back my suit withal

But the plain devil and dissembling looks—

225 And yet to win her, all the world to nothing?° Ha!

Consent

encircles

lover

affair

at once

prompt

various secret

favor

await

Remains

mood; manner

obstacles

against such odds

5. To take your ring is not to give myself.  
6. One of Richard's London residences.

7. That is, to fare well is more than you deserve.

Hath she forgot already that brave prince,  
Edward her lord, whom I some three months since  
Stabbed in my angry mood at Tewkesbury?

230 A sweeter and a lovelier gentleman,  
Framed in the prodigality of nature,<sup>8</sup>

Young, valiant, wise, and no doubt right royal,

The spacious world cannot again afford<sup>9</sup>—

And will she yet abase<sup>9</sup> her eyes on me,

That cropped the golden prime<sup>9</sup> of this sweet prince

235 And made her widow to a woeful bed?

On me, whose all not equals Edward's moiety?<sup>9</sup>

On me, that halts<sup>9</sup> and am misshapen thus?

My dukedom to a beggarly *denier*.<sup>1</sup>

I do mistake my person all this while.

240 Upon my life she finds, although I cannot,

Myself to be a marvellous proper<sup>9</sup> man.

I'll be at charges for<sup>9</sup> a looking-glass

And entertain<sup>9</sup> a score or two of tailors

To study fashions to adorn my body.

245 Since I am crept in<sup>9</sup> favour with myself,

I will maintain it with some little cost.

But first I'll turn you fellow in his grave,

And then return lamenting to my love.

Shine out, fair sun, till I have bought a glass,

250 That I may see my shadow as I pass.

Exit

1.3

*Enter* QUEEN [ELIZABETH], Lord RIVERS, [Marquis DORSET],  
and Lord GRAY

RIVERS [to ELIZABETH] Have patience, madam. There's no doubt his majesty  
Will soon recover his accustomed health.

GRAY [to ELIZABETH] In that you brook it ill,<sup>9</sup> it makes him worse.

Therefore, for God's sake entertain good comfort,

And cheer his grace with quick<sup>9</sup> and merry eyes.

2 QUEEN ELIZABETH If he were dead, what would betide on<sup>9</sup> me?

RIVERS<sup>1</sup> No other harm but loss of such a lord.

QUEEN ELIZABETH The loss of such a lord includes all harms.

GRAY The heavens have blessed you with a goodly son

10 To be your comforter when he is gone.

QUEEN ELIZABETH Ah, he is young, and his minority

Is put unto the trust of Richard Gloucester,

A man that loves not me—nor none of you.

RIVERS Is it concluded<sup>9</sup> he shall be Protector?

15 QUEEN ELIZABETH It is determined,<sup>9</sup> not concluded yet;

But so it must be, if the King miscarry.<sup>9</sup>

*Enter [the Duke of] BUCKINGHAM and [Lord STANLEY,*

*Earl of] Derby*

GRAY Here come the Lords of Buckingham and Derby.

BUCKINGHAM [to ELIZABETH] Good time of day unto your royal grace.

STANLEY [to ELIZABETH] God make your majesty joyful, as you have been.

8. Made when nature in its gift giving was being lavish.  
9. Springtime (Richard "cropped," or harvested, Edward's life prematurely).

1. French coin, one-twelfth of a sou (extremely little). to: against (as in betting).  
1.3 Location: The royal palace of Westminster.  
1. F: Gray, Rivers's role in the conversation is far fuller in Q than in F (see lines 30, 54).

The boy<sup>4</sup> is foolish,<sup>o</sup> and I fear not him.  
 Look how thou dream'st. I say again, give out  
 That Anne, my queen, is sick, and like to die.  
 60 About it, for it stands me much upon<sup>o</sup> *is very important to me*  
 To stop all hopes whose growth may damage me.  
 [Exit CATESBY]  
 [Aside] I must be married to my brother's daughter,<sup>5</sup>  
 Or else my kingdom stands on brittle glass.  
 Murder her brothers, and then marry her?  
 65 Uncertain way of gain, but I am in  
 So far in blood that sin will pluck on<sup>o</sup> sin. *incite*  
 Tear-falling pity dwells not in this eye.  
 Enter [Sir James] TYRRELL; [he kneels]  
 Is thy name Tyrrell?  
 TYRRELL James Tyrrell, and your most obedient subject.  
 KING RICHARD Art thou indeed?  
 70 TYRRELL Prove<sup>o</sup> me, my gracious lord. *Test*  
 KING RICHARD Dar'st thou resolve to kill a friend of mine?  
 TYRRELL Please you,<sup>o</sup> but I had rather kill two enemies. *If you wish*  
 KING RICHARD Why there thou hast it: two deep enemies,  
 Foes to my rest, and my sweet sleep's disturbers,  
 75 Are they that I would have thee deal upon.<sup>o</sup> *set to work upon*  
 Tyrrell, I mean those bastards in the Tower.  
 TYRRELL Let me have open means to come<sup>6</sup> to them,  
 And soon I'll rid you from the fear of them.  
 KING RICHARD Thou sing'st sweet music. Hark, come hither, Tyrrell.  
 80 Go, by this token. Rise, and lend thine ear.  
 [RICHARD] *whispers in his ear*  
 'Tis no more but so.<sup>o</sup> Say it is done, *That's all*  
 And I will love thee, and prefer<sup>o</sup> thee for it. *promote*  
 TYRRELL I will dispatch it straight.  
 KING RICHARD Shall we hear from thee, Tyrrell, ere we sleep?<sup>7</sup>  
 Enter BUCKINGHAM  
 85 TYRRELL Ye shall, my lord. *Exit*  
 BUCKINGHAM My lord, I have considered in my mind  
 The late request that you did sound me in.  
 KING RICHARD Well, let that rest. Dorset is fled to Richmond.  
 BUCKINGHAM I hear the news, my lord.  
 90 KING RICHARD Stanley, he<sup>o</sup> is your wife's son. Well, look to it. *(Richmond)*  
 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  
 Which you have promised I shall possess.  
 95 KING RICHARD Stanley, look to your wife. If she convey  
 Letters to Richmond, you shall answer it.<sup>o</sup> *for it*  
 BUCKINGHAM What says your highness to my just request?  
 KING RICHARD I do remember me, Henry the Sixth  
 Did prophesy that Richmond should be king,  
 100 When Richmond was a little peevish boy.  
 A king . . . perhaps . . . perhaps.<sup>8</sup>  
 BUCKINGHAM My lord?

