

Richard II abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 5.1

Introspection

Situation: Richard, now the late king, now confined to Pomfret Castle as its lone prisoner, reflects on his life, Shakespeare giving us a sense of how he might have hoped a deposed king might think.

RICHARD II: I have been studying how I may compare this prison, where I live unto the world, and for, because the world is populous and here is not a creature buy myself.

Richard II to himself, No. 1

No man whate'er he be is ever pleased
With his life's position till he be eased
From life, being nothing. Slaves to fortune's
Whims are like poor beggars bearing their own
Misfortunes on the backs of other sons
Who have endured the like. This discord sown
Comes in my time when I had not the ear
To hear my own time wasted, and now fear
With these tears that time doth waste me. Those who
Seek ambition may, as vain nails that tried
To tear passages through this hard world do
Fail, for they cannot, die in their own pride.
Let this brain prove the female of my soul
As it begets fresh thoughts in life's short role.