

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

1. KING RICHARD the Second.
2. JOHN OF GAUNT, Duke of Lancaster,
3. EDMUND OF LANGLEY, Duke of York, } uncles to the King.
4. HENRY, surnamed BOLINGBROKE, Duke of Hereford, son to John of Gaunt; afterwards KING HENRY IV.
5. DUKE OF AUMERLE, son to the Duke of York.
6. THOMAS MOWBRAY, Duke of Norfolk.
7. DUKE OF SURREY.
8. EARL OF SALISBURY.
9. LORD BERKELEY.
10. BUSHY,
11. GREEN, } servants to King Richard.
12. BAGOT,
13. EARL OF NORTHUMBERLAND.
14. HENRY PERCY, surnamed Hotspur, his son.
15. LORD ROSS.
16. LORD WILLOUGHBY.
17. LORD FITZWATER.
18. Bishop of Carlisle.
19. Abbot of Westminster.
20. SIR STEPHEN SCROOP.
21. SIR PIERCE of Exton.  
Lord Marshal.  
Captain of a band of Welshmen.
22. QUEEN to King Richard.
23. DUCHESS OF YORK.
24. DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.  
Lady attending on the Queen.

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

SCENE: *England and Wales.*

THE TRAGEDY OF  
KING RICHARD II.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *London. KING RICHARD'S palace.*

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

*K. Rich.* 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?

*Gaunt.* I have, my liege.

*K. Rich.* Tell me, moreover, hast thou sounded him,  
If he appeal the duke on ancient malice;  
Or worthily, as a good subject should, 10  
On some known ground of treachery in him?

*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.

*K. Rich.* 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* BOLINGBROKE and MOWBRAY.

*Boling.* Many years of happy days befall 20  
My gracious sovereign, my most loving liege!

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

*K. Rich.* 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?  
*Boling.* First, heaven be the record to my speech! 30  
 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, 40  
 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.  
*Mow.* 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; 50  
 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: 60  
 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.  
*Boling.* Pale trembling coward, there I throw my gage,  
 Disclaiming here the kindred of the king, 70  
 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 worst devise.  
*Mow.* I take it up; and by that sword I swear,  
 Which gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder, 80  
 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!  
*K. Rich.* 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.  
*Boling.* 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, 90  
 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, 100  
 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.  
*K. Rich.* How high a pitch his resolution soars!  
 Thomas of Norfolk, what say'st thou to this? 110  
*Mow.* 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.  
*K. Rich.* 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.

*Mow.* 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 appeal'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.

*K. Rich.* 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.

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

*K. Rich.* And, Norfolk, throw down his.  
*Gaunt.* When, Harry, when?  
 Obedience bids I should not bid again.

*K. Rich.* Norfolk, throw down, we bid; there is no boot.  
*Mow.* 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.

*K. Rich.* Rage must be withstood:  
 Give me his gage: lions make leopards tame.  
*Mow.* 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 me, and my life is done:  
 Then, dear my liege, mine honour let me try;  
 In that I live and for that will I die.

*K. Rich.* Cousin, throw up your gage; do you begin.  
*Boling.* O, God defend my soul from such deep sin!  
 Shall I seem crest-fall'n in my father's sight?  
 Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height  
 Before this out-dared dastard? Ere my tongue  
 Shall wound my honour with such feeble wrong,  
 Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear  
 The slavish motive of recanting fear,  
 And spit it bleeding in his high disgrace,  
 Where shame doth harbour, even in Mowbray's face.

*K. Rich.* We were not born to sue, but to command;  
 Which since we cannot do to make you friends,  
 Be ready, as your lives shall answer it,  
 At Coventry, upon Saint Lambert's day:  
 There shall your swords and lances arbitrate  
 The swelling difference of your settled hate:  
 Since we can not atone you, we shall see  
 Justice design the victor's chivalry.

