

The Lion in Winter

A Comedy in Two Acts

by James Goldman

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



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THE LION IN WINTER, by James Goldman, directed by Noel Willman, with scenery and costumes by Will Steven Armstrong, was presented by Eugene V. Wolsk, Walter A Hyman and Alan King with Emanuel Azenberg at the Ambassador Theatre, N. Y. C., March 3, 1966.

CAST

(In Order of Their Appearance)

HENRY II, *King of England* Robert Preston

ALAIS, *a French Princess* Suzanne Grossmann

JOHN, *the youngest son* Bruce Scott

GEOFFREY, *the middle son* Dennis Cooney

RICHARD LIONHEART, *the oldest son* James Rado

ELEANOR, *Henry's wife* Rosemary Harris

PHILIP, *King of France* Christopher Walken

THE TIME: Christmas, 1183

THE PLACE: Henry's Castle at Chinon, France

The historical material on Henry's reign is considerable insofar as battles, plots, wars, treaties and alliances are concerned. This play—while simplifying the political maneuvering combining a meeting of the French and English Kings in 1183 with a Royal Court held at Windsor in the following year into a Christmas Court that never was—is accurately based on the available data.

The facts we have, while clear enough as to the outcome of relationships—such things as who kills who and when—say little if anything about the quality and content of those relationships. The people in this play, their character and passions, while consistent with the facts we have, are fictions.

The play, finally, contains anachronisms in speech, thought, habit, custom and so on. Those the author is aware of—the way, for instance, Christmas is celebrated—are deliberate and not intended to outrage the historical aspects of the script.

The Lion in Winter

ACT I

SCENE 1

SCENE: *Henry's palace at Chinon was famous for its grace and beauty. The arches, walls and columns of the unit set, though stone, are soft and light. The rooms in which the play occurs are free of furniture as possible.*

AT RISE: *We are in the bedroom of ALAIS CAPET. There is a chair D. R. and a bench U. C. Henry's coat is on bench U. C. ALAIS CAPET, C., dressed for a state occasion, is just removing a small crown from her exquisite head. She is 23, serenely beautiful and, though glaring at him at the moment, unmistakably in love with: HENRY PLANTAGENET. He has just turned 50, an age at which, in his time, men were either old or dead. Not HENRY. Though arthritis comes occasionally and new battle wounds don't heal the way the old ones did, he still is very nearly all he ever was. He is enjoying that final rush of physical and mental vigor that comes to some men not before the end but just before the start of the decline. He wears, as always, plain, dull, unimpressive clothes. He is standing near the doorway when we see him. As ALAIS takes her crown off, he turns to her and, with the beginnings of impatience, says:*

HENRY. You must know that's a futile gesture. Come along.

ALAIS. No; I'll stay here and you can send reports. *(Removes crown and places it on wall R.)*

HENRY. It's going to be a jungle of a day: if I start growling now, I'll never last.

ALAIS. You'll last. You're like the rocks at Stonehenge; nothing knocks you down.

HENRY. In these rooms, Alais, on this Christmas, I have all the enemies I need.

ALAIS. (*Sits chair D. R.*) You have more than you think.

HENRY. Are you one? Has my willow turned to poison oak?

ALAIS. If I decided to be trouble, Henry, how much trouble could I be?

HENRY. Not much. You don't matter to the others; only me.

ALAIS. How great a matter am I?

HENRY. (*Crosses to her.*) Alais, in my time I've known contessas, milkmaids, courtesans and novices, whores, gypsies, jades and little boys, but nowhere in God's western world have I found anyone to love but you. (*He is kneeling U. S. of her.*)

ALAIS. And Rosamund.

HENRY. She's dead. (*He rises.*)

ALAIS. And Eleanor.

HENRY. The new Medusa? My good wife?

ALAIS. How is your Queen?

HENRY. (*Crosses U. C. Puts on coat.*) Decaying, I suppose.

ALAIS. You haven't seen her?

HENRY. No, nor smelled nor touched nor tasted. Don't be jealous of the gorgon; she is not among the things I love. How many husbands do you know who dungeon up their wives? I haven't kept the great bitch in the keep for ten years out of passionate attachment. (*Extending his hand.*) Come. I've heard she's aging badly; let's go look.

ALAIS. (*Rises; crosses to R. of HENRY.*) Would it be troublesome if I betrayed you?

