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Richard III

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Richard III

Mary Dengler

Climbing three steep flights
Of stairs that July night
To watch King Richard III
Did not prepare me for the evil
Man himself. The stars receded
As the moon rose slowly through the silent trees
In Cedar City Utah's Adams' Theater
Just as both have shined above
The stage whenever Richard III has walked
Outrageously toward Lady Anne
To start his shameless wooing, so
Compelling I could see. This actor
With his massive frame and long
Black curly locks did not
Comport with grad school
Notes of hunched-back spider Richard III.
This King was winsomely compelling—
Maybe Shakespeare had it wrong—
So much so, my partner Helen
Leaned too far and almost fell with Lady Anne,
Widow to the murdered king.
“I love that man,” she said.
“King Richard or the actor
In that black attire?” I asked.
To her, they were the same.
The power of evil to compel us,
Though we're staring at the face of death,
Is old—and new. We fell,
Unlike wise Margaret of Anjou,
Who cursed him to his face.
The rhetoric we long to hear
Makes “easy entrance” to our willing hearts.
When Richard lost his kingdom for a horse,
The spell, like summer's glorious sun, was gone,
But so was Lady Anne.