

Richard II

2.3

*Enter Bolingbroke Duke of Lancaster and Hereford,
and the Earl of Northumberland*

BOLINGBROKE

How far is it, my lord, to Berkeley now?

NORTHUMBERLAND Believe me, noble lord,

I am a stranger here in Gloucestershire.

These high wild hills and rough uneven ways

Draws out our miles and makes them wearisome; 5

And yet your fair discourse hath been as sugar,

Making the hard way sweet and delectable.

But I bethink me what a weary way

From Ravenspurgh to Cotswold will be found

In Ross and Willoughby, wanting your company, 10

Which I protest hath very much beguiled

The tediousness and process of my travel.

But theirs is sweetened with the hope to have

The present benefit which I possess;

And hope to joy is little less in joy 15

Than hope enjoyed. By this the weary lords

Shall make their way seem short as mine hath done

By sight of what I have: your noble company.

BOLINGBROKE

Of much less value is my company

Than your good words.

Enter Harry Percy

But who comes here?

20

NORTHUMBERLAND

It is my son, young Harry Percy,

Sent from my brother Worcester, whencesoever.

Harry, how fares your uncle?

HARRY PERCY

I had thought, my lord, to have learned his health of
you.

NORTHUMBERLAND Why, is he not with the Queen? 25

HARRY PERCY

No, my good lord; he hath forsook the court,
Broken his staff of office, and dispersed
The household of the King.

NORTHUMBERLAND What was his reason?
He was not so resolved when last we spake together.

HARRY PERCY
Because your lordship was proclaimeÁd traitor. 30
But he, my lord, is gone to Ravenspurgh
To offer service to the Duke of Hereford,
And sent me over by Berkeley to discover
What power the Duke of York had levied there,
Then with directions to repair to Ravenspurgh. 35

NORTHUMBERLAND
Have you forgot the Duke of Hereford, boy?

HARRY PERCY
No, my good lord, for that is not forgot
Which ne'er I did remember. To my knowledge,
I never in my life did look on him.

NORTHUMBERLAND
Then learn to know him now. This is the Duke. 40

HARRY PERCY
My gracious lord, I tender you my service,
Such as it is, being tender, raw, and young,
Which elder days shall ripen and confirm
To more approveÁd service and desert.

BOLINGBROKE
I thank thee, gentle Percy, and be sure 45
I count myself in nothing else so happy
As in a soul rememb'ring my good friends;
And as my fortune ripens with thy love,
It shall be still thy true love's recompense.
My heart this covenant makes; my hand thus seals it. 50
He gives Percy his hand

NORTHUMBERLAND
How far is it to Berkeley, and what stir
Keeps good old York there with his men of war?

HARRY PERCY
There stands the castle, by yon tuft of trees,
Manned with three hundred men, as I have heard,
And in it are the Lords of York, Berkeley, and
Seymour, 55

None else of name and noble estimate.

Enter Lord Ross and Lord Willoughby

NORTHUMBERLAND

Here come the Lords of Ross and Willoughby,
Bloody with spurring, fiery red with haste.

BOLINGBROKE

Welcome, my lords. I wot your love pursues
A banished traitor. All my treasury 60
Is yet but unfelt thanks, which, more enriched,
Shall be your love and labour's recompense.

ROSS

Your presence makes us rich, most noble lord.

WILLOUGHBY

And far surmounts our labour to attain it.

BOLINGBROKE

Evermore thank's the exchequer of the poor, 65
Which till my infant fortune comes to years
Stands for my bounty.

Enter Berkeley

But who comes here?

NORTHUMBERLAND

It is my lord of Berkeley, as I guess.

BERKELEY

My lord of Hereford, my message is to you.

BOLINGBROKE

My lord, my answer is to 'Lancaster', 70
And I am come to seek that name in England,
And I must find that title in your tongue
Before I make reply to aught you say.

BERKELEY

Mistake me not, my lord, 'tis not my meaning
To raze one title of your honour out. 75
To you, my lord, I come±±what lord you will±±
From the most gracious regent of this land,
The Duke of York, to know what pricks you on
To take advantage of the absent time
And fright our native peace with self-borne arms. 80

Enter the Duke of York

BOLINGBROKE

I shall not need transport my words by you.
Here comes his grace in person.±±My noble uncle!