4. Clarence's eldest son, Edward, Earl of Warwick.  
 5. To Edward's daughter, Elizabeth of York, who was later to unite the two houses by becoming queen to the Lancastrian Henry VII, formerly the Earl of Richmond.  
 6. Let me have free access.  
 7. F omits this and the following line.  
 8. The passage that follows, 101-119, appears only in Q.

KING RICHARD How chance the prophet could not at that time  
 Have told me, I being by, that I should kill him?  
 BUCKINGHAM My lord, your promise for the earldom.  
 105 KING RICHARD Richmond? When last I was at Exeter,  
 The Mayor in courtesy showed me the castle,  
 And called it 'Ruge-mount'<sup>9</sup>—at which name I started,  
 Because a bard of Ireland<sup>1</sup> told me once  
 I should not live long after I saw 'Richmond'.  
 110 BUCKINGHAM My lord?  
 KING RICHARD Ay? What's o'clock?  
 BUCKINGHAM I am thus bold to put your grace in mind  
 Of what you promised me.  
 KING RICHARD But what's o'clock?  
 BUCKINGHAM Upon the stroke of ten.  
 115 KING RICHARD Well, let it strike!  
 BUCKINGHAM Why 'let it strike'?  
 KING RICHARD Because that, like a jack,<sup>2</sup> thou keep'st the stroke  
 Betwixt thy begging and my meditation.  
 I am not in the giving vein today.  
 120 BUCKINGHAM Why then resolve me,<sup>o</sup> whe'er you will or no? *answer me resolutely*  
 KING RICHARD Thou troublest me. I am not in the vein.<sup>o</sup> *mood*  
 Exit [RICHARD, followed by all but BUCKINGHAM]  
 BUCKINGHAM And is it thus? Repays he my deep<sup>o</sup> service *i.e., rendered at great risk*  
 With such contempt? Made I him king for this?  
 O let me think on Hastings, and be gone  
 125 To Brecon,<sup>o</sup> while my fearful head is on. *manor house in Wales*  
 Exit [at another door]

4.3

Enter Sir [James] TYRRELL  
 TYRRELL The tyrannous and bloody act is done—  
 The most arch<sup>o</sup> deed of piteous massacre *preeminent*  
 That ever yet this land was guilty of.  
 Dighton and Forrest,<sup>1</sup> whom I did suborn<sup>o</sup> *induce*  
 5 To do this piece of ruthless butchery,  
 Albeit they were fleshed<sup>2</sup> villains, bloody dogs,  
 Melted with tenderness and mild compassion,  
 Wept like two children in their deaths' sad story.<sup>3</sup>  
 'O thus', quoth Dighton, 'lay the gentle babes';  
 10 'Thus, thus', quoth Forrest, 'girdling<sup>o</sup> one another  
 Within their alabaster<sup>o</sup> innocent arms. *embracing*  
 Their lips were four red roses on a stalk, *marble-white*  
 And in their summer beauty kissed each other.  
 A book of prayers on their pillow lay,  
 15 'Which once', quoth Forrest, 'almost changed my mind.  
 But O, the devil'—there the villain stopped,  
 When<sup>o</sup> Dighton thus told on, 'We smotherèd  
 The most replenishèd<sup>o</sup> sweet work of nature, *At which point*  
 complete

9. Redhill (but punning on "Richmond").  
 1. Celtic bards, or poets, were also considered prophets.  
 2. A Jack was the mechanical figure who appeared to strike the hours in early clocks. By clockwork reiterations of his suit, Richard suggests, Buckingham is behaving like an annoying beggar and interfering with Richard's "meditation."  
 3. Experienced in killing; applied to hounds that had been fed part of their first kill in order to give them a taste for blood.  
 4. Location: The palace, London.

That from the prime<sup>o</sup> creation e'er she framed.  
Hence both are gone,<sup>o</sup> with conscience and remorse.  
They could not speak, and so I left them both,  
To bear this tidings to the bloody king.

Enter KING RICHARD

And here he comes.—All health, my sovereign lord.

KING RICHARD Kind Tyrrell, am I happy in thy news?

25 TYRRELL If to have done the thing you gave in charge  
Beget your happiness,<sup>4</sup> be happy then,  
For it is done.

KING RICHARD But didst thou see them dead?

TYRRELL I did, my lord.

KING RICHARD And buried, gentle Tyrrell?

