

Richard II abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 2

Grief

Situation: Richard II's queen is legitimately worried, aware that Henry Bolingbroke has attracted support and is headed for Ravenspurgh. Her husband, the king, meanwhile is off fighting the Irish, having now seized the late John of Gaunt's goods, money and lands to help finance his military adventures.

BUSHY: Madam, your Majesty is too much sad.

QUEEN: Yet I know no cause why I should welcome such a guest as grief. My soul grieves at some thing more than with parting from my lord the king.

Bushy to Queen

'Tis not unusual to welcome such
A guest as grief, yet each grief that doth touch
The mind hath twenty shadows each showing
Like grief itself but is not so. Grief's glee
Is to trick eyes, glazing them with blinding
Tears, dividing one thing real to many
Objects, like optics that distort what one
Views, which, when rightly gazed upon, doth run
One into confusion. So, madam, what
Is seen are images of grief more than
Grief itself, which, seen as they are, are but
Shadows of what they are not. If one can,
See what is; let sorrow's eye see wrongly,
Weeping for those things imaginary.

QUEEN: It may be so, but yet my inward soul persuades me it is otherwise.

Green, another friend of the king's, enters.

GREEN: I hope the king is not yet shipped for Ireland.

QUEEN: Why hopest thou so?

GREEN: The banished Bolingbroke repeals himself and with uplifted arms is safe arrived at Ravenspurgh.

QUEEN: Now God in heaven forbid.

GREEN: Ah, madam, 'tis too true. And that is worse, The Lord Northumberland, his son young Harry Percy, The Lords of Ross, Beaumont, and Willoughby, with all their powerful friends, are fled to him.

QUEEN: Who shall hinder me? I will despair.

The Duke of York enters.