

# Richard II

## 3.3

*Enter Bolingbroke Duke of Lancaster and Hereford,  
the Duke of York, the Earl of Northumberland,  
[and soldiers, with drum and colours]*

**BOLINGBROKE**

So that by this intelligence we learn  
The Welshmen are dispersed, and Salisbury  
Is gone to meet the King, who lately landed  
With some few private friends upon this coast.

**NORTHUMBERLAND**

The news is very fair and good, my lord. 5  
Richard not far from hence hath hid his head.

**YORK**

It would beseem the Lord Northumberland  
To say 'King Richard'. Alack the heavy day  
When such a sacred king should hide his head!

**NORTHUMBERLAND**

Your grace mistakes. Only to be brief 10  
Left I his title out.

**YORK**

The time hath been,  
Would you have been so brief with him, he would  
Have been so brief with you to shorten you,  
For taking so the head, your whole head's length.

**BOLINGBROKE**

Mistake not, uncle, further than you should. 15

**YORK**

Take not, good cousin, further than you should,  
Lest you mistake the heavens are over our heads.

**BOLINGBROKE**

I know it, uncle, and oppose not myself  
Against their will.

*Enter Harry Percy [and a trumpeter]*

But who comes here?

Welcome, Harry. What, will not this castle yield? 20

**HARRY PERCY**

The castle royally is manned, my lord,  
Against thy entrance.

**BOLINGBROKE**

Royally?

Why, it contains no king.

**HARRY PERCY** Yes, my good lord,  
It doth contain a king. King Richard lies  
Within the limits of yon lime and stone, 25  
And with him are the Lord Aumerle, Lord Salisbury,  
Sir Stephen Scrope, besides a clergyman  
Of holy reverence; who, I cannot learn.

**NORTHUMBERLAND**

O, belike it is the Bishop of Carlisle.

**BOLINGBROKE** (*to Northumberland*) Noble lord, 30  
Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle;  
Through brazen trumpet send the breath of parley  
Into his ruined ears, and thus deliver.  
Henry Bolingbroke  
Upon his knees doth kiss King Richard's hand, 35  
And sends allegiance and true faith of heart  
To his most royal person, hither come  
Even at his feet to lay my arms and power,  
Provided that my banishment repealed  
And lands restored again be freely granted. 40  
If not, I'll use the advantage of my power,  
And lay the summer's dust with showers of blood  
Rained from the wounds of slaughtered Englishmen;  
The which how far off from the mind of Bolingbroke  
It is such crimson tempest should bedrench 45  
The fresh green lap of fair King Richard's land,  
My stooping duty tenderly shall show.  
Go, signify as much, while here we march  
Upon the grassy carpet of this plain.  
Let's march without the noise of threat'ning drum, 50  
That from this castle's tottered battlements  
Our fair appointments may be well perused.  
Methinks King Richard and myself should meet  
With no less terror than the elements  
Of fire and water when their thund'ring shock 55  
At meeting tears the cloudy cheeks of heaven.  
Be he the fire, I'll be the yielding water.  
The rage be his, whilst on the earth I rain  
My waters: on the earth, and not on him.±±  
March on, and mark King Richard, how he looks. 60

*[They march about the stage; then Bolingbroke, York, Percy, and soldiers stand at a distance from the walls; Northumberland and trumpeter advance to the walls.] The trumpets sound [a parley without, and an answer within; then a flourish within]. King Richard appeareth on the walls, with the Bishop of Carlisle, the Duke of Aumerle, [Scrope, and the Earl of Salisbury]*

See, see, King Richard doth himself appear,  
As doth the blushing discontented sun  
From out the fiery portal of the east  
When he perceives the envious clouds are bent  
To dim his glory and to stain the track  
Of his bright passage to the occident. 65

**YORK**

Yet looks he like a king. Behold, his eye,  
As bright as is the eagle's, lightens forth  
Controlling majesty. Alack, alack for woe  
That any harm should stain so fair a show! 70

**KING RICHARD** *(to Northumberland)*

We are amazed; and thus long have we stood  
To watch the fearful bending of thy knee,  
Because we thought ourself thy lawful king.  
An if we be, how dare thy joints forget  
To pay their awful duty to our presence? 75  
If we be not, show us the hand of God  
That hath dismissed us from our stewardship.  
For well we know no hand of blood and bone  
Can grip the sacred handle of our sceptre,  
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp. 80

And though you think that all $\pm\pm$ as you have done $\pm\pm$   
Have torn their souls by turning them from us,  
And we are barren and bereft of friends,  
Yet know my master, God omnipotent,  
Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf 85  
Armies of pestilence; and they shall strike  
Your children yet unborn and unbegot,  
That lift your vassal hands against my head  
And threat the glory of my precious crown.  
Tell Bolingbroke, for yon methinks he is, 90

That every stride he makes upon my land  
Is dangerous treason. He is come to open  
The purple testament of bleeding war;  
But ere the crown he looks for live in peace  
Ten thousand bloody crowns of mothers' sons 95  
Shall ill become the flower of England's face,  
Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace  
To scarlet indignation, and bedew  
Her pastures' grass with faithful English blood.

