

King Lear abbreviated

Act 4, Scene 6

Inspiration

Situation: Edgar has done his best to comfort his father as he accompanies his now blind, weak and depressed father to the Cliffs of Dover. When they reach the Cliffs of Dover, a disoriented King Lear enters.

EDGAR: But who comes here?

LEAR: I am the King himself.

EDGAR: O, thou heart-rending sight!

LEAR: That fellow handles his bow like a crow keeper. Draw me a clothier's yard. Look, look, a mouse!

GLOUCESTER: I know that voice.

Lear to Gloucester

Ay, every inch a king. When I do stare
My subjects quake, yet my two daughters care
For me as they do a dog, but I sure
Smelt 'em out. Let adultery thrive; Gloucester
Had a bastard kinder to his father
Than my daughters got 'tween lawful sheets. Sir,
When born, not asking to enter, man cries
That he come to this stage of fools. Get eyes
Of glass and like scurvy politicians see
Things thou dost not. A man who looks with his
Ears may with his lights sadly gone find he
May yet see how this cruel world goes. Strange is
How 'gainst the thief doth justice in his brief
Time rail; which is justice, which is the thief?

GLOUCESTER: O ruined piece of nature! Dost thou know me?

LEAR: I remember thine eyes well enough.

GLOUCESTER: Were all thy letters suns, I could not see.

EDGAR ASIDE: My heart breaks at it.