

The Pretension of Richard IV
By Jared McDaris
SAMPLE

1.2

1 [Enter several Irish Pirates, among them Scabby Jane]

Jane

2 I will have pig pies, skooth, elsewise we'll shake this *Flemish* tavern down. Pixie
3 *Pella*; seven ales I say.

4 [A barmaid enters]

Barmaid

5 My lady we've no ale.

Jane

6 Scratch thy ladies, Pixie *Pella*, for I'm a scabby Irish wench and have no need of
7 dainties.

1st Pirate

8 Bring us canary, drench, or we'll make thee sing.

Jane

9 Pass back, bucko, or I'll eat your dainty digits. Nay *Pella* Pie, thou needs not fear my
10 crew. We are a peaceable, though thirsty lot (for we are *Corkish* you know), and
11 we'd be oiled well before we set our sails for home.

Barmaid

12 I'll to't at once, my lady.

Jane

13 This lady makes a lady of me, you hear she plays my sennets. Skooth, I've heard it
14 sung that ladies must be judged by'th' company they tender, and's sure you are a
15 proper lot of gentlemen.

All Pirates

16 Proper gentlemen!

Jane

17 Then I must be a proper *Jane*, a gentle *Jane*, a Lady *Jane*==

2nd Pirate

18 A scabby *Jane*.

Jane

19 Thou pissful patch; I am a *Lady* now, anointed by this varletessen, and thou'lt amend
 20 thy speecheries. Skooth I'll break thy littlest finger, *Fangerman*, if e'er thou't face me
 21 again.

2nd Pirate

22 Nay lady.

Jane

23 Nay Lady cries the scratchy cur. Yay Lady says I, and I will hear thee say't.

2nd Pirate

24 Yay Lady.

All Pirates

25 Yay Lady!

Jane

26 And skooth I'll have that pie, ye Pixie *Pella*, and any pigswill's good enough for those
 27 bareful lads, those pig pokers there.

Barmaid

28 Ay Lady.

Jane

29 There 'tis, now I'm a dainty one. Have off your drapes, you Sluggabed, and gift to me
 30 my proper finery. A scepter quick for this anointed grace. Now who'll not call me
 31 Lady?

All Pirates

32 Lady!

Jane

33 Skooth none walk in all of *Flanders* fancier than I.

34 [*Enter Richard*]

Richard

35 I bid you quit my bed, for I am come into mine home.

Jane

36 Zooks 'n' spools, what is that gilded truffle, that flashy manikin, that Vulcan dwarf;
 37 you see the treasures? Skooth it must be an elf to hold such wealth on such a stoop.

Richard

38 No greater than my birth,
 39 Though well above my worth.

40 I pray you friends, where is the tavern master?
 41 I've debts to settle in my wake tonight.

Jane

42 Zooks, wh't are ye, a Dragon slayer, to traipse
 43 And trollop in such dandifying gosimer?

Richard

44 You flatter me, good Lady, gads, for my
 45 Divinest cut, yeh finest button must
 46 Pay obsequies to this thy finery.

Jane

47 Then *Jane's* a proper Lady, as the King
 48 Ordain'st.

Richard

49 Who calls me king?

Jane

50 We've heard a talk,
 51 A kind a quibbly quabble round the post,
 52 That old King *Edward's* son was tromping about,
 53 Displaying 'mself as a tailor's doll to all
 54 The town. This skinty, squinny knave, this docksider,
 55 They said he was a common page, or else
 56 Some bussy boy who calls himself a Prince.
 57 This *Richard*, if it be his name, was seen
 58 In Em'rald *Ire* before he came to *France*,
 59 But skooth we did not see'm afore we left.

1st Pirate

60 If but we had, he might be lighter of his worth.

Jane

61 Nay skatpate, for *Jane* is jealous of her honor, and will not lower herself to harry
 62 those divinity hath chosen.

Richard

63 Thou'rt most religious to say't.

Jane

64 Ay Lady *Jane* is often on her knees.

2nd Pirate

65 Lip service only.

Jane

66 Cross thyself thou kerne, thou common foot. As *Chesu's* king on Heaven, *Richie's* king
67 on Earth it seems, and so I'm queen on th' waters, and so thou'lt harken me.

2nd Pirate

68 We are not on the water.

Jane

69 And never shalt again if thou'lt not cross thyself afore this King.

Richard

70 My Lady, rugged *Jane*, who ruleth Seas
71 'n' commands the myrmidons upon't, I have
72 Not sold myself a king of anything.

1st Pirate

73 Then where such finery?

2nd Pirate

74 And how such poet-speaking bursts?

Jane

75 Come, thou art the White Rose; tell us true. Skooth, if thou art Yorkist in thy favors,
76 be't rose or horse or peregrine, we'll kneel to thee. These scabby rogues would make
77 obeisance to a pig, so long as it be white.

