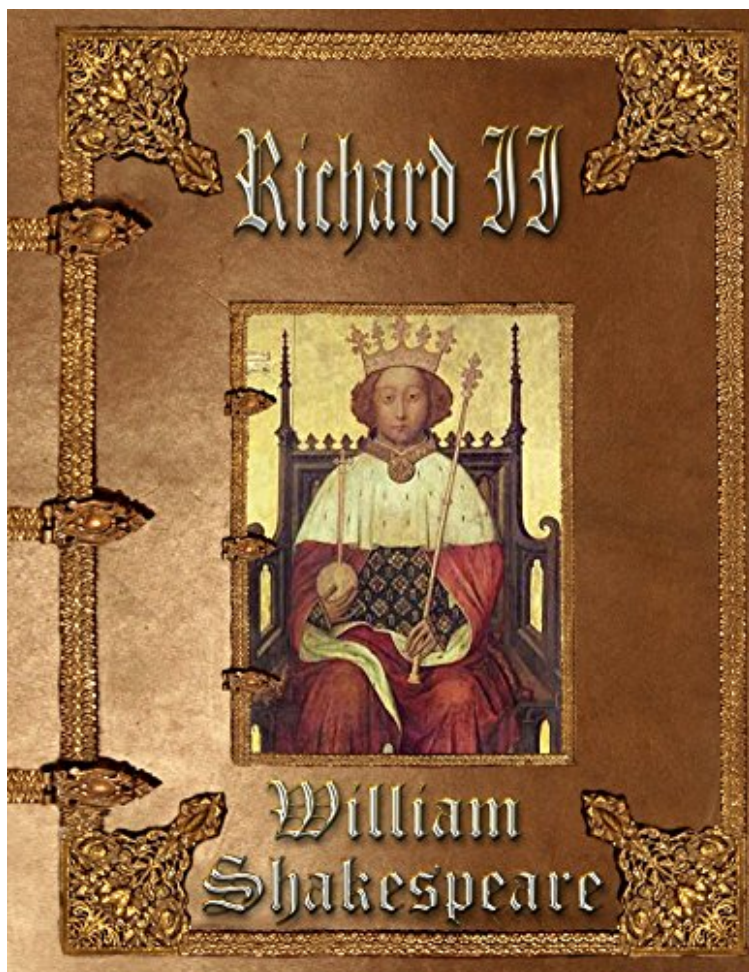


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## Richard II (English Edition)



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<http://facebook.com/BookLiberationFront> Shakespeare can be tough--tough, but well worthwhile---and this book does a good job of presenting Shakespeare in a manner and form that is not overpowering to the reader....Provides just enough insight and history to aid the reader in understanding, but doesn't overpower the reader with unnecessary "book learning." The real impact of Shakespeare, however, is in the play itself...this book adds to the play and doesn't detract from it by an overpowering explanation or presentation..co.ukOne of Shakespeare's finest history plays, Richard II deals with one of the most sensitive and politically explosive issues of its day--the rights and wrongs of deposing a legitimately appointed king. Forerunner to the two parts of Henry IV, the play deals with the abdication of King Richard II in 1399, the subsequent succession of Bolingbroke, the future King Henry IV, and Richard's death in the spring of 1400. But the play has been celebrated above and beyond its stature as historical drama. Richard II begins with a

portrait of Richard as a pompous, arrogant and self-regarding sovereign, with little sense of his people or his political responsibilities. As he consistently miscalculates in his attempts to destroy Bolingbroke, and watches his own power wane, he becomes a far more appealing, Hamlet-like figure, more interested in "talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs", and "sad stories of the death of kings". Richard's speeches become increasingly lyrical and poetic as his supporters desert him, until he finally takes on the stature of the pilloried Christ in the climax of the play, the deposition scene, one of the most politically risky scenes in all of Shakespeare. The play remains most famous for John of Gaunt's "This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle" speech, but historians believe that the play was also performed in the streets of London in 1601 in support of the Earl of Essex's attempt to depose Elizabeth I. Whilst the plot failed, it showed the power of the theatre of the time, and the politically controversial nature of Shakespeare's play. --Jerry Brotton