HENRY. We've no secrets, Eleanor and I. How can you possibly betray me?

ALAIS. I could give away your plans.

HENRY. You don't know what they are.

ALAIS. I know you want to disinherit Richard.

HENRY. So does Eleanor. She knows young Henry's dead. The young king died in summer and I haven't named an heir. She knows I want John on the throne and I know she wants Richard. We are very frank about it.

ALAIS. (*Turning away.*) Henry, I can't be your mistress if I'm married to your son.

HENRY. Why can't you? Johnny wouldn't mind.

ALAIS. I do not like your Johnny.

HENRY. He's a good boy.

ALAIS. He's got pimples and he smells of compost.

HENRY. He's just sixteen; he can't help the pimples.

ALAIS. He could bathe.

HENRY. (*Crosses to her.*) It isn't such a dreadful thing to be a Queen of England. Not all eyes will weep for you.

ALAIS. (*Turns to HENRY.*) Will yours?

HENRY. I don't know. Very likely. (*They embrace.*)

ALAIS. All I want is not to lose you. Can't you hide me? Can't I simply disappear?

HENRY. You know you can't. Your little brother Philip is the King of France now and he wants your wedding or your dowry back. I only took you for your dowry. You were seven. Two big knees and two big eyes and that's all. How was I to know?

ALAIS. Let Philip have the dowry back. It isn't much.

HENRY. (*Crossing L.*) I can't. The Vexin is a little county but it's vital to me.

ALAIS. And I'm not.

HENRY. It's been my luck to fall in love with landed women. When I married Eleanor, I thought: "You lucky man. The richest woman in the world. She owns the Aquitaine, the greatest province on the Continent—and beautiful as well." She was, you know.

ALAIS. And you adored her.

HENRY. (*Crosses to ALAIS.*) Memory fails. There may have been an era when I did. (*Gently arranging a wisp of her hair.*) Let's have one strand askew; nothing in life has any business being perfect.

ALAIS. (*Crosses L.*) Henry, I was brought up to be dutiful. I smile a lot, bend easily and hope for very little. It is useful training and it's made a lot of hard things possible. But, Henry, not this thing.

HENRY. I've had them summoned and I'll have you by me. With the headdress or without it.

ALAIS. (*Crosses to bench.*) Oh, what difference does it make who's king?

HENRY. What difference?

ALAIS. (*Sits.*) Have you found religion, Henry? Are you going to look down from the clouds and see who's sitting in your place?

HENRY. (*Crosses L.*) I've got to know before I die. I've built an empire and I've got to know it's going to last. I've put together England and I've added to it half of France. I am the greatest power in a thousand years. And after me comes John. If I can't leave this state to John, I've lived for nothing.

ALAIS. John doesn't care for you at all.

HENRY. We love each other deeply.

ALAIS. None of them has any love for you.

HENRY. Because we fight? Tell me they all three want the crown, I'll tell you it's a feeble prince that doesn't. They may snap at me or plot and that makes them the kind of sons I want. I've snapped and plotted all my life: there is no other way to be a king, alive and fifty all at once.

ALAIS. I'm going to fight for you.

HENRY. (*Sits chair D. L.*) Oh, fine.

ALAIS. When I was sixteen and we started this depraved relationship, I left everything to you. I lap sat, drank my milk and did what I was told. Not any more. Your cherub's twenty-three now and she's going to fight.

HENRY. With mace and chain?

ALAIS. With anything that I can think of.

HENRY. That's exactly what I need: another mind at work. Try; you can hear the thinking through the walls. There's Geoffrey, humming treachery. And Richard, growling out for gore. And Eleanor, she's thinking heavy thoughts like molten lead and marble slabs. My house is full of intellectual activity.

ALAIS. Add mine.

HENRY. (*Crosses to ALAIS.*) Alais, Alais—I don't plan to give you up. I don't plan to give up anything. I'll make alliances and bargains, threaten, beg, break heads and hearts and when I'm done, I'll make an heir of John, a petty prince of Richard and I'll still have you.

ALAIS. When can I believe you, Henry?

HENRY. Always; even when I lie.

ALAIS. How much is it safe to hope for?

HENRY. Everything.