Richard

78 Is *Lancaster* so despised?

Jane

79 In *Ireland* he be, in *Scotland*, here in *Flanders*, all of *Europe* I foresee. For I have
80 witchery in my blood, you know. A salthag was my mother, and I can spy the future
81 in the rains.

Richard

82 What payment would you have for this?

Jane

83 Why none; I need the rain.

Richard

84 Alack, I cannot summon up the storms,
85 Nor make the Heavens precede nor follow me.
86 Many a Monarch spoke these boasts, and set
87 Their majesty upon such slipp'ry pillars,

88 And knocked themselves into a pillory
89 To their own disillusionous surprise.

Jane

90 Aye. Marry.

1st Pirate

91 If he cannot bring the rain, he is no King.

Jane

92 Nay I will summon up the rains from him,
93 But crook thy littlest finger, Lord, and squeeze,
94 And golden mercy raineth down on Earth.

Richard

95 Hah; mirth o'er-topples mercy. I must prevail,
96 For thou who ruleth the waves and conjures rain
97 From out the dignity of Kings, who stands
98 Like th' Fairy Queen before the humble *Arthur*.
99 My worth is greater than I dare exclaim,
100 But I am forged from adversity,
101 Like oster Swords that cannot trust until
102 They've tasted blood and there digest their aim.
103 And so this dandied, bandied peregrine
104 Must sue to you, pray knight this lily Rose
105 And grant his spurs upon'm. I need the fame
106 Of a Knight to crown myself, and only you
107 Can grant that sanguiny that legend craves.

108 [*Enter Don Pedro*]

Jane

109 'tis a full day. You see here, lads, that I submit on greatest pains. Then I here knight
110 thee Sir Rose, or Sir Pig as thou prefer, and taste my charity. Ay, there's a kingly
111 appetite. All hail King *Richard*.

All Pirates

112 All hail King *Richard*!

Don Pedro

113 Peace. Thou rebarbant drainage. Iwis am I compelled by simplitude to fish thee out
114 of o'th' sewers.

Jane

115 I do not like this man.

Don Pedro

116 The nobles, *Richard*, summon thee. They mean
 117 To prod and feel upon thy greatness, t' draw
 118 The truth from thee.

Richard

119 Who wishes truth from me?
 120 Would you, my first and faithfulest subjects wish
 121 To hear the tragic tale of my deliverance?

1st Pirate

122 Aye.

2nd Pirate

123 Nay.

Jane

124 Queen *Jane* says aye. Present your heraldry, Sir Rose, lest we should dub and drub
 125 you Pig.

Don Pedro

126 Thine Aunt, the Lady *Margaret* is waiting.

Richard

127 You kind and welcoming friends, who've held me as
 128 A babe unto your bosom, I would not
 129 Abuse our newborn friendship with such gross
 130 Dissimulation, to exaggerate
 131 Or render mythical the sorrow'd fortunes
 132 O' my perverse and well recounted history.

1st Pirate

133 The Tower. Tell us the Tower.

Richard

134 In brief: mine uncle, that renowned *Richard*,
 135 Who so maligned by our usurperous *Henry*
 136 As crook-backed fiend or a blaspheming villain,
 137 Did safeguard me and my lamented brother
 138 I'th' Tower of *London*, thinking us but bastard
 139 Begotten get of our fair Father's blood
 140 And fearing the ambitious *Woodvilles* might
 141 Make puppets of us, to supplant the Throne.
 142 Thinking us useless now to his designs,
 143 The treach'rous *Buckingham*, who straddled th' fence
 144 Of loyalty as a green equestrian

145 His overchosen mount,

2nd Pirate

146 O vicious *Buckingham*.

Richard

147 He there elected

148 To have my princely brother and I slain.

Jane

149 This moves my weighty heart. My pig pie, lass.

Richard

150 He sent into our humble chambers some
151 Decadent lord, the lowborn *Tyrel*, hungry
152 As a bone-picked dog for princely favors. Thinking
153 The traitor did speak for th' King, he crept into
154 Our beds and boldly spoke his ill intent.
155 My brother, *Edward*, a worthy prince who bore
156 Our Father's worthiest name, there flung himself
157 Before my wavering breast and cried *Preserve*
158 *My little Brother Sir, for I am next*
159 *In line. Slay me and let my blood protect him.*

Jane

160 O mercy, I swoon.

Don Pedro

161 Odds zounds.

Richard

162 That bloody *Tyrel*, hunching o'er our starry
163 And liquidous eyes, obliged my brother his
164 Bequest, and butchered him before my face.