ExtraitChapter 1Act 1 Scene 1 running scene 1Enter King Richard, John of Gaunt, with other Nobles and AttendantsKING RICHARD Old John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster,Hast thou according to thy oath and bandBrought hither Henry Hereford thy bold son,Here to make good the boist'rous late appeal,Which then our leisure would not let us hear,Against the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?GAUNT I have, my liege.KING RICHARD Tell me, moreover, hast thou sounded him,If he appeal the duke on ancient malice,Or worthily, as a good subject should,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 himAimed at your highness, no inveterate malice.KING RICHARD Then call them to our presence. [Exit an Attendant]Face to face,And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hearTh'accuser and the accusd freely speak;High-stomached are they both, and full of ire,In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.Enter Bullingbrook and

MowbrayBULLINGBROOK Many years of happy days befallMy gracious sovereign, my most loving liege!MOWBRAY Each day still better other's happinessUntil the heavens, envying earth's good hap,Add an immortal title to your crown!KING RICHARD 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 objectAgainst the Duke of Norfolk, Thomas Mowbray?BULLINGBROOK First, heaven be the record to my speech!In the devotion of a subject's love,Tend'ring the precious safety of my prince,And free from other misbegotten hate,Come I appellent to this princely presence.Now, Thomas Mowbray, do I turn to thee,And mark my greeting well, for what I speakMy 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,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.MOWBRAY 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.The blood is hot that must be cooled for this.Yet can I not of such tame patience boastAs to be hushed and nought at all to say.First, the fair reverence of your highness curbs meFrom giving reins and spurs to my free speech,Which else would post until it had returnedThese terms of treason doubly 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,Call him a slanderous coward and a villain,Which to maintain I would allow him odds,And meet him, were I tied to run afootEven to the frozen ridges of the Alps,Or any other ground inhabitableWherever Englishman durst set his foot.Meantime, let this defend my loyalty:By all my hopes most falsely doth he lie.BULLINGBROOK Pale trembling coward, there I Throws down his gage,throw my gage,Disclaiming here the kindred of a king,And lay aside my high blood's royalty,Which fear, not reverence, makes thee to except.If guilty dread hath left thee so much strengthAs 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 spoken, or thou canst devise.MOWBRAY I take it up, and by that sword I swear Takes up gageWhich gently laid my knighthood on my shoulder,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!KING RICHARD What doth our cousin lay to Mowbray's charge?It must be great that can inherit usSo much as of a thought of ill in him.BULLINGBROOK Look what I said: my life shall prove it true,That Mowbray hath received eight thousand noblesIn name of lendings for your highness' soldiers,The which he hath detained for lewd employments,Like a false traitor and injurious villain.Besides I say, and will in battle prove,Or here or elsewhere to the furthest vergeThat ever was surveyed by English eye,That all the treasons for these eighteen yearsComplotted and contrivd in this landFetched from false Mowbray their first head and spring.Further I say, and further will maintainUpon his bad life to make all this good,That he did plot the Duke of