Lord marshal, command our officers at arms  
Be ready to direct these home alarms.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *The Duke of Lancaster's palace.*

*Enter JOHN OF GAUNT with the DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER.*

*Gaunt.* Alas, the part I had in Woodstock's blood  
Doth more solicit me than your exclams,  
To stir against the butchers of his life!  
But since correction lieth in those hands  
Which made the fault that we cannot correct,  
Put we our quarrel to the will of heaven;  
Who, when they see the hours ripe on earth,  
Will rain hot vengeance on offenders' heads.

*Duch.* Finds brotherhood in thee no sharper spur?

Hath love in thy old blood no living fire? 10

Edward's seven sons, whereof thyself art one,  
Were as seven vials of his sacred blood,

Or seven fair branches springing from one root:

Some of those seven are dried by nature's course,

Some of those branches by the Destinies cut;

But Thomas, my dear lord, my life, my Gloucester,

One vial full of Edward's sacred blood,

One flourishing branch of his most royal root,

Is crack'd, and all the precious liquor spilt,

Is hack'd down, and his summer leaves all faded, 20

By envy's hand and murder's bloody axe.

Ah, Gaunt, his blood was thine! that bed, that womb,

That metal, that self mould, that fashion'd thee

Made him a man; and though thou livest and breathest,

Yet art thou slain in him: thou dost consent

In some large measure to thy father's death,

In that thou seest thy wretched brother die,

Who was the model of thy father's life.

Call it not patience, Gaunt; it is despair:

In suffering thus thy brother to be slaughter'd, 30

Thou showest the naked pathway to thy life,

Teaching stern murder how to butcher thee:

That which in mean men we intitle patience

Is pale cold cowardice in noble breasts.

What shall I say? to safeguard thine own life,

The best way is to venge my Gloucester's death.

*Gaunt.* God's is the quarrel; for God's substitute,

His deputy anointed in His sight,

Hath caused his death: the which if wrongfully,  
Let heaven revenge; for I may never lift  
An angry arm against His minister. 40

*Duch.* Where then, alas, may I complain myself?

*Gaunt.* To God, the widow's champion and defence.

*Duch.* Why, then, I will. Farewell, old Gaunt.

Thou goest to Coventry, there to behold

Our cousin Hereford and fell Mowbray fight;

O, sit my husband's wrongs on Hereford's spear,

That it may enter butcher Mowbray's breast!

Or, if misfortune miss the first career,

Be Mowbray's sins so heavy in his bosom, 50

That they may break his foaming courser's back,

And throw the rider headlong in the lists,

A caitiff recreant to my cousin Hereford!

Farewell, old Gaunt: thy sometimes brother's wife

With her companion grief must end her life.

*Gaunt.* Sister, farewell; I must to Coventry:

As much good stay with thee as go with me!

*Duch.* Yet one word more: grief boundeth where it falls,

Not with the empty hollowness, but weight:

I take my leave before I have begun, 60

For sorrow ends not when it seemeth done.

Commend me to thy brother, Edmund York.

Lo, this is all:—nay, yet depart not so;

Though this be all, do not so quickly go;

I shall remember more. Bid him—ah, what?—

With all good speed at Plashy visit me.

Alack, and what shall good old York there see

But empty lodgings and unfurnish'd walls,

Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?

And what hear there for welcome but my groans? 70

Therefore commend me; let him not come there,

To seek out sorrow that dwells every where.

Desolate, desolate, will I hence and die:

The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. *The lists at Coventry.*

*Enter the Lord Marshal and the Duke of Aumerle.*

*Mar.* My Lord Aumerle, is Harry Hereford arm'd?

*Aum.* Yea, at all points; and longs to enter in.

*Mar.* The Duke of Norfolk, sprightly and bold,  
Stays but the summons of the appellant's trumpet.

*Aum.* Why, then, the champions are prepared, and stay  
For nothing but his majesty's approach.