1st Pirate

165 Death! Death!

2nd Pirate

166 Kill the traitor!

Richard

167 Would I might.
168 But I was but a tender child of eight,
169 There dewed with *Edward's* blood alike the poppy
170 With morning glow. There *Tyrel* stood, painted

171 As I with innocent life that seemed to bake
 172 And steam away from off his sinful skin,
 173 His dagger dipping toward my quaking chest.

Jane

174 Say on, say on. What next?

Don Pedro

175 He lived.

Jane

176 You spoil the tale.

Don Pedro

177 He tells the tale; you see he lives, ye hag.

Jane

178 Oh hag me not, thou heartless haggard, I
 179 Am queen o'th' Seas. Say on, my Prince, say on.

Richard

180 As *Tyrel's* dagger dove into my breast,
 181 The fingers of the morning Sun erupted
 182 Into our chambers, 'n' dazzled as it shone
 183 Across the gilded blood of *Edward*, king
 184 That should have been. The crimson halo glowed
 185 In *Tyrel's* eyes, and scoured out the greed
 186 And bloody-lust that 'til then had animated
 187 His life. Upon the instant, he flung himself
 188 Onto his knees and prayed forgiveness, took
 189 Me in his arms and spirited me away
 190 To great Sir *Robert Chamberlain*, who died
 191 For me. He set me on a ship to *Portugal*,
 192 And ever since have I been as a ball
 193 In Fortune's matches, who volleys me about
 194 To fit her instant pleasures. I've worked the docks
 195 And served as page to th' great Sir *Pedro* here,
 196 And seen the beauteous verdant of *Ireland*,
 197 The high resplendent *France*, and even far
 198 Into the *Africk* jungles, there in search
 199 Of Prester *John* his mythic Treasures. But
 200 Such majesty as th' world supplies cannot
 201 Compare to *England*, mine inherited
 202 And rightful seat, so brutally usurped
 203 From poor, maligned *Richard*, my namesake.
 204 And that I mean to render *York's* again.

205 I tell you I am *Richard*, King of *England*.

Jane

206 My King, you do command the Rains, they blunder out mine eyes. We'll stand and
207 strike and fight and feast for *York* until the day we die. All hail King *Richard*.

All Pirates

208 All hail King *Richard*!

Don Pedro

209 My king, the Duchess waits.

Richard

210 Farewell my friends,
211 Remember me when you do pray, and pray
212 For me, for I'll remember you. Adieu.

213 [*Exit Richard*]

All Pirates

214 All hail King *Richard*!

Don Pedro

215 You lackwit gulls, go blast your brains.

Jane

216 And what art thou, thou *Pedro*, who beards our King so saucily?

Don Pedro

217 Will you all kneel like savages to damask or silk and shining rocks? Would you set a
218 laurel on a pig and call it King?

Jane

219 Will the pig speak for *York*? If so I'll ponder't.

Don Pedro

220 You kernes, mean you to war with *Henry* for a manikin?

1st Pirate

221 What of the pig?

Jane

222 Ay, so. I mean to place a lily Pig upon the Throne.

Don Pedro

223 You'll fight for *Richard*?

Jane

224 Nay Lady *Margaret* has her parakeeto.
 225 Then I'll display a standard of mine own.
 226 Inskooth the white and green upon a sheet
 227 May best the Crimson Dragon all alone
 228 If loyal fast retainers know their worth.
 229 What say ye rudely born, you band of brocks
 230 Who lately wagged against my newly birth?
 231 Will you crow out and prove the morning cocks
 232 Who welcome th'blank-eyed Sun to chase away
 233 The vicious, bloody Night? Will not you fight
 234 For Scabby *Jane*? Or Lady, maid, or dray?
 235 Or piss away your shot in diurnal plight?
 236 If you'll not sell your life for meager gain,
 237 Then pledge your life and love to Lady *Jane*!

All Pirates

238 All hail Scabby *Jane*!

Jane

239 All hail Lady *Jane*!

All Pirates

240 All hail Scabby *Jane*!

Jane

241 Your wits and words are impotent, but I
 242 Shall shake your hearts i'th' temper as their offered.
 243 Come brothers, set a Pig upon the throne.

244 [*Exit Jane and the Pirates*]

Don Pedro

245 If *Burgundy* demands I fight for *York*,
 246 Then I'll a private enterprise endure
 247 On his behalf. The Golden Calf hath always
 248 Been holy pledge to me. Then I will with
 249 Those seahag brigands, 'nd plunder what I can.
 250 I'll die for *York* however should I dare,
 251 Then I'll live as a sea King while I may.

252 [*Exit Don Pedro*]

For more information, please contact jared@wethreeplays.com