Gloucester's death, 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. KING RICHARD How high a pitch his resolution soars! Thomas of Norfolk, what sayest thou to this? MOWBRAY 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. KING RICHARD Mowbray, impartial are our eyes and ears. Were he my brother, nay, our 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. MOWBRAY Then, Bullingbrook, 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 mine own disgrace Neglected my sworn duty in that case. For you, my noble lord of Lancaster, The honourable father to my foe, Once I did lay an ambush for your life - A trespass that doth vex my griev'd soul. But ere I last received the sacrament I did confess it, and exactly begged Your grace's pardon, and I hope I had it. This is my fault. As for the rest appealed, 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 Throws down his gage Upon this overweening traitor's foot, To prove myself a loyal gentleman Even in the best blood chambered in his bosom. In haste whereof, most heartily I pray Your highness to assign our trial day. KING RICHARD 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 time 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. KING RICHARD And, Norfolk, throw down his. GAUNT When, Harry, when? Obedience bids I should not bid again. KING RICHARD Norfolk, throw down, we bid; there is no boot. MOWBRAY Myself I throw, dread sovereign, at thy foot. Kneels 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, impeached 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. KING RICHARD Rage must be withstood. Give me his gage. Lions make leopards tame. MOWBRAY 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-barred-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. KING RICHARD Cousin, throw down your gage. Do you begin. BULLINGBROOK O, heaven defend my soul from such foul 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 mine 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. Exit Gaunt KING RICHARD 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 cannot 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 Act 1 Scene 2 running scene 2 Enter Gaunt and Duchess of Gloucester GAUNT Alas, the part I had in Gloucester'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. DUCHESS Finds brotherhood in thee no sharper spur? Hath love in thy old blood no living fire? 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 cracked, and all the precious liquor spilt, Is hacked down, and his summer

leaves all faded,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 fashioned theeMade him a man. And though thou liv'st and breath'st,Yet art thou slain in him. Thou dost consentIn some large measure to thy father's death,In that thou see'st thy wretched brother die,Who was the model of thy father's life.Call it not patience, Gaunt, it is despair.In suffring thus thy brother to be slaughtered,Thou show'st the naked pathway to thy life,Teaching stern murder how to butcher thee.That which in mean men we entitle paciencels 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 Heaven's is the quarrel, for heaven's substitute,His deputy anointed in his sight,Hath caused his death, the which if wrongfully,Let heaven revenge, for I may never liftAn angry arm against his minister.DUCHESS Where then, alas, may I complaint myself?GAUNT To heaven, the widow's champion to defence.DUCHESS Why, then, I will. Farewell, old Gaunt.Thou go'st to Coventry, there to beholdOur 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,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 wifeWith her companion grief must end her life.GAUNT Sister, farewell. I must to Coventry.As much good stay with thee as go with me!DUCHESS Yet one word more: grief boundeth where it falls,Not with the empty hollowness, but weight.I take my leave before I have begun,For sorrow ends not when it seemeth done.Commend me to my 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 - O, what? -With all good speed at Plashy visit me.Alack, and what shall good old York there seeBut empty lodgings and unfurnished walls,Unpeopled offices, untrodden stones?And what hear there for welcome but my groans?Therefore commend me, let him not come thereTo seek out sorrow that dwells everywhere.Desolate, desolate, will I hence and die:The last leave of thee takes my weeping eye. ExeuntAct 1 Scene 3 running scene 3Enter [the Lord] Marshal and AumerleLORD MARSHAL My Lord Aumerle, is Harry Hereford armed?AUMERLE Yea, at all points, and longs to enter in.LORD MARSHAL The Duke of Norfolk, sprightly and bold,Stays but the summons of the appellant's trumpet.AUMERLE Why, then, the champions are prepared, and stayFor nothing but his majesty's approach.Flourish. Enter King, Gaunt, Bushy, Bagot, Green and others. [When they are set,] then Mowbray in armour and [a] HeraldKING RICHARD Marshal, demand of yonder championThe cause of his arrival here in arms.Ask him his name and orderly proceedTo swear him in the justice of his cause.LORD MARSHAL In God's name and the king's, say who thou artAnd why thou com'st thus knightly clad in arms,Against what man thou com'st, and what's thy quarrel.Speak truly, on thy knighthood and thine oath,As so defend thee heaven and thy valour!MOWBRAY My name is Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk,Who hither comes engagd by my oath -Which heaven defend a knight should violate! -Both to defend my loyalty and truthTo God, my king and his 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!Tucket. Enter Hereford [Bullingbrook] and HeraldKING RICHARD Marshal, ask yonder knight in arms,Both who he is and why he cometh hitherThus plated in habiliments of war,And formally, according to our law,Depose him in the justice of his cause.