**NORTHUMBERLAND** *[kneeling]*

The King of heaven forbid our lord the King 100  
Should so with civil and uncivil arms  
Be rushed upon. Thy thrice-noble cousin  
Harry Bolingbroke doth humbly kiss thy hand,  
And by the honourable tomb he swears,  
That stands upon your royal grandsire's bones, 105  
And by the royalties of both your bloods,  
Currents that spring from one most gracious head,  
And by the buried hand of warlike Gaunt,  
And by the worth and honour of himself,  
Comprising all that may be sworn or said, 110  
His coming hither hath no further scope  
Than for his lineal royalties, and to beg  
Enfranchisement immediate on his knees;  
Which on thy royal party granted once,  
His glittering arms he will commend to rust, 115  
His barbeAd steeds to stables, and his heart  
To faithful service of your majesty.  
This swears he as he is a prince and just,  
And as I am a gentleman I credit him.

**KING RICHARD**

Northumberland, say thus the King returns: 120  
His noble cousin is right welcome hither,  
And all the number of his fair demands  
Shall be accomplished without contradiction.  
With all the gracious utterance thou hast,  
Speak to his gentle hearing kind commends. 125

*Northumberland and the trumpeter return to  
Bolingbroke*

*(To Aumerle)* We do debase ourself, cousin, do we not,

To look so poorly and to speak so fair?  
Shall we call back Northumberland, and send  
Defiance to the traitor, and so die?

**AUMERLE**

No, good my lord, let's fight with gentle words 130  
Till time lend friends, and friends their helpful swords.

**KING RICHARD**

O God, O God, that e'er this tongue of mine,  
That laid the sentence of dread banishment  
On yon proud man, should take it off again  
With words of sooth! O, that I were as great 135  
As is my grief, or lesser than my name,  
Or that I could forget what I have been,  
Or not remember what I must be now!  
Swell'st thou, proud heart? I'll give thee scope to  
beat,

Since foes have scope to beat both thee and me. 140  
*Northumberland advances to the walls*

**AUMERLE**

Northumberland comes back from Bolingbroke.

**KING RICHARD**

What must the King do now? Must he submit?  
The King shall do it. Must he be deposed?  
The King shall be contented. Must he lose  
The name of King? A God's name, let it go. 145

I'll give my jewels for a set of beads,  
My gorgeous palace for a hermitage,  
My gay apparel for an almsman's gown,  
My figured goblets for a dish of wood,  
My sceptre for a palmer's walking staff, 150

My subjects for a pair of carveÁd saints,  
And my large kingdom for a little grave,  
A little, little grave, an obscure grave;  
Or I'll be buried in the King's highway,  
Some way of common trade where subjects' feet 155  
May hourly trample on their sovereign's head,  
For on my heart they tread now, whilst I live,  
And buried once, why not upon my head?

Aumerle, thou weep'st, my tender-hearted cousin.  
We'll make foul weather with despiseÁd tears. 160

Our sighs and they shall lodge the summer corn,  
And make a dearth in this revolting land.  
Or shall we play the wantons with our woes,  
And make some pretty match with shedding tears;  
As thus to drop them still upon one place 165  
Till they have fretted us a pair of graves  
Within the earth, and therein laid? 'There lies  
Two kinsmen digged their graves with weeping eyes.'  
Would not this ill do well? Well, well, I see  
I talk but idly and you mock at me. 170  
Most mighty prince, my lord Northumberland,  
What says King Bolingbroke? Will his majesty  
Give Richard leave to live till Richard die?  
You make a leg, and Bolingbroke says 'Ay'.

**NORTHUMBERLAND**

My lord, in the base court he doth attend 175  
To speak with you. May it please you to come down?

**KING RICHARD**

Down, down I come like glist'ring Phaethon,  
Wanting the manage of unruly jades.  
In the base court: base court where kings grow base  
To come at traitors' calls, and do them grace. 180  
In the base court, come down: down court, down  
King,  
For night-owls shriek where mounting larks should  
sing.

*Exeunt King Richard and his party  
Northumberland returns to Bolingbroke*

**BOLINGBROKE**

What says his majesty?

**NORTHUMBERLAND** Sorrow and grief of heart  
Makes him speak fondly, like a frantic man.

*Enter King Richard [and his party] below*

Yet he is come.

**BOLINGBROKE** Stand all apart, 185  
And show fair duty to his majesty.

*He kneels down*

My gracious lord.

**KING RICHARD**

Fair cousin, you debase your princely knee

To make the base earth proud with kissing it.  
Me rather had my heart might feel your love 190  
Than my unpleased eye see your courtesy.  
Up, cousin, up. Your heart is up, I know,  
Thus high at least, although your knee be low.

**BOLINGBROKE**

My gracious lord, I come but for mine own.

**KING RICHARD**

Your own is yours, and I am yours, and all. 195

**BOLINGBROKE**

So far be mine, my most redoubted lord,  
As my true service shall deserve your love.

**KING RICHARD**

Well you deserve. They well deserve to have  
That know the strong'st and surest way to get.

*[Bolingbroke rises]*

(To York) Uncle, give me your hands. Nay, dry your  
eyes. 200

Tears show their love, but want their remedies.

(To Bolingbroke) Cousin, I am too young to be your  
father,

Though you are old enough to be my heir.  
What you will have I'll give, and willing too;  
For do we must what force will have us do. 205  
Set on towards London, cousin: is it so?

**BOLINGBROKE**

Yea, my good lord.

**KING RICHARD** Then I must not say no.

*Flourish. Exeunt*