

# Richard II

## *Cast*

*King Richard II..... Rupert Graves*  
*Henry Bolingbroke ..... Julian Glover*  
*John of Gaunt..... John Wood*  
*Duchess of Gloucester..... Isla Blair*  
*York..... John Nettleton*  
*Aumerle..... Rupert Penry-Jones*  
*Northumberland ..... Peter Jeffrey*  
*Carlisle ..... Edward De Souza*  
*Queen ..... Saira Todd*  
*Duchess of York..... Susan Brown*  
*Gardener ..... Geoffrey Bayldon*  
*Mowbray ..... Steve Hodson*  
*Welsh Captain..... Ian Hughes*  
*Green..... Robert Portal*  
*Abbot of Westminster ..... Anthony Jackson*  
*Ross ..... Jonathan Tafler*  
*Bagot..... Nicholas Murchie*  
*Exton..... Scott Cherry*  
*Other parts played by: Alan Cox, Theo Fraser Steele,*  
*Sidney Livingstone and Nicholas Lumley*

## *Play description*

### ACT I

Scene 1. At Windsor Castle, King Richard listens as his cousin Henry Bolingbroke accuses Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, of embezzling royal funds and of plotting the recent death of the Duke of Gloucester. Mowbray insists that he is innocent. The King commands them to make peace but they refuse to be reconciled and he orders a trial by combat.

Scene 2. The Duchess of Gloucester begs her brother-in-law, John of Gaunt, to revenge her husband's death. Gaunt says he cannot because Gloucester was killed on the King's orders.

Scene 3. At Coventry, Bolingbroke and Mowbray prepare to settle their dispute. Richard, however, stops the proceedings and banishes them both: Bolingbroke for six years and Mowbray for life. Gaunt bids his son a sad farewell.

Scene 4. Richard notes the people's affection for Bolingbroke. The King is planning to leave for Ireland to quash a rebellion, when he is called to the bedside of the dying John of Gaunt.

### ACT II

Scene 1. Gaunt warns Richard against flatterers and rebukes him for administering the royal revenue irresponsibly. When the old man dies, the King seizes his property, ignoring York who reminds him that Bolingbroke is his father's rightful heir. Henry Percy, Duke of Northumberland, Lord Ross, and Lord Willoughby speak angrily of Richard's high-handed behavior. Northumberland reveals that Bolingbroke has set sail for England with an army of three thousand.

Scene 2. Bushy tries to comfort the Queen who is saddened by Richard's departure for Ireland. Green announces that Bolingbroke has landed in England and that Northumberland and others have given him their allegiance. The Duke of York is divided between loyalty to Richard and to Bolingbroke, both of them his kinsmen. Bushy, Green, and Bagot comment on the King's unpopularity with the people.

Scene 3. In Gloucestershire, York reprimands Bolingbroke for his treachery. Bolingbroke defends himself, saying he comes only to claim his rightful inheritance. Sadly, York concedes that his nephew has a case but he condemns the warlike way in which Bolingbroke pursues it.

Scene 4. In Wales, a Welsh Captain tells the Earl of Salisbury that having received no news from the King for ten days, he must disperse his men.

### ACT III

Scene 1. Bolingbroke condemns Bushy and Green to death.

Scene 2. Arriving in Wales, Richard is overjoyed to be back in his kingdom. He is sure that Bolingbroke's rebellion cannot succeed, but his confidence wanes as he learns from Salisbury that the Welsh have defected to Bolingbroke's side. Sir Stephen Scroop comes with news of popular unrest, of the executions of Bushy, Green, and the Earl of Wiltshire and, finally and worst of all, he reveals that the Duke of York has joined forces with Bolingbroke. The King, grief-stricken and despairing, seeks refuge at Flint Castle.

Scene 3. Outside Flint Castle, Bolingbroke sends word to Richard that he will end all aggression if the King agrees to repeal his banishment and restore his lands. If refused, however, he will "lay the summer's dust with show'rs of blood." Sorrowfully, Richard agrees to the demands and is taken back to London by Bolingbroke.

Scene 4. The Queen walks sadly in her garden. Overhearing the conversation between a gardener and two serving men, she learns of her husband's misfortunes.

#### ACT IV

Scene 1. In Parliament, Bagot accuses Aumerle of complicity in Gloucester's death; he is supported by Fitzwater, who says that the banished Mowbray made the same charge. Bolingbroke says he intends to recall Mowbray and restore his lands, but the Bishop of Carlisle tells them that the Duke has died in exile. York enters announcing that Richard has adopted Bolingbroke as his heir, and is abdicating from the throne. Carlisle is horrified, predicting discord and violence should traitorous Bolingbroke become king. He is immediately arrested for treason. Richard is summoned to make a public surrender of his power. Though relinquishing his crown, he refuses to read a list of alleged crimes and calls for a mirror. After bitterly examining his face in the glass, he dashes it to the ground. He is then escorted to the Tower. Left alone with Carlisle and Aumerle, the Abbot of Westminster confides that he has a plan for overthrowing Bolingbroke.

#### ACT V

Scene 1. As Richard is led to prison, the Queen chides him for his passivity. Richard foresees the time when Northumberland and Bolingbroke will be in conflict. Richard and his Queen part in great sorrow: he is to be taken to Pomfret and she must leave for France.

Scene 2. When York discovers that Aumerle is part of the conspiracy to kill the King, he is determined to expose his son publicly. The Duchess of York entreats her son to race ahead of his father to the King and beg his pardon before he is accused.

Scene 3. The Duke and Duchess of York and Aumerle rush in upon King Henry. The father condemns his son, the mother defends him. Henry pardons Aumerle, but shows no mercy to the other conspirators.

Scene 4. Acting on a hint from Henry, Sir Pierce of Exton resolves to murder Richard.

Scene 5. In prison, Richard reflects upon his fallen condition. Exton enters and kills him.

Scene 6. Henry learns that the conspirators are all now either dead or taken. When Exton presents him with Richard's body, the King denies responsibility for the murder, saying that he had only wished him dead, not ordered his death. He will, he says, make a voyage to the Holy Land to expiate his sins.

## *Track list*

### Disc 1

Track 1	Act I	Scene i
Track 2	Act I	Scene ii
Track 3	Act I	Scene iii
Track 4	Act I	Scene iv
Track 5	Act II	Scene i

### Disk 2

Track 1	Act II	Scene ii
Track 2	Act II	Scene iii
Track 3	Act II	Scene iv
Track 4	Act III	Scene i
Track 5	Act III	Scene ii
Track 6	Act III	Scene iii
Track 7	Act III	Scene iv
Track 8	Act IV	Scene i (up to line 161)

### Disk 3

Track 1	Act IV	Scene i (from line 162)
Track 2	Act V	Scene i
Track 3	Act V	Scene ii
Track 4	Act V	Scene iii
Track 5	Act V	Scene iv
Track 6	Act V	Scene v
Track 7	Act V	Scene vi