ALAIS. But with so many enemies—

HENRY. (*Gets crown from L. wall; brings it to ALAIS.*) I know—and some of them are smarter folk than I or crueller or more ruthless or dishonest. But not all rolled in one. The priests write all the history these days and they'll do me justice. Henry, they'll say, was a master bastard. (*Takes her hand.*) Come; let's go downstairs and meet the family.

(*They exit U. R.*)

DIM AND BLACKOUT

ACT I

SCENE 2

SCENE: *A Reception Hall. Immediately following. It is a bright and spacious room. A refectory table, a chair, R. C., a stool, D. L., and seven bunches of holly on floor D. R.*

AT RISE: *The young Plantagenets*—RICHARD, GEOFFREY and JOHN—are bowing each other through doorway L. when we see them. RICHARD COEUR DE LION, at 26, looks both like his father and his legend. He is taller than HENRY, thick and powerful but at the same time graceful, handsome, impressive and exquisitely dressed. He has been a famous soldier since his middle teens and is thoroughly at home with power and politics. GEOFFREY, Count of Brittany, is 25, tall, thin, darkly attractive, quick of speech and movement. The best brain of a brainy family. JOHN, at 16, does indeed have pimples. Shorter than his brothers and pudgy without being fat, he has a round open face and a sweet smile.

JOHN. After you.

GEOFFREY. No; after you.

RICHARD. No; after you.

JOHN. *(Delighted with himself as he skips into the room.)* Oh, have it your way; after me.

RICHARD. *(Following in, along with GEOFFREY.)* You do keep growing, Johnny—

JOHN. *(Agreeing cheerfully.)* Every way but up. Look: holly. *(As he moves to the boughs and picks two up.)* I love Christmas.

GEOFFREY. *(Crossing to behind table.)* Warm and rosy time. The hot wine steams, the Yule log roars and we're the fat that's in the fire. She's here, you know.

JOHN. *(Crossing U. C.)* Who?

RICHARD. *(L. of table.)* Mother.

GEOFFREY. Since this morning.

RICHARD. Have you seen her?

GEOFFREY. Haven't you?

RICHARD. We're not as friendly as we were.

GEOFFREY. Does she still favor you?

RICHARD. Does she or doesn't she?

JOHN. *(Has placed holly on two columns R. C. Is crossing D. S.)* If I'm supposed to make a fuss and kiss her hairy cheek, I won't.

RICHARD. What you kiss, little prince, is up to you.

JOHN. *(Taking another bunch of holly.)* I'm Father's favorite; that's what counts.

RICHARD. *(Crossing to him.)* You hardly know me, Johnny, so I beg you to believe my reputation: I'm a constant soldier and a sometime poet and I will be King.

JOHN. *(Crosses below RICHARD to C.)* Just you remember: Father loves me best.

ELEANOR. *(Enters through L. arch. Sweeping in.)* The way you bicker it's a wonder that he cares for any of you. *(ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE is 61 and looks nothing like it. She is a truly handsome woman of great temperament, authority and presence. She has been a queen of international importance for 46 years and you know it. Finally, she is that most unusual thing: a genuinely feminine woman thoroughly capable of holding her own in a man's world.)*

GEOFFREY. *(Crossing to her. Delighted.)* Mother.

ELEANOR. *(Kissing GEOFFREY.)* Geoffrey—oh, but I do have handsome children. *(Crossing to JOHN.)* John—you're so clean and neat. *(Kisses JOHN.)* Henry takes good care of you. *(Crosses to RICHARD.)* And Richard. Don't look sullen, dear; *(Kisses him.)* it makes your eyes go small and piggy and your chin look weak. Where's Henry?

RICHARD. Upstairs with the family whore.

ELEANOR. That is a mean and tawdry way to talk about your fiancée.

JOHN. (*Has placed holly on column U. L. C.*) My fiancée.

ELEANOR. Whosever fiancée, I bought her up and she is dear to me and gentle. Have we seen the French king yet?

GEOFFREY. Not yet.

ELEANOR. (*Moves L. to GEOFFREY.*) Let's hope he's grown up like his father—simon pure and simon simple. Good, good Louis; if I'd managed sons for him instead of all those little girls, I'd still be stuck with being Queen of France and we should not have known each other. Such, my angels, is the role of sex in history. How's your father?

JOHN. (*Sitting behind table.*) Do you care?

ELEANOR. More deeply, lamb, than you can possibly imagine. Is my hair in place? I've given up the looking glass; quick-silver has no sense of tact.