He kneels

YORK

Show me thy humble heart, and not thy knee,
Whose duty is deceivable and false.

BOLINGBROKE My gracious uncle±± 85

YORK

Tut, tut, grace me no grace, nor uncle me no uncle.
I am no traitor's uncle, and that word `grace'
In an ungracious mouth is but profane.
Why have those banished and forbidden legs
Dared once to touch a dust of England's ground? 90
But then more `why': why have they dared to march
So many miles upon her peaceful bosom,
Frighting her pale-faced villages with war
And ostentation of despiseÁd arms?
Com'st thou because the anointed King is hence? 95
Why, foolish boy, the King is left behind,
And in my loyal bosom lies his power.
Were I but now the lord of such hot youth
As when brave Gaunt, thy father, and myself
Rescued the Black Prince, that young Mars of men, 100
From forth the ranks of many thousand French,
O then how quickly should this arm of mine,
Now prisoner to the palsy, chastise thee
And minister correction to thy fault!

BOLINGBROKE

My gracious uncle, let me know my fault. 105
On what condition stands it and wherein?

YORK

Even in condition of the worst degree:
In gross rebellion and detested treason.
Thou art a banished man, and here art come
Before the expiration of thy time 110
In braving arms against thy sovereign.

BOLINGBROKE *[standing]*

As I was banished, I was banished Hereford;
But as I come, I come for Lancaster.
And, noble uncle, I beseech your grace,
Look on my wrongs with an indifferent eye. 115
You are my father, for methinks in you

I see old Gaunt alive. O then, my father,
 Will you permit that I shall stand condemned
 A wandering vagabond, my rights and royalties
 Plucked from my arms perforce and given away 120
 To upstart unthrifths? Wherefore was I born?
 If that my cousin King be King in England,
 It must be granted I am Duke of Lancaster.
 You have a son, Aumerle my noble kinsman.
 Had you first died and he been thus trod down, 125
 He should have found his uncle Gaunt a father
 To rouse his wrongs and chase them to the bay.
 I am denied to sue my livery here,
 And yet my letters patents give me leave.
 My father's goods are all distrained and sold, 130
 And these and all are all amiss employed.
 What would you have me do? I am a subject,
 And I challenge law; attorneys are denied me;
 And therefore personally I lay my claim
 To my inheritance of free descent. 135

NORTHUMBERLAND

The noble Duke hath been too much abused.

ROSS

It stands your grace upon to do him right.

WILLOUGHBY

Base men by his endowments are made great.

YORK

My lords of England, let me tell you this.
 I have had feeling of my cousin's wrongs, 140
 And laboured all I could to do him right.
 But in this kind to come, in braving arms,
 Be his own carver, and cut out his way
 To find out right with wrong±±it may not be.
 And you that do abet him in this kind 145
 Cherish rebellion, and are rebels all.

NORTHUMBERLAND

The noble Duke hath sworn his coming is
 But for his own, and for the right of that
 We all have strongly sworn to give him aid;
 And let him never see joy that breaks that oath. 150

YORK

Well, well, I see the issue of these arms.

I cannot mend it, I must needs confess,
Because my power is weak and all ill-left.
But if I could, by Him that gave me life,
I would attach you all, and make you stoop 155
Unto the sovereign mercy of the King.
But since I cannot, be it known to you
I do remain as neuter. So fare you well±±
Unless you please to enter in the castle
And there repose you for this night. 160

BOLINGBROKE

An offer, uncle, that we will accept.
But we must win your grace to go with us
To Bristol Castle, which they say is held
By Bushy, Bagot, and their complices,
The caterpillars of the commonwealth, 165
Which I have sworn to weed and pluck away.

YORK

It may be I will go with you±±but yet I'll pause,
For I am loath to break our country's laws.
Nor friends nor foes, to me welcome you are.
Things past redress are now with me past care. 170

Exeunt