TYRRELL The chaplain of the Tower hath buried them;

30 But where, to say the truth, I do not know.

KING RICHARD Come to me, Tyrrell, soon, at after-supper,<sup>o</sup>

When thou shalt tell the process<sup>o</sup> of their death.

Meantime, but think how I may do thee good,

And be inheritor of thy desire.<sup>5</sup>

Farewell till then.

35 TYRRELL I humbly take my leave.

KING RICHARD The son of Clarence have I pent<sup>o</sup> up close.

His daughter meanly have I matched in marriage.<sup>6</sup>

The sons of Edward sleep in Abraham's bosom,<sup>7</sup>

And Anne, my wife, hath bid this world goodnight.

40 Now, for<sup>o</sup> I know the Breton<sup>8</sup> Richmond aims

At young Elizabeth, my brother's daughter,

And by that knot<sup>o</sup> looks proudly o'er the crown,

To her go I, a jolly thriving wooer<sup>9</sup>—

Enter [Sir Richard] RATCLIFFE<sup>1</sup> [running]

RATCLIFFE My lord.

45 KING RICHARD Good news or bad, that thou com'st in so bluntly?

RATCLIFFE Bad news, my lord. Ely<sup>o</sup> is fled to Richmond,

And Buckingham, backed with the hardy Welshmen,

Is in the field, and still his power increaseth.

KING RICHARD Ely with Richmond troubles me more near<sup>o</sup>

50 Than Buckingham and his rash-levied strength.<sup>o</sup>

Come, I have learned that fearful commenting

Is leaden servitor<sup>2</sup> to dull delay.

Delay leads impotent and snail-paced beggary.<sup>o</sup>

Then fiery expedition<sup>o</sup> be my wing:

55 Jove's Mercury,<sup>3</sup> an herald for a king.

Go, muster men. My counsel is my shield.<sup>4</sup>

We must be brief, when traitors brave the field.<sup>5</sup>

Exeunt

4. If . . . happiness: If it pleases you to have accomplished what you ordered done.

5. but . . . desire: you have only to think what you want of me, and you will possess it.

6. I have married off to a poor man.

7. In heaven (see Luke 16:22–23).

8. Person from Brittany; Richmond spent fourteen years in exile there before returning to England to face Richard III in 1485.

9. It was widely rumored that Anne was poisoned in order to facilitate a plan by Richard to marry Elizabeth,

sister to the missing princes; modern historians believe that these allegations are probably untrue. The charges regarding Clarence's son and daughter (lines 36–37) are certainly untrue.

1. Q calls for Catesby.

2. fearful . . . servitor: frightened talk is the sluggish attendant.

3. The swift messenger of the gods.

4. My . . . shield: I do not talk, but arm myself to fight counsel: adviser.

5. When traitors defy (us on) the battlefield.

Enter old QUEEN MARGARET

QUEEN MARGARET So now prosperity begins to mellow<sup>o</sup>

And drop into the rotten mouth of death.

Here in these confines slyly have I lurked

To watch the waning of mine enemies.

5 A dire induction<sup>o</sup> am I witness to,

And will to France, hoping the consequence<sup>o</sup>

Will prove as bitter, black, and tragical.

Enter the [old] DUCHESS OF YORK and QUEEN [ELIZABETH]

Withdraw thee, wretched Margaret! Who comes here?

QUEEN ELIZABETH Ah, my poor princes! Ah, my tender babes!

10 My unblown<sup>o</sup> flowers, new-appearing sweets!<sup>o</sup>

If yet your gentle souls fly in the air,

And be not fixed in doom perpetual,<sup>1</sup>

Hover about me with your airy wings

And hear your mother's lamentation.

15 QUEEN MARGARET [aside] Hover about her, say that right for right

Hath dimmed your infant mom to aged night.<sup>2</sup>

DUCHESS OF YORK<sup>3</sup> So many miseries have crazed<sup>o</sup> my voice

That my woe-wearied tongue is still and mute.

Edward Plantagenet, why art thou dead?

20 QUEEN MARGARET [aside] Plantagenet doth quit<sup>o</sup> Plantagenet;

Edward for Edward pays a dying debt.<sup>4</sup>

QUEEN ELIZABETH Wilt thou, O God, fly from such gentle lambs

And throw them in the entrails of the wolf?

When<sup>o</sup> didst thou sleep, when such a deed was done?

25 QUEEN MARGARET [aside] When holy Harry<sup>5</sup> died, and my sweet son.

DUCHESS OF YORK Dead life, blind sight, poor mortal living ghost,<sup>6</sup>

Woe's scene, world's shame, grave's due by life usurped,<sup>7</sup>

Brief abstract<sup>o</sup> and record of tedious days,

Rest thy unrest on England's lawful earth,

30 Unlawfully made drunk with innocents' blood.

[They sit]

QUEEN ELIZABETH Ah that thou<sup>8</sup> wouldst as soon afford a grave

As thou canst yield a melancholy seat.

Then would I hide my bones, not rest them here.

Ah, who hath any cause to mourn but we?

35 QUEEN MARGARET [coming forward] If ancient sorrow be most reverend,

Give mine the benefit of seniority,<sup>9</sup>

And let my griefs frown on the upper hand.<sup>1</sup>

If sorrow can admit society,

Tell o'er<sup>o</sup> your woes again by viewing mine.

40 I had an Edward, till a Richard killed him;

I had a husband, till a Richard killed him:

4.4 Location: Before the palace.

1. fixed in doom perpetual: assigned by an irrevocable sentence to your final place of punishment or reward.

