

# Richard III

Act 1, sc. 4 (line 2)

## CLARENCE

O, I have pass'd a miserable night,  
So full of ugly sights, of ghastly dreams,  
That, as I am a Christian faithful man,  
I would not spend another such a night,  
Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days,  
So full of dismal terror was the time!

## **BRAKENBURY**

*What was your dream? I long to hear you tell it.*

## CLARENCE

Methoughts that I had broken from the Tower,  
And was embark'd to cross to Burgundy;  
And, in my company, my brother Gloucester;  
Who from my cabin tempted me to walk  
Upon the hatches: thence we looked toward England,  
And cited up a thousand fearful times,  
During the wars of York and Lancaster  
That had befall'n us. As we paced along  
Upon the giddy footing of the hatches,  
Methought that Gloucester stumbled; and, in falling,  
Struck me, that thought to stay him, overboard,  
Into the tumbling billows of the main.

Lord, Lord! methought, what pain it was to drown!

What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears!

What ugly sights of death within mine eyes!

Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks;

Ten thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon;

Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,

Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,

All scatter'd in the bottom of the sea:

Some lay in dead men's skulls; and, in those holes

Where eyes did once inhabit, there were crept,

As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems,

Which woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep,

And mock'd the dead bones that lay scatter'd by.

***BRAKENBURY***

*Had you such leisure in the time of death  
To gaze upon the secrets of the deep?*

**CLARENCE**

Methought I had; and often did I strive

To yield the ghost: but still the envious flood

Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth

To seek the empty, vast and wandering air;

But smother'd it within my panting bulk,

Which almost burst to belch it in the sea.

***BRAKENBURY***

*Awaked you not with this sore agony?*

**CLARENCE**

O, no, my dream was lengthen'd after life;  
O, then began the tempest to my soul,  
Who pass'd, methought, the melancholy flood,  
With that grim ferryman which poets write of,  
Unto the kingdom of perpetual night.  
The first that there did greet my stranger soul,  
Was my great father-in-law, renowned Warwick;  
Who cried aloud, 'What scourge for perjury  
Can this dark monarchy afford false Clarence?'  
And so he vanish'd: then came wandering by  
A shadow like an angel, with bright hair  
Dabbled in blood; and he squeak'd out aloud,  
'Clarence is come; false, fleeting, perjured Clarence,  
That stabb'd me in the field by Tewksbury;  
Seize on him, Furies, take him to your torments!'  
With that, methoughts, a legion of foul fiends  
Environ'd me about, and howled in mine ears  
Such hideous cries, that with the very noise  
I trembling waked, and for a season after  
Could not believe but that I was in hell,  
Such terrible impression made the dream.