

King John abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 1

Request

Situation: Robert Faulconbridge and his older brother Philip have approached the king, seeking to have the king determine which one of them is entitled to inherit the lands of the late Sir Robert Faulconbridge. Philip has physical and verbal characteristics similar the king's deceased older brother, Richard I, the iconic Richard the Lion-Hearted.

KING JOHN: Why, being younger born, doth he lay claim to thine inheritance?

PHILIP FAULCONBRIDGE: I know not why, except to get the land. But once he slandered me with bastardy. Compare our faces and be judge yourself. If old Sir Robert did beget us both and were our father, and this son like him, O old Sir Robert, father, on my knee I give heaven thanks I was not like to thee!

KING JOHN: Why, what a madcap hath heaven lent us here!

QUEEN ELEANOR ASIDE TO KING JOHN: He hath a characteristic expression of Coeur de Lion's face; the accent of his tongue affecteth him. Do you not read some tokens of my son in the large physique of this man?

KING JOHN ASIDE TO QUEEN ELEANOR: Mine eye hath well examined his parts and finds them perfect Richard.

KING JOHN TO ROBERT FAULCONBRIDGE: What doth move you to claim your brother's land?

Robert Faulconbridge to King John

**My gracious liege, your brother Richard did
Much employ my father, having once bid
Him as ambassador to Germany,
Where he did confer with the Emperor
On high affairs of that time. But in the
Absence of my father, the king wore
A path to my mother, taking undo
Advantage of my father, ashamed to
Speak as I am. But truth is truth and 'tween
Them this man was got; upon his deathbed
He bequeathed his lands to me. As can be seen,
This other son was none of his, he said.
My liege, let me have what is justly mine,
Provided in my father's final sign.**