2. right for . . . night: even-handed justice has destroyed the bright hopes of your young lives.

3. Q places this after line 34 (making it the last speech before Margaret's intervention) and omits lines 20–21.

4. A debt for which payment is death. Edward for Edward: Prince Edward (Elizabeth's son) for Prince Edward (Margaret's son, whose murder is dramatized in Richard Duke of York).

5. Henry VI (Margaret's husband).

6. mortal living ghost: a dead person doomed to exist among the living.

7. graves . . . usurped: person who ought to be dead, unlawfully alive.

8. Here, Elizabeth is addressing the earth directly.

9. Seniority; Q1–5 have "signoric," F "signeurie," which suggests that Margaret may mean "sovereignty" or "lordship" ("seigniorie").

1. frown . . . hand: have precedence in mourning.

first  
overcome

dessert  
story

locked

because

marriage, alliance

(Bishop of Ely)

deeply  
hastily raised army

ruin

speed

ripen

prologue (as to a play)  
conclusion (as of a play)

unopened / blooms

cracked

pay for (the deeds of)

Whenever (up until now)

epitome; summary

Count; narrate

The crest of youth against your dignity.

KING HENRY But I have sent for him to answer this;

100 And for this cause awhile we must neglect

Our holy purpose to Jerusalem.

Cousin, on Wednesday next our Council we

Will hold at Windsor. So inform the lords.

But come yourself with speed to us again;

105 For more is to be said and to be done

Than out of anger can be utterèd.

WESTMORLAND I will, my liege.

*Exeunt [KING HENRY, LANCASTER, and other lords  
at one door; WESTMORLAND at another door]*

1.2

*Enter [HARRY]<sup>1</sup> Prince of Wales and Sir John FALSTAFF<sup>2</sup>*

FALSTAFF Now, Hal, what time of day is it, lad?

PRINCE HARRY Thou art so fat-witted<sup>3</sup> with drinking of old sack,<sup>4</sup>

and unbuttoning thee after supper, and sleeping upon benches

after noon, that thou hast forgotten to demand that truly which

thou wouldst truly know. What a devil hast thou to do with the

time of the day? Unless hours were cups of sack, and minutes

capons,<sup>5</sup> and clocks the tongues of bawds, and dials<sup>6</sup> the signs

of leaping-houses,<sup>7</sup> and the blessed sun himself a fair hot

wench in flame-coloured taffeta,<sup>8</sup> I see no reason why thou

shouldst be so superfluous<sup>9</sup> to demand the time of the day.

FALSTAFF Indeed you come near me<sup>10</sup> now, Hal, for we that take

purses go by the moon and the seven stars,<sup>6</sup> and not 'By Phoebus,

he, that wand'ring knight so fair.'<sup>7</sup> And I prithee, sweet

wag,<sup>8</sup> when thou art a king, as God save thy grace—'majesty' I

15 should say, for grace<sup>9</sup> thou wilt have none—

PRINCE HARRY What, none?

FALSTAFF No, by my troth, not so much as will serve to be pro-

logue to an egg and butter.

PRINCE HARRY Well, how then? Come, roundly,<sup>10</sup> roundly.

20 FALSTAFF Marry<sup>11</sup> then, sweet wag, when thou art king let not us

that are squires of the night's body<sup>9</sup> be called thieves of the

day's beauty. Let us be 'Diana's foresters',<sup>1</sup> 'gentlemen of the

shade', 'minions of the moon', and let men say we be men of

good government,<sup>10</sup> being governed, as the sea is, by our noble

and chaste mistress the moon, under whose countenance<sup>11</sup> we

25 steal.

PRINCE HARRY Thou sayst well, and it holds well<sup>12</sup> too, for the

fortune of us that are the moon's men doth ebb and flow like

5. A term from falconry suggesting the hawk's trimming of its feathers as preparation for action.  
1.2 Location: A room in the Prince's apartments, London.  
1. F's stage direction reads, "Henry Prince of Wales"; Q reads, "prince of Wales." Norton speech prefixes refer to this character as "Prince Harry," and the same designation is used, as here, in stage directions.  
2. See Introduction and Textual Note for a discussion of Falstaff's name.  
3. Spanish white wine.  
4. Castrated male chickens (an Elizabethan delicacy).  
5. Silk cloth, which in some contexts was associated with prostitutes.  
6. The constellation known as the Pliades. go by the

moon: go about at moonlight; tell time by the light of the moon.  
7. Evidently a line from a contemporary belief romance about Phoebus, the sun god of classical myth.  
8. Virtue; with a pun also on "grace" as meaning "good favor" and "a prayer before meals." Falstaff asserts that Hal has none of these and so must be called "your grace," rather than "your grace," which was also a title of honor.  
9. Let not we who steal by night. Falstaff alludes to attendants of knights known as "squires of the body."  
1. Hunters by moonlight; thieves. In classical myth Diana was goddess of the moon.

the sea; being governed as the sea is by the moon. As for proof now: a purse of gold most resolutely snatched on Monday night, and most dissolutely spent on Tuesday morning; got with swearing 'lay by!',<sup>2</sup> and spent with crying 'bring in!';<sup>3</sup> now in as low an ebb as the foot of the ladder, and by and by in as high a flow as the ridge<sup>4</sup> of the gallows.<sup>4</sup>

FALSTAFF By the Lord, thou sayst true, lad; and is not my Hostess of the tavern a most sweet wench?