RICHARD. He still plans to make John king.

ELEANOR. (*At c.*) Of course he does. My, what a greedy little trinity you are: king, king, king. Two of you must learn to live with disappointment.

HENRY. (*Entering through L. arch; ALAIS following.*) Ah—but which two?

ELEANOR. (*Curtseys.*) Let's deny them all and live forever.

(*All BOYS bow; JOHN stands behind chair.*)

HENRY. Tusk to tusk through all eternity. (*Crosses to ELEANOR.*) How was your crossing? Did the Channel part for you?

ELEANOR. (*Kissing his hand.*) It went flat when I told it to; I didn't think to ask for more. How dear of you to let me out of jail.

HENRY. It's only for the holidays.

ELEANOR. Like school. You keep me young. Here's gentle Alais. (*As ALAIS crosses to ELEANOR and starts to curtsy.*) No, no; greet me like you used to. (*Embraces*

ALAIS *lightly.*) Fragile I am not: affection is a pressure I can bear.

(*ELEANOR crosses D. L.; sits on stool; ALAIS crosses U. L. C. GEOFFREY stands behind her.*)

HENRY. (*Standing behind table.*) I've had the French king sent for. We will have a tactile conversation, like two surgeons looking for a lump. We'll state positions and I'll make the first of many offers. He'll refuse it, naturally, I'll make a better one and so on through the holidays until I win. For the duration of this joyous ritual, you will give, to your father, your support. (*Sits.*)

RICHARD. Why will I?

ELEANOR. Out of duty, dear. (*To HENRY.*) Tell me, what's Philip like? I hear he's quite impressive for a boy of seventeen—

(*PHILIP enters through L. arch.*)

HENRY. (*Sees PHILIP.*) My Lord.

ELEANOR. —and you are. I'm Eleanor who might have been your mother. All the others here you know.

PHILIP. (*He crosses to ELEANOR. PHILIP CAPET is indeed gorgeous. He is tall, well-proportioned and handsome without being at all pretty. His manner is open, direct and simple and he smiles easily. He has been King of France for three years and has learned a great deal. Bowing.*) Queen Eleanor—Your Grace.

HENRY. (*Rises.*) My Lord. Welcome to Chinon.

PHILIP. (*Crosses to HENRY.*) Sir.

HENRY. Your grievances, as we have understood them, have to do with Princess Alais and her dowry.

PHILIP. (*L. of table.*) Sixteen years ago, you made a treaty with us. It is time its terms were executed.

HENRY. (*Sits L. edge of table.*) We are willing to discuss it.

PHILIP. Our position comes to this: that you will either

hold the marriage or return the Vexin. Alais marries Richard or we'll have the county back at once.

HENRY. That's clear, concise and well presented. My position is—well, frankly, Philip, it's a tangle. Once I'm dead, who's to be king? I could draw papers 'til my scribes drop or the ink runs out, and once I died, unless I've left behind me three contented sons, my lands will split three ways in civil war. You see my problem?

PHILIP. Clearly, but it's yours, not mine.

HENRY. (*Rises; crosses D. R. to RICHARD.*) Two years ago, the Queen and I, for reasons passing understanding, gave the Aquitaine to Richard. That makes Richard very powerful. How can I give him Alais, too? The man she marries has you for an ally.

PHILIP. (*Crossing to below table.*) It's their wedding or the Vexin back. Those are the terms you made with Louis.

HENRY. True but academic, lad. The Vexin's mine.

PHILIP. By what authority?

HENRY. It's got my troops all over it: that makes it mine. (*Crosses to PHILIP.*) Now hear me, boy. You take what memories you have of me and mark them out of date. I'm not your father's friend, now; I'm his son's opponent.

PHILIP. I'm a king: I'm no man's boy.

HENRY. A king? Because you put your ass on purple cushions?

PHILIP. Sir. (*He turns on his heel, starts to go.*)

HENRY. Philip, you haven't got the feel of this at all. Use all your voices: when I bellow, bellow back.

PHILIP. (*L. C. White with anger.*) I'll mark that down.

HENRY. (*Crosses to PHILIP.*) This, too. We are the world in small. A nation is a human thing; it does what we do, for our reasons. Surely, if we're civilized, it must be possible to put the knives away. We can make peace. We have it in our hands.

