

# Richard II (Signet Classics)

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Considered one of Shakespeare's greatest history plays, *The Tragedy of King Richard II* concerns the ill-fated reign of a king whose eventual overthrow marks the beginning of Shakespeare's history cycle, including *Henry IV, Part I*, *Henry IV Part II*; and *Henry V*.

This edition features an overview of Shakespeare's works by Sylvan Barnet, former Chairman of the English Department at Tufts University, as well as a comprehensive stage and screen history, dramatic criticism from the past and present, and sources from which Shakespeare derived this great work.

Like every other play in the Cambridge School Shakespeare series, *King Richard II* has been specially prepared to help all students in schools and colleges. This version of *Richard II* aims to be different from other editions of the play. It invites you to bring the play to life in your classroom through enjoyable activities that will help increase your understanding. You are encouraged to make up your own mind about the play, rather than have someone else's interpretation handed down to you. Whatever you do, remember that Shakespeare wrote his plays to be acted, watched and enjoyed. An exciting new edition of the complete works of Shakespeare with these features: illustrated with photographs from New York Shakespeare Festival productions, vivid readable readable introductions for each play by noted scholar David Bevington, a lively personal foreword by Joseph Papp, an insightful essay on the play in performance, modern spelling and pronunciation, up-to-date annotated bibliographies, and convenient listing of key passages.

#### Other Books

*Uncertain Refuge*. To seek sanctuary from persecution by entering a sacred space is an act of desperation, but also a symbolic endeavor: fugitives invoke divine presence to reach a precarious safe haven that imbues their lives with religious, social, or political significance. In medieval England, sanctuary was upheld under both canon and common law, and up to five hundred people sought sanctuary every year. What they found, however, was not so much a static refuge as a temporary respite from further action—confession and exile—or from further violence—jurisdictional conflict, harrying or starvation, a breaching of the sanctuary. While sanctuary has usually been analyzed as part of legal history, in *Uncertain Refuge* Elizabeth Allen explores the symbolic consequences of sanctuary seeking in English literary works—miracle collections, chronicles, romances, and drama. She ponders the miracle of a stag's escape from the hunt into a churchyard as well as the account of a fallen political favorite who gains a sort of charisma as he takes sanctuary three times in succession: the figure of Sir Gawain, seeking refuge in a stark land far from the court and Robin Hood, hiding in his local forest refuge among his Merry Men. Her consideration of medieval sanctuary extends to its resonances in a seventeenth-century play about the early Tudor usurper Perkin Warbeck and even into modern America, with the case of a breach of sanctuary in southwest Georgia in 1963, when sheriffs took over a voter registration meeting in a local church. *Uncertain Refuge* illuminates a fantasy of protection and its impermanence that animated late medieval literary culture, and one that remains poignantly alive, if no longer written into law, in today's troubled political world.

... Richard the Second, ed. Kenneth Muir (New York: Signet Classics, 1963), cited by act and scene. ... In later scenes, however, Richard II refuses to reduce kingship to "a role or office like any other." Leggatt, "Double Reign," 129."