PRINCE HARRY As the honey of Hybla,<sup>5</sup> my old lad of the castle,<sup>6</sup> and is not a buff jerkin<sup>7</sup> a most sweet robe of duirance?<sup>8</sup>

FALSTAFF How now, how now, mad wag? What, in thy quips and thy quiddities?<sup>9</sup> What a plague have I to do with a buff jerkin?

PRINCE HARRY Why, what a pox<sup>8</sup> have I to do with my Hostess of the tavern?

FALSTAFF Well, thou hast called her to a reckoning<sup>9</sup> many a time and oft.

PRINCE HARRY Did I ever call for thee to pay thy part?<sup>1</sup>

FALSTAFF No, I'll give thee thy due, thou hast paid all there.

PRINCE HARRY Yea, and elsewhere: so far as my coin would stretch,<sup>2</sup> and where it would not, I have used my credit.

FALSTAFF Yea, and so used it that were it not here apparent that thou art heir apparent—but I prithee, sweet wag, shall there be gallows standing in England when thou art king, and resolution thus fubbed<sup>3</sup> as it is with the rusty curb of old father Antic<sup>4</sup> the law? Do not thou when thou art king hang a thief.

PRINCE HARRY No, thou shalt.

FALSTAFF Shall I? O, rare! By the Lord, I'll be a brave<sup>5</sup> judge!

PRINCE HARRY Thou judgest false already. I mean thou shalt have the hanging of the thieves, and so become a rare hangman.

FALSTAFF Well, Hal, well; and in some sort it jumps<sup>6</sup> with my humour<sup>6</sup> as well as waiting in the court,<sup>4</sup> I can tell you.

PRINCE HARRY For obtaining of suits?<sup>5</sup>

FALSTAFF Yea, for obtaining of suits, whereof the hangman hath no lean wardrobe. 'Sblood,<sup>6</sup> I am as melancholy as a gib cat,<sup>7</sup> or a lugged bear.<sup>7</sup>

PRINCE HARRY Or an old lion, or a lover's lute.

FALSTAFF Yea, or the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe.

PRINCE HARRY What sayst thou to a hare,<sup>8</sup> or the melancholy of Moor-ditch?<sup>9</sup>

FALSTAFF Thou hast the most unsavoury similes, and art indeed

2. A thief's cry similar to "Hands up!"  
3. A tavern customer's call for more food or wine.  
4. The Prince's speech is riddled with sexual slang, including "purse" (line 30) as meaning "vagina" or "scrotum"; "snatched" (line 30) as "forcibly had sexual relations with"; "spent" (line 31) as "exhausted by sexual activity"; "lay by" (line 32) as "lie back"; "spent with" (line 32) as "reached orgasm with"; and "low" (line 33) and "high" (line 33) as referring to a penis, first limp and then erect.  
5. Region of Sicily renowned for its honey.  
6. Slang for "roisterer"; also a play on the name "Oldcastle" (see Introduction).  
7. Leather jacket often worn by jailers.  
8. The equivalent of "what the devil." The pox literally was plague or syphilis.

9. You have asked that she present the bill; asked that she show her value sexually.  
1. To pay your bill; to use your penis.  
2. So far as my money would go; so far as my ability to engender, or "coin," a child would take me.  
3. And valor (of thieves) thus thwarted.  
4. Being in attendance at the royal court or at the court of justices.  
5. Petitions; clothing. The hangman was entitled to claim the victims' clothing.  
6. By His blood (an oath alluding to Christ's crucifixion).  
7. A baited bear. In a popular form of entertainment, bears were led in chains and set upon by dogs.  
8. The hare's sadness was proverbial. Its flesh, when eaten, was supposed to generate melancholy.  
9. An open sewer outside the walls of London.

crossbar

durability; imprisonment

quibbles (wordplay)

buffoon

fine; well-dressed

agrees temperament

tomcat

thick

clock faces; sun

needlessly

are near the

mischievous

to the

By Mary (a milite

cond

face, pri

the compar

...disdainest sweet young Prince. But Hal, I prithe trouble me no more with vanity.<sup>1</sup> I would to God thou and I knew where a commodity<sup>2</sup> of good names<sup>3</sup> were to be bought. An old lord of the Council rated me the other day in the street about you, sir, but I marked him not; and yet he talked very wisely, but I regarded him not; and yet he talked wisely, and in the street too.

PRINCE HARRY Thou didst well, for wisdom cries out in the streets, and no man regards it.<sup>1</sup>

75 FALSTAFF O, thou hast damnable iteration,<sup>2</sup> and art indeed able to corrupt a saint. Thou hast done much harm upon me, Hal, God forgive thee for it. Before I knew thee, Hal, I knew nothing; and now am I, if a man should speak truly, little better than one of the wicked. I must give over this life, and I will give it over. By the Lord, an<sup>3</sup> I do not, I am a villain. I'll be damned for never a<sup>4</sup> king's son in Christendom.

PRINCE HARRY Where shall we take a purse tomorrow, Jack?

FALSTAFF Zounds,<sup>3</sup> where thou wilt, lad! I'll make one;<sup>4</sup> an I do not, call me villain and baffle me.<sup>4</sup>

90 PRINCE HARRY I see a good amendment of life in thee, from praying to purse-taking.

FALSTAFF Why, Hal, 'tis my vocation,<sup>5</sup> Hal. 'Tis no sin for a man to labour in his vocation.<sup>5</sup>

Enter POINS

85 Poins! Now shall we know if Gadshill<sup>6</sup> have set a match.<sup>6</sup> O, if men were to be saved by merit,<sup>7</sup> what hole in hell were hot enough for him? This is the most omnipotent villain that ever cried 'Stand!' to a true<sup>8</sup> man.