*The trumpets sound, and the KING enters with his nobles,  
GAUNT, BUSHY, BAGOT, GREEN, and others. When they  
are set, enter MOWBRAY in arms, defendant, with a Herald.*

*K. Rich.* Marshal, demand of yonder champion  
The cause of his arrival here in arms:  
Ask him his name and orderly proceed  
To swear him in the justice of his cause. 10

*Mar.* In God's name and the king's, say who thou art  
And why thou comest thus knightly clad in arms,  
Against what man thou comest, and what thy quarrel:  
Speak truly, on thy knighthood and thy oath;  
As so defend thee heaven and thy valour!

*Mow.* My name is Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk:  
Who hither come engaged by my oath—

Which God defend a knight should violate!—  
Both to defend my loyalty and truth 20  
To God, my king and my succeeding issue,  
Against the Duke of Hereford that appeals me;  
And, by the grace of God and this mine arm,  
To prove him, in defending of myself,  
A traitor to my God, my king, and me:  
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

*The trumpets sound. Enter BOLINGBROKE, appellant, in  
armour, with a Herald.*

*K. Rich.* Marshal, ask yonder knight in arms  
Both who he is and why he cometh hither  
Thus plated in habiliments of war,  
And formally, according to our law,  
Depose him in the justice of his cause. 30

*Mar.* What is thy name? and wherefore comest thou hither,  
Before King Richard in his royal lists?  
Against whom comest thou? and what's thy quarrel?  
Speak like a true knight, so defend thee heaven!

*Boling.* Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby  
Am I; who ready here do stand in arms,  
To prove, by God's grace and my body's valour,  
In lists, on Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,  
That he is a traitor, foul and dangerous,  
To God of heaven, King Richard and to me; 40  
And as I truly fight, defend me heaven!

*Mar.* On pain of death, no person be so bold  
Or daring-hardy as to touch the lists,  
Except the marshal and such officers  
Appointed to direct these fair designs.

*Boling.* Lord marshal, let me kiss my sovereign's hand,  
And bow my knee before his majesty:  
For Mowbray and myself are like two men  
That vow a long and weary pilgrimage;  
Then let us take a ceremonious leave 50  
And loving farewell of our several friends.

*Mar.* The appellant in all duty greets your highness,  
And craves to kiss your hand and take his leave.

*K. Rich.* We will descend and fold him in our arms.  
Cousin of Hereford, as thy cause is right,  
So be thy fortune in this royal fight!  
Farewell, my blood; which if to-day thou shed,  
Lament we may, but not revenge thee dead.

*Boling.* O, let no noble eye profane a tear  
For me, if I be gored with Mowbray's spear: 60  
As confident as is the falcon's flight  
Against a bird, do I with Mowbray fight.  
My loving lord, I take my leave of you;  
Of you, my noble cousin, Lord Aumerle;  
Not sick, although I have to do with death,  
But lusty, young, and cheerly drawing breath.

Lo, as at English feasts, so I regret  
The daintiest last, to make the end most sweet:  
O thou, the earthly author of my blood,  
Whose youthful spirit, in me regenerate, 70  
Doth with a twofold vigour lift me up  
To reach at victory above my head,  
Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers;  
And with thy blessings steel my lance's point,  
That it may enter Mowbray's waxen coat,  
And furbish new the name of John a Gaunt,  
Even in the lusty haviour of his son.

*Gaunt.* God in thy good cause make thee prosperous!  
Be swift like lightning in the execution;  
And let thy blows, doubly redoubled, 80  
Fall like amazing thunder on the casque  
Of thy adverse pernicious enemy:  
Rouse up thy youthful blood, be valiant and live.

