

King John abbreviated

Act 3, Scene 1

Threat

Situation: Pandulph continues to press King Philip to honor his vow to the church, “his first vow.” Pandulph considers King Philip’s vow to the church above Philip’s vow to King John. Pandulph says that King Philip must honor his vow to the Church or that the Church’s curses will be so strong that he will “not escape their fate.”

PANDULPH: Therefore to arms! Be champion of our Church, or let the Church, our mother, breathe her curse on a revolting son. France, thou mayst sooner hold a serpent by the tongue than keep in peace that hand which thou dost hold.

KING PHILIP: I may disjoin my hand, but not my agreement.

Pandulph to King Philip II

O, let thy vow first made to God be thy
Commanding vow, the vow to hold most high:
To be champion of our Church. What thou
With England hast swor’st is deceiving
To thyself. This new vow ‘gainst thy first vow
Doth renounce your God, as if rebelling
Against thyself. Ne’er a better conquest
Of challenges you must face than to best
Arm thyself against giddy temptations,
On which our prayers come in, you accept
Them. But if you choose to not, know that one’s
Peril of our modest curses is set
So strong that thou shalt not escape their fate,
But in despair die ‘neath their deadly weight.

AUSTRIA: Rebellion, flat rebellion!

BASTARD: Will thou never be quiet? Will not a calfskin stop that mouth of thine?

DAUPHIN: Father, to arms!

BLANCHE: Upon thy wedding day? Against the blood that thou hast married?