



King Richard the Second

William Shakespeare

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

KING RICHARD THE SECOND

JOHN OF GAUNT, Duke of Lancaster - uncle to the King

EDMUND LANGLEY, Duke of York - uncle to the King

HENRY, surnamed BOLINGBROKE, Duke of Hereford, son of
John of Gaunt, afterwards King Henry IV

DUKE OF AUMERLE, son of the Duke of York

THOMAS MOWBRAY, Duke of Norfolk

DUKE OF SURREY

EARL OF SALISBURY

LORD BERKELEY

BUSHY - Servant to King Richard

BAGOT - Servant to King Richard

GREEN - Servant to King Richard

EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND

HENRY PERCY, surnamed Hotspur, his son

LORD ROSS

LORD WILLOUGHBY

LORD FITZWATER

BISHOP OF CARLISLE

ABBOT OF WESTMINSTER

LORD MARSHAL

SIR PIERCE OF EXTON

SIR STEPHEN SCROOP

Captain of a band of Welshmen

QUEEN TO KING RICHARD

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER

DUCHESS OF YORK

Lady attending on the Queen

Lords, Heralds, Officers, Soldiers, Gardeners, Keeper, Messenger, Groom,
and other Attendants

SCENE: Dispersedly in England and Wales.

ACT 1

SCENE 1

London. KING RICHARD II's palace.

Enter KING RICHARD II, JOHN OF GAUNT, with other Nobles and Attendants

KING RICHARD II

Old John of Gaunt, time-honour'd Lancaster,
Hast thou, according to thy oath and band, Brought hither Henry
Hereford thy bold son, Here to make good the boisterous late
appeal, Which then our leisure would not let us hear, Against the Duke of
Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

JOHN OF GAUNT

I have, my liege.

KING RICHARD II

Tell me, moreover, hast thou sounded him,
If he appeal the duke on ancient malice; Or worthily, as a good subject
should, On some known ground of treachery in him?

JOHN OF GAUNT

As near as I could sift him on that argument,
On some apparent danger seen in him Aim'd at your highness, no
inveterate malice.

KING RICHARD II

Then call them to our presence; face to face,
And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hear The accuser and the
accused freely speak: High-stomach'd are they both, and full of ire, In
rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.

Enter HENRY BOLINGBROKE and THOMAS MOWBRAY

HENRY BOLINGBROKE

Many years of happy days befall
My gracious sovereign, my most loving liege!

THOMAS MOWBRAY

Each day still better other's happiness;
Until the heavens, envying earth's good hap, Add an immortal title to
your crown!

KING RICHARD II

We thank you both: yet one but flatters us,
As well appeareth by the cause you come; Namely to appeal each other of
high treason. Cousin of Hereford, what dost thou object Against the Duke
of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?

HENRY BOLINGBROKE

First, heaven be the record to my speech!
In the devotion of a subject's love, Tendering the precious safety of my
prince, And free from other misbegotten hate, Come I appellant to this
princely presence. Now, Thomas Mowbray, do I turn to thee, And mark
my greeting well; for what I speak My body shall make good upon this
earth, Or my divine soul answer it in heaven. Thou art a traitor and a
miscreant, Too good to be so and too bad to live, Since the more fair and
crystal is the sky, The uglier seem the clouds that in it fly. Once more, the
more to aggravate the note, With a foul traitor's name stuff I thy
throat; And wish, so please my sovereign, ere I move, What my tongue
speaks my right drawn sword may prove.

THOMAS MOWBRAY

Let not my cold words here accuse my zeal:
'Tis not the trial of a woman's war, The bitter clamour of two eager
tongues, Can arbitrate this cause betwixt us twain; The blood is hot that
must be cool'd for this: Yet can I not of such tame patience boast As to be
hush'd and nought at all to say: First, the fair reverence of your highness
curbs me From giving reins and spurs to my free speech; Which else
would post until it had return'd These terms of treason doubled down his
throat. Setting aside his high blood's royalty, And let him be no kinsman
to my liege, I do defy him, and I spit at him; Call him a slanderous coward
and a villain: Which to maintain I would allow him odds, And meet him,
were I tied to run afoot Even to the frozen ridges of the Alps, Or any other
ground inhabitable, Where ever Englishman durst set his foot. Mean time
let this defend my loyalty, By all my hopes, most falsely doth he lie.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE

Pale trembling coward, there I throw my gage,
Disclaiming here the kindred of the king, And lay aside my high blood's
royalty, Which fear, not reverence, makes thee to except. If guilty dread
have left thee so much strength As to take up mine honour's pawn, then
stoop: By that and all the rites of knighthood else, Will I make good
against thee, arm to arm, What I have spoke, or thou canst worse devise.