*Boling.* Mine innocence and Saint George to thrive!  
*Mow.* However God or fortune cast my lot,  
There lives or dies, true to King Richard's throne,

A loyal, just and upright gentleman:  
 Never did captive with a freer heart  
 Cast off his chains of bondage and embrace  
 His golden uncontroll'd enfranchisement,  
 More than my dancing soul doth celebrate  
 This feast of battle with mine adversary.  
 Most mighty liege, and my companion peers,  
 Take from my mouth the wish of happy years.  
 As gentle and as jocund as to jest  
 Go I to fight: truth hath a quiet breast.  
*K. Rich.* Farewell, my lord: securely I espy  
 Virtue with valour couched in thine eye.  
 Order the trial, marshal, and begin.  
*Mar.* Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,  
 Receive thy lance; and God defend the right!  
*Boling.* Strong as a tower in hope, I cry amen.  
*Mar.* Go bear this lance to Thomas, Duke of Norfolk.  
*First Her.* Harry of Hereford, Lancaster and Derby,  
 Stands here for God, his sovereign and himself,  
 On pain to be found false and recreant,  
 To prove the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray,  
 A traitor to his God, his king and him;  
 And dares him to set forward to the fight.  
*Sec. Her.* Here standeth Thomas Mowbray, Duke of  
 Norfolk,  
 On pain to be found false and recreant,  
 Both to defend himself and to approve  
 Henry of Hereford, Lancaster, and Derby,  
 To God, his sovereign and to him disloyal;  
 Courageously and with a free desire  
 Attending but the signal to begin.  
*Mar.* Sound, trumpets; and set forward, combatants.  
 [A charge sounded.]  
 Stay, the king hath thrown his warder down.  
*K. Rich.* Let them lay by their helmets and their spears,  
 And both return back to their chairs again:  
 Withdraw with us: and let the trumpets sound  
 While we return these dukes what we decree.  
 [A long flourish.]  
 Draw near,  
 And list what with our council we have done.  
 For that our kingdom's earth should not be soil'd  
 With that dear blood which it hath fostered;  
 And for our eyes do hate the dire aspect  
 Of civil wounds plough'd up with neighbours' sword;

And for we think the eagle-winged pride  
 Of sky-aspiring and ambitious thoughts,  
 With rival-hating envy, set on you  
 To wake our peace, which in our country's cradle  
 Draws the sweet infant breath of gentle sleep;  
 Which so roused up with boisterous untuned drums,  
 With harsh-resounding trumpets' dreadful bray,  
 And grating shock of wrathful iron arms,  
 Might from our quiet confines fright fair peace  
 And make us wade even in our kindred's blood;  
 Therefore, we banish you our territories:  
 You, cousin Hereford, upon pain of life,  
 Till twice five summers have enrich'd our fields  
 Shall not regret our fair dominions,  
 But tread the stranger paths of banishment.  
*Boling.* Your will be done: this must my comfort be,  
 That sun that warms you here shall shine on me;  
 And those his golden beams to you here lent  
 Shall point on me and gild my banishment.  
*K. Rich.* Norfolk, for thee remains a heavier doom,  
 Which I with some unwillingness pronounce:  
 The sly slow hours shall not determinate  
 The dateless limit of thy dear exile;  
 The hopeless word of 'never to return'  
 Breathe I against thee, upon pain of life.  
*Mow.* A heavy sentence, my most sovereign liege,  
 And all unlook'd for from your highness' mouth:  
 A dearer merit, not so deep a maim  
 As to be cast forth in the common air,  
 Have I deserved at your highness' hands.  
 The language I have learn'd these forty years,  
 My native English, now I must forego:  
 And now my tongue's use is to me no more  
 Than an unstringed viol or a harp,  
 Or like a cunning instrument cased up,  
 Or, being open, put into his hands  
 That knows no touch to tune the harmony:  
 Within my mouth you have engaol'd my tongue,  
 Doubly portcullis'd with my teeth and lips;  
 And dull unfeeling barren ignorance  
 Is made my gaoler to attend on me.  
 I am too old to fawn upon a nurse,  
 Too far in years to be a pupil now:  
 What is thy sentence then but speechless death,  
 Which robs my tongue from breathing native breath?

