

# King John

Act V, sc. 2 (line 132)

## BASTARD

By all the blood that ever fury breathed,  
The youth says well. Now hear our English king;  
For thus his royalty doth speak in me.  
He is prepared, and reason too he should:  
This apish and unmannerly approach,  
This harness'd masque and unadvised revel,  
This unhair'd sauciness and boyish troops,  
The king doth smile at; and is well prepared  
To whip this dwarfish war, these pigmy arms,  
From out the circle of his territories.  
That hand which had the strength, even at your door,  
To cudgel you and make you take the hatch,  
To dive like buckets in concealed wells,  
To crouch in litter of your stable planks,  
To lie like pawns lock'd up in chests and trunks,  
To hug with swine, to seek sweet safety out  
In vaults and prisons, and to thrill and shake  
Even at the crying of your nation's crow,  
Thinking his voice an armed Englishman;  
Shall that victorious hand be feebled here,  
That in your chambers gave you chastisement?

No: know the gallant monarch is in arms  
And like an eagle o'er his airy towers,  
To souse annoyance that comes near his nest.  
And you degenerate, you ingrate revolts,  
You bloody Neroes, ripping up the womb  
Of your dear mother England, blush for shame;  
For your own ladies and pale-visaged maids  
Like Amazons come tripping after drums,  
Their thimbles into armed gauntlets change,  
Their needles to lances, and their gentle hearts  
To fierce and bloody inclination.