PRINCE HARRY Good morrow, Ned.

95 POINS Good morrow, sweet Hal. [To FALSTAFF] What says Monsieur Remorse? What says Sir John, sack-and-sugar Jack?<sup>8</sup> How agrees the devil and thee about thy soul, that thou soldest him on Good Friday<sup>9</sup> last, for a cup of Madeira<sup>1</sup> and a cold capon's leg?

PRINCE HARRY Sir John stands to<sup>9</sup> his word, the devil shall have his bargain, for he was never yet a breaker of proverbs: he will give the devil his due.

100 POINS [to FALSTAFF] Then art thou damned for keeping thy word with the devil.

PRINCE HARRY Else he had been damned for cozening<sup>10</sup> the devil.

105 POINS But my lads, my lads, tomorrow morning by four o'clock early, at Gads Hill, there are pilgrims going to Canterbury with rich offerings, and traders riding to London with fat purses. I have visors<sup>11</sup> for you all; you have horses for yourselves. Gadshill

1. A biblical allusion to Proverbs 1:20-24.  
2. You have a soul-endangering way of reading Scripture. This is one of several speeches in which Falstaff uses a language associated with Puritans.  
3. By Christ's wounds (a strong oath).  
4. And subject me to public disgrace. Falstaff alludes to the practice of "baffling," in which perjured knights or effigies of them were hung upside down in public places.  
5. Allusion to 1 Corinthians 7:20 and Ephesians 4:1. Falstaff is misusing the biblical injunction to work at one's vocation to justify robbery.  
6. A thief named after Gad's Hill, the place where he

practices his robberies. This hill, near Rochester on the road from Canterbury to London, was notorious for highway robberies.  
7. By good works (as opposed to salvation by God's grace).  
8. "Jack" is a nickname for "John," but the word also means "a drinking vessel" or "a knave." Falstaff likes sugar in his sack, or sweet white wine.  
9. The strictest of fast days in the Christian calendar.  
10. A white wine exported from Madeira, an island off the coast of west Africa.

quick at command  
worthless this  
supply / reputation

for re  
I'll take part

calling  
planned a thief

an honest

tears

cheating

man

lies<sup>12</sup> tonight in Rochester. I have bespoke<sup>12</sup> supper tomorrow night in Eastcheap.<sup>2</sup> We may do it as secure<sup>13</sup> as sleep. If you will go, I will stuff your purses full of crowns; if you will not, tarry at home and be hanged.

110 FALSTAFF Hear ye, Edward, if I tarry at home and go not, I'll hang you for going.

POINS You will, chops?<sup>14</sup>

FALSTAFF Hal, wilt thou make one?

PRINCE HARRY Who, I rob? I a thief? Not I, by my faith.

115 FALSTAFF There's neither honesty,<sup>15</sup> manhood, nor good fellowship in thee, nor thou camest not of the blood royal, if thou darest not stand for<sup>16</sup> ten shillings.<sup>3</sup>

PRINCE HARRY Well then, once in my days I'll be a madcap.

FALSTAFF Why, that's well said.

PRINCE HARRY Well, come what will, I'll tarry at home.

120 FALSTAFF By the Lord, I'll be a traitor then, when thou art king.

PRINCE HARRY I care not.

POINS Sir John, I prithe leave the Prince and me alone. I will lay him down such reasons for this adventure that he shall go:

125 FALSTAFF Well, God give thee the spirit of persuasion and him the ears of profiting, that what thou speakest may move and what he hears may be believed, that the true prince may, for recreation's sake, prove a false thief; for the poor abuses of the time want countenance.<sup>4</sup> Farewell. You shall find me in Eastcheap.

130 PRINCE HARRY Farewell, the latter spring; farewell, All-hallow summer.<sup>5</sup> [Exit FALSTAFF]

POINS Now, my good sweet honey lord, ride with us tomorrow. I have a jest to execute that I cannot manage alone. Falstaff, Peto, Bardolph, and Gadshill shall rob those men that we have already waylaid—youself and I will not be there—and when they have the booty, if you and I do not rob them, cut this head off from my shoulders.

PRINCE HARRY But how shall we part with them in setting forth?

135 POINS Why, we will set forth before or after them and appoint them a place of meeting, wherein it is at our pleasure to fail. And then will they adventure upon the exploit themselves, which they shall have no sooner achieved but we'll set upon them.

PRINCE HARRY Ay, but 'tis like that they will know us by our horses, by our habits,<sup>6</sup> and by every other appointment,<sup>6</sup> to be ourselves.

140 POINS Tut, our horses they shall not see—I'll tie them in the wood; our visors we will change after we leave them; and, sirrah,<sup>7</sup> I have cases of buckram for the nonce,<sup>7</sup> to immask<sup>8</sup> our noted<sup>8</sup> outward garments.