PHILIP. I've tutors of my own. Will that be all?

HENRY. Oh, think. You came here for a reason. You've

made demands of me. Now don't you want to ask me if I've got an offer?

PHILIP. Have you got an offer?

HENRY. Not yet—but I'll think of one. (*PHILIP starts off again.*) Oh, by the way . . . (*At the L. archway, PHILIP turns. Grinning at him.*) You're better at this than I thought you'd be.

PHILIP. (*Grinning back.*) I wasn't sure you'd noticed. (*Exit.*)

HENRY. (*At c.*) Well—what shall we hang? The holly or each other?

ELEANOR. You can't read your sons at all. That isn't anger they're projecting; it's anxiety.

HENRY. I read them. I know Richard's moods and Johnny's faces and the thought behind the pitch of Geoffrey's voice. The trouble's at the other end; they don't know me. There is a legend of a king called Lear with whom I have a lot in common. Both of us have kingdoms and three children we adore and both of us are old. But there it stops. He cut his kingdom into bits. I can't do that. I've built this house and it will stand. What I have architected, you will not destroy.

RICHARD. (*Crosses to HENRY.*) Would you say, Father, that I have the makings of a king?

HENRY. A splendid king.

RICHARD. Would you expect me, Father, to be disinherited without a fight?

HENRY. Of course you'll fight. I raised you to.

RICHARD. I don't care what you offer Philip. I don't care what plans you make. I'll have the Aquitaine and Alais and the crown. I'll have them all.

JOHN. (*At D. R. corner to table.*) You're going to love my coronation.

RICHARD. I won't give up one to get the other. I won't trade off Alais or the Aquitaine to this— (*Indicating JOHN.*) this walking pustule. No, your loving son will not. (*Exits through L. arch.*)

JOHN. (*Crosses to HENRY.*) Did you hear what he called me?

ELEANOR. Clearly, dear. Now run along; it's nearly dinnertime.

JOHN. (*Crosses below HENRY to ELEANOR.*) I only do what Father tells me.

HENRY. (*Crosses to behind table.*) Go and eat.

JOHN. (*Following HENRY.*) Did I say something wrong? I'm always saying something wrong. (*HENRY glares at him.*) All right, I'll eat, I'll eat. (*He exits through L. arch.*)

(HENRY sits behind table.)

ELEANOR. And that's to be the king.

GEOFFREY. (*Crossing behind ELEANOR to C.*) And I'm to be his chancellor. Has he told you? John will rule the country while I run it. That's to say, he gets to spend the taxes that I get to raise.

ELEANOR. How nice for you.

GEOFFREY. It's not as nice as being King.

HENRY. We've made you Duke of Brittany. Is that so little?

GEOFFREY. No one ever thinks of crowns and mentions Geoff. Why is that? I make out three prizes here—a throne, a princess and the Aquitaine. Three prizes and three sons; but no one ever says, "Here, Geoff, here Geoff boy, here's a bone for you."

HENRY. I should have thought that being chancellor was a satisfying bone.

GEOFFREY. It isn't power that I feel deprived of; it's the mention that I miss. There's no affection for me here. You wouldn't think I'd want that, would you? (*Exits through L. arch.*)

(ALAIS crosses and stands L. of HENRY.)

ELEANOR. Henry, I have a confession.

HENRY. Yes?

ELEANOR. I don't much like our children. (*Turning to ALAIS.*) Only you—the child I raised but didn't bear.

ALAIS. (*Crosses D. L. C.*) You never cared for me.

ELEANOR. I did and do. Believe me, Henry's bed is Henry's province; he can people it with sheep for all I care. Which, on occasion, he has done.

HENRY. Still that? When Rosamund's been dead for seven years?

ELEANOR. Two months and eighteen days. I never liked her much.

HENRY. You count the days?

ELEANOR. I made the numbers up. (*To ALAIS.*) He found Miss Clifford in the mists of Wales and brought her home for closer observation. Liking what he saw, he scrutinized her many years. He loved her deeply and she him. (*Rises and crosses to L. of ALAIS.*) And yet, my dear, when Henry had to choose between his lady and my lands—

ALAIS. He'll leave me if he has to; I know that.

ELEANOR. Poor Alais.

ALAIS. (*Crosses below ELEANOR to L. arch.*) There's no sport in hurting me; it is so easy.