*K. Rich.* It boots thee not to be compassionate:  
After our sentence plaining comes too late.

*Mow.* Then thus I turn me from my country's light,  
To dwell in solemn shades of endless night.

*K. Rich.* Return again, and take an oath with thee.  
Lay on our royal sword your banish'd hands;  
Swear by the duty that you owe to God—  
Our part therein we banish with yourselves—  
To keep the oath that we administer:  
You never shall, so help you truth and God!  
Embrace each other's love in banishment;  
Nor never look upon each other's face;  
Nor never write, regret, nor reconcile  
This luring tempest of your home-bred hate;  
Nor never by advised purpose meet  
To plot, contrive, or complot any ill  
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*Boling.* I swear.

*Mow.* And I, to keep all this.

*Boling.* Norfolk, so far as to mine enemy:—  
By this time, had the king permitted us,  
One of our souls had wander'd in the air,  
Banish'd this frail sepulchre of our flesh,  
As now our flesh is banish'd from this land:  
Confess thy treasons ere thou fly the realm;  
Since thou hast far to go, bear not along  
The clogging burthen of a guilty soul.

*Mow.* No, Bolingbroke: if ever I were traitor,  
My name be blotted from the book of life,  
And I from heaven banish'd as from hence!  
But what thou art, God, thou, and I do know;  
And all too soon, I fear, the king shall rue.  
Farewell, my liege. Now no way can I stray;  
Save back to England, all the world's my way.

*K. Rich.* Uncle, even in the glasses of thine eyes  
I see thy grieved heart: thy sad aspect  
Hath from the number of his banish'd years  
Pluck'd four away. [To Boling.] Six frozen winters spent,  
Return with welcome home from banishment.

*Boling.* How long a time lies in one little word!  
Four lagging winters and four wanton springs  
End in a word: such is the breath of kings.

*Gaunt.* I thank my liege, that in regard of me  
He shortens four years of my son's exile:  
But little vantage shall I reap thereby;

For, ere the six years that he hath to spend  
Can change their moons and bring their times about, 220  
My oil-dried lamp and time-bewasted light  
Shall be extinct with age and endless night;  
My inch of taper will be burnt and done,  
And blindfold death not let me see my son.

*K. Rich.* Why, uncle, thou hast many years to live.

*Gaunt.* But not a minute, king, that thou canst give:  
Shorten my days thou canst with sullen sorrow,  
And pluck nights from me, but not lend a morrow;  
Thou canst help time to furrow me with age,  
But stop no wrinkle in his pilgrimage; 230  
Thy word is current with him for my death,  
But dead, thy kingdom cannot buy my breath.

*K. Rich.* Thy son is banish'd upon good advice,  
Whereto thy tongue a party-verdict gave:  
Why at our justice seem'st thou then to lour?

*Gaunt.* Things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour.  
You urged me as a judge; but I had rather  
You would have bid me argue like a father.  
O, had it been a stranger, not my child,  
To smooth his fault I should have been more mild: 240  
A partial slander sought I to avoid,  
And in the sentence my own life destroy'd.  
Alas, I look'd when some of you should say,  
I was too strict to make mine own away;  
But you gave leave to my unwilling tongue  
Against my will to do myself this wrong.

*K. Rich.* Cousin, farewell; and, uncle, bid him so:  
Six years we banish him, and he shall go.

[Flourish. Exeunt King Richard and train.  
*Aum.* Cousin, farewell: what presence must not know,  
From where you do remain let paper show. 250

*Mar.* My lord, no leave take I; for I will ride,  
As far as land will let me, by your side.

*Gaunt.* O, to what purpose dost thou hoard thy words,  
That thou return'st no greeting to thy friends?

*Boling.* I have too few to take my leave of you,  
When the tongue's office should be prodigal  
To breathe the abundant dolour of the heart.

