

# The Life and Death of King John

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## SCENE III. The same.

*Alarums, excursions, retreat. Enter KING JOHN, QUEEN ELINOR, ARTHUR, the BASTARD, HUBERT, and Lords*

### KING JOHN

[To QUEEN ELINOR] So shall it be; your grace shall stay behind  
So strongly guarded.

*To ARTHUR*

Cousin, look not sad:  
Thy grandam loves thee; and thy uncle will  
As dear be to thee as thy father was.

### ARTHUR

O, this will make my mother die with grief!

### KING JOHN

[To the BASTARD] Cousin, away for England!  
haste before:  
And, ere our coming, see thou shake the bags  
Of hoarding abbots; imprisoned angels  
Set at liberty: the fat ribs of peace  
Must by the hungry now be fed upon:  
Use our commission in his utmost force.

### BASTARD

Bell, book, and candle shall not drive me back,  
When gold and silver beckons me to come on.  
I leave your highness. Grandam, I will pray,  
If ever I remember to be holy,  
For your fair safety; so, I kiss your hand.

### ELINOR

Farewell, gentle cousin.

### KING JOHN

Coz, farewell.

**QUEEN ELINOR**

Come hither, little kinsman; hark, a word.

**KING JOHN**

Come hither, Hubert. O my gentle Hubert,  
We owe thee much! within this wall of flesh  
There is a soul counts thee her creditor  
And with advantage means to pay thy love:  
And my good friend, thy voluntary oath  
Lives in this bosom, dearly cherished.  
Give me thy hand. I had a thing to say,  
But I will fit it with some better time.  
By heaven, Hubert, I am almost ashamed  
To say what good respect I have of thee.

**HUBERT**

I am much bounden to your majesty.

**KING JOHN**

Good friend, thou hast no cause to say so yet,  
But thou shalt have; and creep time ne'er so slow,  
Yet it shall come from me to do thee good.  
I had a thing to say, but let it go:  
The sun is in the heaven, and the proud day,  
Attended with the pleasures of the world,  
Is all too wanton and too full of gawds  
To give me audience: if the midnight bell  
Did, with his iron tongue and brazen mouth,  
Sound on into the drowsy race of night;  
If this same were a churchyard where we stand,  
And thou possessed with a thousand wrongs,  
Or if that surly spirit, melancholy,  
Had baked thy blood and made it heavy-thick,  
Which else runs tickling up and down the veins,  
Making that idiot, laughter, keep men's eyes  
And strain their cheeks to idle merriment,  
A passion hateful to my purposes,  
Or if that thou couldst see me without eyes,  
Hear me without thine ears, and make reply  
Without a tongue, using conceit alone,  
Without eyes, ears and harmful sound of words;  
Then, in despite of brooded watchful day,  
I would into thy bosom pour my thoughts:  
But, ah, I will not! yet I love thee well;  
And, by my troth, I think thou lovest me well.

**HUBERT**

So well, that what you bid me undertake,  
Though that my death were adjunct to my act,  
By heaven, I would do it.

**KING JOHN**

Do not I know thou wouldst?  
Good Hubert, Hubert, Hubert, throw thine eye  
On yon young boy: I'll tell thee what, my friend,  
He is a very serpent in my way;  
And whereso'er this foot of mine doth tread,  
He lies before me: dost thou understand me?  
Thou art his keeper.

**HUBERT**

And I'll keep him so,  
That he shall not offend your majesty.

**KING JOHN**

Death.

**HUBERT**

My lord?

**KING JOHN**

A grave.

**HUBERT**

He shall not live.

**KING JOHN**

Enough.  
I could be merry now. Hubert, I love thee;  
Well, I'll not say what I intend for thee:  
Remember. Madam, fare you well:  
I'll send those powers o'er to your majesty.

**ELINOR**

My blessing go with thee!

**KING JOHN**

For England, cousin, go:  
Hubert shall be your man, attend on you  
With all true duty. On toward Calais, ho!

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