ELEANOR. After all the years of love, the hair I've brushed and braided and the tears I've kissed away, do you think I could bring myself to hurt you?

ALAIS. Eleanor, with both hands tied behind you. (*Exits through L. arch.*)

HENRY. (*Rises; crosses to R. of ELEANOR.*) She is lovely, isn't she?

ELEANOR. Yes, very.

HENRY. If I'd chosen, who could I have picked to love to gall you more?

ELEANOR. There's no one. (*Moving to the holly boughs.*) Come on; let's finish Christmassing the place.

HENRY. (*Following her.*) Time hasn't done a thing but wrinkle you.

ELEANOR. It hasn't even done that. I have borne six

girls, five boys and thirty-one connubial years of you. How am I possible? (*Picks up three bunches of holly.*)

HENRY. There are moments when I miss you.

ELEANOR. (*Gives HENRY two bunches of holly.*) Many?

HENRY. Do you doubt it?

ELEANOR. (*Rumpling his hair.*) That's my wooly sheep dog. (*Crosses L.*) So wee Johnny gets the crown.

HENRY. (*Following her.*) I've heard it rumored but I don't believe it.

ELEANOR. (*Turns to HENRY.*) Losing Alais will be hard, for you do love her.

HENRY. It's an old man's last attachment; nothing more. How hard do you find living in your castle?

ELEANOR. (*Placing holly on column D. S. of L. arch.*) It was difficult in the beginning but that's past. I find I've seen the world enough. I have my maids and menials in my courtyard and I hold my little court. It suits me now. (*Takes bunch of holly from HENRY and places on column U. S. of L. arch.*)

HENRY. I'll never let you loose. You led too many civil wars against me.

ELEANOR. (*Crossing back to HENRY.*) And I damn near won the last one. (*Takes last bunch of holly from him and places it on column U. L. C.*) Still, as long as I get trotted out for Christmas Courts and state occasions now and then—for I do like to see you—it's enough. (*Crossing D. R.*) Do you still need the Vexin, Henry?

HENRY. (*Following her.*) Need you ask?

ELEANOR. My strategy is ten years old. (*ELEANOR picks up last bunch of holly and places it on D. R. column.*)

HENRY. It is as crucial as it ever was. My troops there are a day away from Paris, just a march of twenty miles. I must keep it.

ELEANOR. (*Surveying the holly.*) I'd say that's all the jollying this room can stand. I'm famished. Let's go in to dinner.

HENRY. (*R. C. Extending his arm.*) Arm in arm.

ELEANOR. (*Taking it, smiling at him.*) And hand in hand. You're still a marvel of a man.

HENRY. And you're my lady. (*She crosses below HENRY; they start to exit.*)

ELEANOR. (*Stops.*) Henry, dear, if Alais doesn't marry Richard, I will see you lose the Vexin.

HENRY. Well, I thought you'd never say it.

ELEANOR. I can do it.

HENRY. You can try.

ELEANOR. My Richard is the next king, not your John. I know you, Henry. I know every twist and bend you've got and I'll be waiting round each corner for you.

HENRY. Do you truly care who's king?

ELEANOR. I care because you care so much.

HENRY. I might surprise you. (*Moves R.; sits D. S. edge of table.*) Eleanor, I've fought and bargained all these years as if the only thing I lived for was what happened after I was dead. I've something else to live for now. I've blundered onto peace.

ELEANOR. On Christmas Eve.

HENRY. Since Louis died, while Philip grew, I've had no France to fight. And in that lull, I've found how good it is to write a law or make a tax more fair or sit in judgment to decide which peasant gets a cow. There is, I tell you, nothing more important in the world. And now the French boy's big enough and I am sick of war.

ELEANOR. Come to your question, Henry; make the plea. What would you have me do? Give out, give up, give in?

HENRY. Give me a little peace.

ELEANOR. A little? Why so modest? How about eternal peace? Now, there's a thought.

HENRY. If you oppose me, I will strike you any way I can.

ELEANOR. Of course you will.

HENRY. (*Extending his arm as before.*) We have a hundred barons we should look the loving couple for.

ELEANOR. (*They stand regally, side by side. Smiling a terrible smile at him.*) Can you read love in that?

HENRY. (*Nodding, smiling back.*) And permanent affection.