THOMAS MOWBRAY

I take it up; and by that sword I swear
Which gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder, I'll answer thee in any
fair degree, Or chivalrous design of knightly trial: And when I mount,
alive may I not light, If I be traitor or unjustly fight!

KING RICHARD II

What doth our cousin lay to Mowbray's charge?
It must be great that can inherit us So much as of a thought of ill in him.

HENRY BOLINGBROKE

Look, what I speak, my life shall prove it true;
That Mowbray hath received eight thousand nobles In name of lendings
for your highness' soldiers, The which he hath detain'd for lewd
employments, Like a false traitor and injurious villain. Besides I say and
will in battle prove, Or here or elsewhere to the furthest verge That ever
was survey'd by English eye, That all the treasons for these eighteen
years Complotted and contrived in this land Fetch from false Mowbray
their first head and spring. Further I say and further will maintain Upon
his bad life to make all this good, That he did plot the Duke of
Gloucester's death, Suggest his soon-believing adversaries, And
consequently, like a traitor coward, Sluiced out his innocent soul
through streams of blood: Which blood, like sacrificing Abel's, cries, Even
from the tongueless caverns of the earth, To me for justice and rough
chastisement; And, by the glorious worth of my descent, This arm shall
do it, or this life be spent.

KING RICHARD II

How high a pitch his resolution soars!
Thomas of Norfolk, what say'st thou to this?

THOMAS MOWBRAY

O, let my sovereign turn away his face
And bid his ears a little while be deaf, Till I have told this slander of his
blood, How God and good men hate so foul a liar.

KING RICHARD II

Mowbray, impartial are our eyes and ears:
Were he my brother, nay, my kingdom's heir, As he is but my father's
brother's son, Now, by my sceptre's awe, I make a vow, Such neighbour
nearness to our sacred blood Should nothing privilege him, nor
partialize The unstooping firmness of my upright soul: He is our subject,
Mowbray; so art thou: Free speech and fearless I to thee allow.

THOMAS MOWBRAY

Then, Bolingbroke, as low as to thy heart,
Through the false passage of thy throat, thou liest. Three parts of that
receipt I had for Calais Disbursed I duly to his highness' soldiers; The
other part reserved I by consent, For that my sovereign liege was in my
debt Upon remainder of a dear account, Since last I went to France to
fetch his queen: Now swallow down that lie. For Gloucester's death, I slew
him not; but to my own disgrace Neglected my sworn duty in that
case. For you, my noble Lord of Lancaster, The honourable father to my
foe Once did I lay an ambush for your life, A trespass that doth vex my
grieved soul But ere I last received the sacrament I did confess it, and
exactly begg'd Your grace's pardon, and I hope I had it. This is my fault:
as for the rest appeall'd, It issues from the rancour of a villain, A recreant
and most degenerate traitor Which in myself I boldly will defend; And
interchangeably hurl down my gage Upon this overweening traitor's
foot, To prove myself a loyal gentleman Even in the best blood chamber'd
in his bosom. In haste whereof, most heartily I pray Your highness to
assign our trial day.

KING RICHARD II

Wrath-kindled gentlemen, be ruled by me;
Let's purge this choler without letting blood: This we prescribe, though
no physician; Deep malice makes too deep incision; Forget, forgive;
conclude and be agreed; Our doctors say this is no month to bleed. Good
uncle, let this end where it begun; We'll calm the Duke of Norfolk, you
your son.

JOHN OF GAUNT

To be a make-peace shall become my age:
Throw down, my son, the Duke of Norfolk's gage.

KING RICHARD II

And, Norfolk, throw down his.

JOHN OF GAUNT

When, Harry, when?
Obedience bids I should not bid again.

KING RICHARD II

Norfolk, throw down, we bid; there is no boot.

THOMAS MOWBRAY

Myself I throw, dread sovereign, at thy foot.
My life thou shalt command, but not my shame: The one my duty owes;
but my fair name, Despite of death that lives upon my grave, To dark
dishonour's use thou shalt not have. I am disgraced, impeach'd and
baffled here, Pierced to the soul with slander's venom'd spear, The which
no balm can cure but his heart-blood Which breathed this poison.

KING RICHARD II

Rage must be withstood:
Give me his gage: lions make leopards tame.

THOMAS MOWBRAY

Yea, but not change his spots: take but my shame.
And I resign my gage. My dear dear lord, The purest treasure mortal
times afford Is spotless reputation: that away, Men are but gilded loam or
painted clay. A jewel in a ten-times-barr'd-up chest Is a bold spirit in a
loyal breast. Mine honour is my life; both grow in one: Take honour from