



Lady Anne.

KING RICHARD III. ACT 4 SC. 1.

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they differ from those materially. In her community of good and bad fellow-creatures she exists a negative abstraction, equally ready to be good or bad, as any one, for selfish purposes, may take the pains to influence her.

With Anne, Richard appeals to her personal vanity, her propensity to inspire passion, as, subsequently with Elizabeth, he tempts maternal ambition; but in both cases it is himself—his wily words, and, above all, his own implicit faith in the infallibility of his arguments—that constitutes the most dangerous snare:

*Anne.* What! do you tremble? are you all afraid?

Alas! I blame you not; for you are mortal,

And mortal eyes cannot endure the devil.—

Avaunt, thou dreadful minister of hell!

Thou hadst but power over his mortal body—

His soul thou canst not have; therefore, begone!

*Glo.* Sweet saint, for charity, be not so curst.

*Anne.* Foul devil! for God's sake, hence, and trouble us not;

For thou hast made the happy earth thy hell,

Fill'd it with cursing cries, and deep exclams.

If thou delight to view thy heinous deeds,

Behold this pattern of thy butcheries:

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*Glo.* Lady, you know no rules of charity,

Which renders good for bad, blessings for curses.

*Anne.* Villain, thou know'st no law of God nor man;

No beast so fierce but knows some touch of pity.

*Glo.* But I know none, and therefore am no beast.

*Anne.* O wonderful, when devils tell the truth!

*Glo.* More wonderful, when angels are so angry.—

Vouchsafe, divine perfection of a woman,

Of these supposed evils to give me leave,

By circumstance, but to acquit myself.

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Your beauty was the cause of that effect;

Your beauty, which did haunt me in my sleep

To undertake the death of all the world,  
So I might live one hour in your sweet bosom.

\* \* \* \* \*

I never su'd to friend nor enemy:

My tongue could never learn sweet soothing word;

But now thy beauty is propos'd my fee,

My proud heart sues, and prompts my tongue to speak.

[*She looks scornfully on him.*]

Teach not thy lip such scorn; for it was made

For kissing, lady, not for such contempt.

If thy revengeful heart cannot forgive,

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,

I lay it naked to the deadly stroke,

And humbly beg the death upon my knee.

[*He lays his breast open; she offers at it with his sword.*]

Nay, do not pause; for I did kill King Henry;—

But 'twas thy beauty that provoked me.

Nay, now despatch; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward:—

[*She again offers at his breast.*]

But 'twas thy heavenly face that set me on.

[*She lets fall the sword.*]

Take up the sword again, or take up me.

*Anne.* Arise, dissembler: though I wish thy death,

I will not be thy executioner.

\* \* \* \* \*

I would I knew thy heart.

*Glo.* 'Tis figur'd in

My tongue.

*Anne.* I fear me both are false.

*Glo.* Then man

Was never true.

*Anne.* Well, well, put up your sword.

*Glo.* Say, then, my peace is made.

*Anne.* That shall you know

Hereafter.

*Glo.* But shall I live in hope?



*Anne.* All men,

I hope, live so.

*Glo.* Vouchsafe to wear this ring.

*Anne.* To take is not to give. [*She puts on the ring.*]

*Glo.* Look, how this ring encompasseth 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 may  
But beg one favor at thy gracious hand,  
Thou dost confirm his happiness forever.

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*Anne.* With all my heart; and much it joys me, too,  
To see you are become so penitent.—  
Tressel and Berkley, go along with me.

With all our appreciation of the gentleness of this "gentle Lady Anne," "ay, too gentle," we cannot forbear ejaculating with Richard, himself:

Was ever woman in this humor woo'd?

Was ever woman in this humor won?

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

What! I, that kill'd her husband, and his father,

To take her in her heart's extremest hate—

With curses in her mouth, tears in her eyes,

The bleeding witness of her hatred by—

With God, her conscience, and these bars against me,

And I no friends to back my suit withal,

But the plain devil, and dissembling looks,

And yet to win her?—all the world to nothing!

When we next meet her, she is summoned to her coronation; and it is a touching picture that she gives us of the grievous penance she has undergone for that blundering hour of flattered vanity:

*Stan.*

Come, madam, you must straight to Westminster,

There to be crowned Richard's royal queen.

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*Anne.* And I with all unwillingness will go.—  
O, would to God that the inclusive verge  
Of golden metal, that must round my brow,  
Were red-hot steel, to sear me to the brain!  
Anointed let me be with deadly venom—  
And die, ere men can say God Save the Queen!

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When he, that is my husband now,  
Came to me, as I followed Henry's corse—  
When scarce the blood was well wash'd from his hands,  
Which issu'd from my other angel husband,  
And that dead saint which then I weeping follow'd—  
O, when, I say, I look'd on Richard's face,  
This was my wish,—*Be thou, quoth I, accurs'd,  
For making me, so young, so old a widow!*  
*And, when thou wed'st, let sorrow haunt thy bed;  
And be thy wife (if any be so mad)  
More miserable by the life of thee  
Than thou hast made me by my dear lord's death!*  
Lo, ere I can repeat this curse again,  
Even in so short a space, my woman's heart  
Grossly grew captive to his honey words,  
And prov'd the subject of mine own soul's curse,  
Which ever since hath held mine eyes from rest;  
For never yet one hour in his bed  
Did I enjoy the golden dew of sleep,  
But with his timorous dreams was still awak'd.  
Besides, he hates me for my father Warwick;  
And will, no doubt, shortly be rid of me.

And when, at last, poor Anne "has bid the world good-night," and Gloster is already promised another bride, her ghost appears to her guilty husband—to swell the horrors of his sleep before the battle in which he is doomed to fall, and like the rest of his super-



natural visitants, victims of his cruelty, to pronounce a malediction :

*The Ghost of QUEEN ANNE rises.*

*Ghost.* Richard, thy wife, that wretched Anne thy wife,  
That never slept a quiet hour with thee,  
Now fills thy sleep with perturbations ;  
To-morrow in the battle think on me,  
And fall thy edgeless sword. Despair, and die !





### LADY ANNE.

This lady, the eldest daughter of that renowned "setter up and plucker down of kings," the Earl of Warwick, was twice married—first to Edward, Prince of Wales, son of Henry VI., by Margaret of Anjou; and afterward to Richard, Duke of Gloster.

The scene in *King Richard III.*, where, even in the act of following the corse of her father-in-law to the grave, she is wooed and won by his murderer, who had also "cropp'd the golden prime of the sweet prince," her husband, leaves nothing to be desired as an exemplification of her character. That demonstrates her a woman, doubtless of good intentions and a sufficiently kind heart, but lamentably deficient in intellect and the plainest common sense—without any fixed principles or opinions, or the simply natural impulses of a saving pride. We grant the irresistible fascination, that would exist for such a woman as Anne, in the towering superiority, the flashing audacity of Richard—and he purposely makes a display of it by threatening the gentlemen who bear the body; but nothing is truer of her than that "in a less critical moment a far less subtle and audacious seducer would have sufficed."

She is an eminent example of weakness, the effects of which are scarcely less deplorable than those of deliberate criminality; nor do