PRINCE HARRY But I doubt they will be too hard for us.<sup>8</sup>

145 POINS Well, for two of them, I know them to be as true-bred cowards as ever turned back; and for the third, if he fight longer

2. A street and market district in London, evidently the location of the play's tavern.  
3. A ten-shilling coin was called a "royal," thus punning on the Prince's "blood royal."  
4. Lack encouragement (from those of high rank).  
5. Addressing Falstaff as youth in age (a second spring) and likening him to a period of unusually mild weather

(a second summer) occurring around All Hallows' Day, November 1.  
6. A familiar form of address, conventionally used with social inferiors.  
7. I have suits of coarse cloth for the purpose.  
8. But I fear they will be more than we can manage.

lodges / ordered  
safely

fat cheeks

honor

fight for; be worth

clothing / item

hide  
known



than he sees reason, I'll forswear arms. The virtue of this jest will be the incomprehensible° lies that this same fat rogue will tell us when we meet at supper: how thirty at least he fought with, what wards,° what blows, what extremities he endured; and in the reproof° of this lives the jest:

PRINCE HARRY Well, I'll go with thee. Provide us all things necessary, and meet me tomorrow night in Eastcheap; there I'll sup. Farewell.

POINS Farewell, my lord.

PRINCE HARRY I know you all, and will a while uphold The unyoked humour° of your idleness.

Yet herein will I imitate the sun, Who doth permit the base contagious° clouds To smother up his beauty from the world, That° when he please again to be himself, Being wanted° he may be more wondered at By breaking through the foul and ugly mists Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.

If all the year were playing holidays, To sport would be as tedious as to work; But when they seldom come, they wished-for come,

And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.° So when this loose behaviour I throw off And pay the debt I never promised,

By how much better than my word I am, By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;° And like bright metal on a sullen ground,°

My reformation, glittering o'er my fault, Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes Than that which hath no foil to set it off.

I'll so offend to° make offence a skill,° Redeeming time° when men think least I will.

Exit

Exit

1.3

Enter the KING, [the Earls of] NORTHUMBERLAND [and] WORCESTER, HOTSPUR, Sir Walter BLUNT, with other [lords]

KING HENRY [to HOTSPUR, NORTHUMBERLAND, and WORCESTER]

My blood hath been too cold and temperate, Unapt° to stir at these indignities,

And you have found me,° for accordingly You tread upon my patience; but be sure

I will from henceforth rather be myself,° Mighty and to be feared, than my condition,°

Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down, And therefore lost that title of° respect

Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.

WORCESTER Our house,° my sovereign liege, little deserves The scourge of greatness to be used on it,

And that same greatness too, which our own hands Have help° to make so portly.°

9. Making amends for misspent time. Injunctions to redeem time were both proverbial and biblical: see Ephesians 5:16 or Colossians 4:5.

1.3 Location: A royal residence, probably Windsor Castle.

1. My natural (mild) temperament.  
2. The Percy family, which had supported Henry against Richard II.

NORTHUMBERLAND [to the KING] My lord— KING HENRY Worcester, get thee gone, for I do see Danger and disobedience in thine eye.

O sir, your presence is too bold and peremptory,° And majesty might never yet endure The moody frontier° of a servant brow.

You have good leave° to leave us. When we need Your use and counsel we shall send for you. Exit WORCESTER You were about to speak.

NORTHUMBERLAND Yea, my good lord. Those prisoners in your highness' name demanded, Which Harry Percy here at Holmedon took,

Were, as he says, not with such strength denied As was delivered° to your majesty, Who either through envy° or misprision°

Was guilty of this fault, and not my son. HOTSPUR [to the KING] My liege, I did deny no prisoners; But I remember, when the fight was done,

When I was dry° with rage and extreme toil, Breathless and faint, leaning upon my sword, Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly dressed,

Fresh as a bridegroom, and his chin, new-reaped,° Showed° like a stubble-land at harvest-home.° He was perfumèd like a milliner,°

And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held A pouncet-box,° which ever and anon He gave his nose and took't away again—

Who° therewith angry, when it next came there Took it in snuff° — and still he smiled and talked; And as the soldiers bore dead bodies by,

He called them untaught knaves, unmannerly To bring a slovenly° unhandsome corpse Betwixt the wind and his nobility.

With many holiday and lady° terms He questioned me; amongst the rest demanded My prisoners in your majesty's behalf.

I then, all smarting with my wounds being cold— To be so pestered with a popinjay!° — Out of my grief° and my impatience

Answered neglectingly,° I know not what— He should, or should not— for he made me mad To see him shine so brisk, and smell so sweet,

And talk so like a waiting gentlewoman Of guns, and drums, and wounds, God save the mark!° And telling me the sovereign°st° thing on earth Was parmacity° for an inward bruise,

And that it was great pity, so it was,

3. The angry expression (punning on "frontier" as meaning both "forehead" and "military fortifications").  
4. Newly trimmed. London in the 1590s witnessed a fashion for close-shaved beards.  
5. At the end of harvest (when the fields are cut back to stubble).  
6. Seller of finely scented apparel such as bonnets, ribbons, and gloves. The name derives from the fact that

these goods were often imports from Milan.  
7. Perfume box with a perforated lid.  
8. Took offense at it; inhaled it.  
9. God keep evil away (an expression of indignation).  
1. Spermaceti, an oily substance from the sperm whale that was used in various medicines and poisons. The spelling "parmacity" probably derives from the ointment's association with the Italian city of Parma.

bound  
per  
dis  
unbridled wh  
disease-carr  
So he  
Having been mis  
exceptional ev  
expectation  
dull background  
as to / an at

proud  
full permission

reported  
malice / error

thirsty

looked

(the nose)

base; nasty

dainty and effeminate

parrot; vain dandy

pain

negligently

best

helped / majesty

170 Haply the seas and countries different,  
With variable objects,<sup>5</sup> shall expel  
This something-settled<sup>o</sup> matter in his heart,  
Whereon his brains still<sup>o</sup> beating puts him thus  
From fashion of himself.<sup>6</sup> What think you on't?  
175 POLONIUS It shall do well. But yet do I believe  
The origin and commencement of this grief  
Sprung from neglected<sup>o</sup> love.—How now, Ophelia?  
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;  
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please,  
180 But, if you hold it fit, after the play  
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him  
To show his griefs. Let her be round<sup>o</sup> with him,  
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear<sup>o</sup>  
Of all their conference. If she find him not,<sup>7</sup>  
185 To England send him, or confine him where  
Your wisdom best shall think.

