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

| Disk 1 | Track 1 | Act I | Scene i |
| Disk 2 | Track 2 | Act I | Scene ii |
| Disk 2 | Track 3 | Act I | Scene iii |
| Disk 2 | Track 4 | Act I | Scene iv |
| Disk 3 | Track 1 | Act II | Scene i |
| Disk 3 | Track 2 | Act II | Scene ii |
| Disk 3 | Track 3 | Act II | Scene iii |
| Disk 3 | Track 4 | Act II | Scene iv |
| Disk 3 | Track 5 | Act III | Scene i |
| Disk 3 | Track 6 | Act III | Scene ii |
| Disk 3 | Track 7 | Act III | Scene iii |
| Disk 3 | Track 8 | Act IV | Scene i |
| Disk 3 | Track 9 | Act V | Scene ii |
| Disk 3 | Track 10 | Act V | Scene iii |
| Disk 3 | Track 11 | Act V | Scene iv |
| Disk 3 | Track 12 | Act V | Scene v |
| Disk 3 | Track 13 | Act V | Scene vi |

Track list (up to line 161)