*Gaunt.* Thy grief is but thy absence for a time.

*Boling.* Joy absent, grief is present for that time.

*Gaunt.* What is six winters? they are quickly gone. 260

*Boling.* To men in joy; but grief makes one hour ten.

*Gaunt.* Call it a travel that thou takest for pleasure.

*Boling.* My heart will sigh when I miscall it so,  
Which finds it an enforced pilgrimage.

*Gaunt.* The sullen passage of thy weary steps  
Esteem as foil wherein thou art to set  
The precious jewel of thy home return.

*Boling.* Nay, rather, every tedious stride I make  
Will but remember me what a deal of world  
I wander from the jewels that I love. 270

Must I not serve a long apprenticeship  
To foreign passages, and in the end,  
Having my freedom, boast of nothing else  
But that I was a journeyman to grief?

*Gaunt.* All places that the eye of heaven visits  
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.  
Teach thy necessity to reason thus;  
There is no virtue like necessity.

Think not the king did banish thee,  
But thou the king. Woe doth the heavier sit,  
Where it perceives it is but faintly borne. 280

Go, say I sent thee forth to purchase honour  
And not the king exiled thee; or suppose  
Devouring pestilence hangs in our air  
And thou art flying to a fresher clime:

Look, what thy soul holds dear, imagine it  
To lie that way thou go'st, not whence thou comest:  
Suppose the singing birds musicians,

The grass whereon thou tread'st the presence strew'd,  
The flowers fair ladies, and thy steps no more 290  
Than a delightful measure or a dance;

For gnarling sorrow hath less power to bite  
The man that mocks at it and sets it light.

*Boling.* O, who can hold a fire in his hand  
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus?  
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite  
By bare imagination of a feast?

Or wallow naked in December snow  
By thinking on fantastic summer's heat?  
O, no! the apprehension of the good 300  
Gives but the greater feeling to the worse:

Fell sorrow's tooth doth never rankle more  
Than when he bites, but lanceth not the sore.

*Gaunt.* Come, come, my son, I'll bring thee on thy way:  
Had I thy youth and cause, I would not stay.

*Boling.* Then, England's ground, farewell; sweet soil, adieu;  
My mother, and my nurse, that bears me yet!

Where'er I wander, boast of this I can,  
Though banish'd, yet a trueborn Englishman. [Exeunt.

SCENE IV. *The court.*

*Enter the KING, with BAGOT and GREEN at one door;  
and the DUKE OF AUMERLE at another.*

*K. Rich.* We did observe. Cousin Aumerle,  
How far brought you high Hereford on his way?

*Aum.* I brought high Hereford, if you call him so,  
But to the next highway, and there I left him.

*K. Rich.* And say, what store of parting tears were shed?  
*Aum.* Faith, none for me; except the north-east wind,

Which then blew bitterly against our faces,  
Awaked the sleeping rheum, and so by chance  
Did grace our hollow parting with a tear.

*K. Rich.* What said our cousin when you parted with him?

*Aum.* 'Farewell': 11

And, for my heart disdained that my tongue  
Should so profane the word, that taught me craft  
To counterfeit oppression of such grief  
That words seem'd buried in my sorrow's grave.  
Marry, would the word 'farewell' have lengthen'd hours  
And added years to his short banishment,  
He should have had a volume of farewells;  
But since it would not, he had none of me.

*K. Rich.* He is our cousin, cousin; but 't is doubt, 20  
When time shall call him home from banishment,  
Whether our kinsman come to see his friends.

Ourselves and Bushy, Bagot here and Green  
Observed his courtship to the common people;  
How he did seem to dive into their hearts  
With humble and familiar courtesy,

What reverence he did throw away on slaves,  
 wooing poor craftsmen with the craft of smiles  
And patient underbearing of his fortune,  
As 't were to banish their affects with him. 30

Off goes his bonnet to an oyster-wench;  
A brace of draymen bid God speed him well  
And had the tribute of his supple knee,  
With 'Thanks, my countrymen, my loving friends';  
As were our England in reversion his,  
And he our subjects' next degree in hope.