KING CLAUDIUS It shall be so.  
Madness in great ones must not unwatched go. *Exeunt*

### 3.2

*Enter [Prince] HAMLET and two or three of the PLAYERS.*

HAMLET Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to  
you—trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it,<sup>1</sup> as many  
of your players do, I had as lief<sup>o</sup> the town-crier had spoke my  
lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus,  
5 but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and as I may  
say the whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget  
a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to  
the soul to hear a robustious,<sup>o</sup> periwig-pated<sup>o</sup> fellow tear a pas-  
sion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings,<sup>2</sup>  
10 who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable  
dumb shows<sup>3</sup> and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped  
for o'erdoing Termagant. It out-Herods Herod.<sup>4</sup> Pray you avoid  
it.

A PLAYER I warrant your honour.<sup>5</sup>

15 HAMLET Be not too tame; neither; but let your own discretion  
be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the  
action, with this special observance: that you o'erstep not the  
modesty<sup>o</sup> of nature. For anything so overdone is from<sup>o</sup> the pur-  
pose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and  
20 is to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her  
own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body  
of the time his form and pressure.<sup>6</sup> Now this overdone, or come  
tardy<sup>o</sup> off, though it make the unskilful<sup>7</sup> laugh, cannot but  
make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one<sup>8</sup> must

5. With different sights or interests.

6. *puts* . . . *himself*: makes him unlike his normal self.

7. If she fails to discover his secret.

3.2 Location: A stateroom of the castle.

1. If you speak exaggeratedly.

2. Spectators standing on the ground before the stage (the cheapest area).

3. Brief mimed scenes giving the plot of the scene to follow (see 3.2.122ff.). By Shakespeare's time, this once-common device was out of fashion.

4. It surpasses the excesses of Herod, who, as a character

in medieval cycle plays, was famous for his ranting. Termagant, an imaginary deity supposedly worshipped by Muslims, takes the form of a violent speaking idol in medieval drama.

5. I assure your Honor (that we will avoid it).

6. *the very* . . . *pressure*: the true state of things at present in shape ("form") and likeness (as a stamp pressed in wax).

7. Undiscriminating.

8. The judgment of one of whom (judicious persons).

25 in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there  
be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and  
that highly, not to speak it profanely,<sup>9</sup> that neither having the  
accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor no  
man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some  
30 of nature's journeymen<sup>1</sup> had made men, and not made them  
well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

A PLAYER I hope we have reformed that indifferently<sup>o</sup> with us,  
SIR.

HAMLET O, reform it altogether. And let those that play your  
35 clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be  
of<sup>o</sup> them that will themselves laugh to set<sup>o</sup> on some quantity of  
barren<sup>o</sup> spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some  
necessary question of the play be then to be considered. That's  
villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that  
40 uses it. Go make you ready. *Exeunt PLAYERS*

*Enter POLONIUS, GUILDENSTERN, and ROSENCRANTZ*

[To POLONIUS] How now; my lord? Will the King hear this  
piece of work?

POLONIUS And the Queen too, and that presently.<sup>o</sup>

HAMLET Bid the players make haste. *Exit POLONIUS*

Will you two help to hasten them?

45 ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN We will, my lord. *Exeunt*

HAMLET What ho, Horatio!

*Enter HORATIO*

HORATIO Here, sweet lord, at your service.

HAMLET Horatio, thou art e'en as just<sup>o</sup> a man

As e'er my conversation coped withal.<sup>2</sup>

HORATIO O my dear lord—

HAMLET Nay, do not think I flatter;

50 For what advancement<sup>o</sup> may I hope from thee,  
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits

To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flattered?

No, let the candied<sup>o</sup> tongue lick absurd pomp,

And crook the pregnant<sup>o</sup> hinges of the knee

55 Where thrift may follow feigning,<sup>3</sup> Dost thou hear?—

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice

And could of<sup>o</sup> men distinguish, her election

Hath sealed thee for herself;<sup>4</sup> for thou hast been

60 As one in suff'ring all that suffers nothing,

A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards

Hath ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those

Whose blood<sup>o</sup> and judgement are so well commingled

65 That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger

To sound what stop she please. Give me that man

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,

As I do thee. Something too much of this.

There is a play tonight before the King.

One scene of it comes near the circumstance

9. Meaning no blasphemy (by implying as he goes on to do that some humans were not created by God).

1. Hired assistants to the master craftsmen, still learning their trade.

2. As I ever encountered in my dealings with men.

3. Where prosperity may result from (flattering) lies. Most editions follow Q2's "fawning."

4. Has marked you as her own (on a document, a legal sign of possession).

*somewhat rosted*

*constantly*

*unrequited*

*blunt*

*within earshot*

*willingly*

*bombastic / wig-wearing*

*moderation / opposed to*

*faultily*

*moderately well*

*some of / urge  
unthinking*

*immediately*

*honest; balanced*

*political favors*

*flattering  
ready (to bow)*

*between*

*passion*