

King John

Act III, sc. 4 (line 26 - intercut)

CONSTANCE

No, I defy all counsel, all redress,
But that which ends all counsel, true redress,
Death, death; O amiable lovely death!
Thou odouriferous stench! sound rottenness!
Arise forth from the couch of lasting night,
Thou hate and terror to prosperity,
And I will kiss thy detestable bones
And put my eyeballs in thy vaulty brows
And ring these fingers with thy household worms
And stop this gap of breath with fulsome dust
And be a carrion monster like thyself:
Come, grin on me, and I will think thou smilest
And buss thee as thy wife. Misery's love,
O, come to me!

KING PHILIP

O fair affliction, peace!

CONSTANCE

No, no, I will not, having breath to cry:
O, that my tongue were in the thunder's mouth!
Then with a passion would I shake the world;
And rouse from sleep that fell anatomy

Which cannot hear a lady's feeble voice,

Which scorns a modern invocation.

CARDINAL PANDULPH

Lady, you utter madness, and not sorrow.

CONSTANCE

Thou art not holy to belie me so;

I am not mad: this hair I tear is mine;

My name is Constance; I was Geoffrey's wife;

Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost:

I am not mad: I would to heaven I were!

For then, 'tis like I should forget myself:

O, if I could, what grief should I forget!

Preach some philosophy to make me mad,

And thou shalt be canonized, cardinal;

For being not mad but sensible of grief,

My reasonable part produces reason

How I may be deliver'd of these woes,

And teaches me to kill or hang myself:

If I were mad, I should forget my son,

Or madly think a babe of clouts were he:

I am not mad; too well, too well I feel

The different plague of each calamity.