*Green.* Well, he is gone; and with him go these thoughts.



Now for the rebels which stand out in Ireland,  
 Expedient manage must be made, my liege,  
 Ere further leisure yield them further means  
 For their advantage and your highness' loss. 40

*K. Rich.* We will ourself in person to this war:  
 And, for our coffers, with too great a court  
 And liberal largess, are grown somewhat light,  
 We are enforced to farm our royal realm;  
 The revenue whereof shall furnish us  
 For our affairs in hand: if that come short,  
 Our substitutes at home shall have blank charters;  
 Whereto, when they shall know what men are rich,  
 They shall subscribe them for large sums of gold 50  
 And send them after to supply our wants;  
 For we will make for Ireland presently.

*Enter BUSHY.*

Bushy, what news?

*Bushy.* Old John of Gaunt is grievous sick, my lord,  
 Suddenly taken; and hath sent post haste  
 To entreat your majesty to visit him.

*K. Rich.* Where lies he?

*Bushy.* At Ely House.

*K. Rich.* Now put it, God, in the physician's mind  
 To help him to his grave immediately! 60  
 The lining of his coffers shall make coats  
 To deck our soldiers for these Irish wars.  
 Come, gentlemen, let's all go visit him:  
 Pray God we may make haste, and come too late!  
*All.* Amen.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Ely House.*

*Enter JOHN OF GAUNT sick, with the DUKE OF YORK, &c.*

*Gaunt.* Will the king come, that I may breathe my last  
 In wholesome counsel to his unstaid youth?

*York.* Vex not yourself, nor strive not with your breath;  
 For all in vain comes counsel to his ear.

*Gaunt.* O, but they say the tongues of dying men  
 Enforce attention like deep harmony:  
 Where words are scarce, they are seldom spent in vain,  
 For they breathe truth that breathe their words in pain.

He that no more must say is listen'd more  
 Than they whom youth and ease have taught to glose; 10  
 More are men's ends mark'd than their lives before:

The setting sun, and music at the close,  
 As the last taste of sweets, is sweetest last,  
 Writ in remembrance more than things long past:  
 Though Richard my life's counsel would not hear,  
 My death's sad tale may yet undeaf his ear.

*York.* No; it is stopp'd with other flattering sounds,  
 As praises, of whose taste the wise are fond,  
 Lascivious metres, to whose venom sound  
 The open ear of youth doth always listen; 20  
 Report of fashions in proud Italy,  
 Whose manners still our tardy apish nation  
 Limp after in base imitation.

Where doth the world thrust forth a vanity—  
 So it be new, there's no respect how vile—  
 That is not quickly buzz'd into his ears?  
 Then all too late comes counsel to be heard,  
 Where will doth mutiny with wit's regard.  
 Direct not him whose way himself will choose:  
 'T is breath thou lack'st, and that breath wilt thou lose. 30

*Gaunt.* Methinks I am a prophet new inspired  
 And thus expiring do foretell of him:  
 His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last,  
 For violent fires soon burn out themselves;  
 Small showers last long, but sudden storms are short;  
 He tires betimes that spurs too fast betimes;  
 With eager feeding food doth choke the feeder:  
 Light vanity, insatiate cormorant,  
 Consuming means, soon preys upon itself.

This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle, 40  
 This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,  
 This other Eden, demi-paradise,  
 This fortress built by Nature for herself  
 Against infection and the hand of war,  
 This happy breed of men, this little world,  
 This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
 Which serves it in the office of a wall  
 Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
 Against the envy of less happier lands,  
 This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England, 50  
 This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings,  
 Fear'd by their breed and famous by their birth,  
 Renowned for their deeds as far from home.