ELEANOR. (*As they start, grand and stately, for the L. arch.*) Henry?

HENRY. Madam?

ELEANOR. Did you ever love me?

HENRY. No.

ELEANOR. Good. That will make this pleasanter.

(*They exit.*)

DIM AND BLACKOUT

ACT I

SCENE 3

SCENE: ELEANOR's chamber. A short time later.

AT RISE: ELEANOR is seated at a table U. C. wrapping Christmas presents. There is a bench D. R. and a stool D. L. a wine pitcher and a glass are placed on a low wall U. L. C. She looks up as:

RICHARD. (*Enters U. R.*) All right. I've come. I'm here. What was it you wanted?

ELEANOR. Just to talk. We haven't been alone, the two of us, in—how long is it, lamb? Two years? You look fit. War agrees with you. I keep informed. I follow all your slaughters from a distance. Do sit down.

RICHARD. Is this an audience, a goodnight kiss with cookies or an ambush?

ELEANOR. Let us hope it's a reunion. Must you look so stern? I sent for you to say I want your love again but I can't say it to a face like that.

RICHARD. My love, of all things. What could you want it for?

ELEANOR. Why, for itself. What other purpose could I have?

RICHARD. You'll tell me when you're ready to.

ELEANOR. I scheme a lot; I know. I plot and plan. That's how a queen in prison spends her time. But there is more to me than that. My mind's not disembodied. Can't I say I love a son and be believed?

RICHARD. (*Crosses above ELEANOR to U. L.*) If I were you, I'd try another tack. I have no dammed up floods of passion for you. There's no chance I'll overflow.

ELEANOR. You are a dull boy.

RICHARD. Am I?

ELEANOR. Dull as plainsong: la, la, la, forever on one note. I gave the Church up out of boredom. I can do as much for you.

RICHARD. You'll never give me up; not while I hold the Aquitaine.

ELEANOR. You think I'm motivated by a love of real estate?

RICHARD. (*Crosses to L. of table.*) I think you want it back. You're so deceitful you can't ask for water when you're thirsty. We could tangle spiders in the webs you weave. (*Moves D. L.*)

ELEANOR. If I'm so devious, why don't you go? Don't stand there quivering in limbo. Love me, little lamb, or leave me.

RICHARD. (*Not moving.*) Leave you, madam? With pure joy.

ELEANOR. Departure is a simple act. You put the left foot down and then the right.

JOHN. (*Entering U. R. in high spirits, followed by GEOFFREY.*) Mother—

ELEANOR. Hush, dear. Mother's fighting.

JOHN. (*U. S. of table.*) Father's coming with the treaty terms.

ELEANOR. (*Gathering packages, rises.*) No doubt he's told you what they are.

JOHN. He doesn't have to. Don't you think I know which end is up?

ELEANOR. (*Crosses to D. R. bench.*) Of course you do, dear. Has he put the terms to Philip? (*Places packages inside bench.*)

HENRY. (*Entering U. R. with ALAIS following.*) Not yet, but we're shortly granting him an audience. I hope you'll all attend.

ELEANOR. (*Sitting on bench.*) Are we to know the terms or have you come to tease us?

HENRY. Not at all. The terms are these—

RICHARD. What are you giving up to Philip? What of mine?

JOHN. Whatever you've got goes to me.

GEOFFREY. (*Standing R. of bench.*) And what's the nothing Geoffrey gets?

HENRY. For God's sake, boys, you can't all three be king.

RICHARD. All three of us can try.

HENRY. That's pointless now. (*Crosses below table to RICHARD.*) The treaty calls for you to marry Alais and you shall. I want you to succeed me, Richard. Alais and the crown: I give you both.

RICHARD. I've got no sense of humor. If I did, I'd laugh.

HENRY. I've used you badly, haven't I?

RICHARD. You've used me cleverly and well.

HENRY. Not any more. I mean to do it.

JOHN. (*Crossing to R. of HENRY.*) What about me? I'm your favorite, I'm the one you love.

HENRY. John, I can't help myself. (*Pushes JOHN next to RICHARD.*) Stand next to Richard. See how you compare. Could you keep anything I gave you? Could you beat him on the field?

JOHN. You could.

HENRY. But John, I won't be there.

JOHN. (*Grabs HENRY's arm.*) Let's fight him now.

HENRY. How can I? There's no way to win. I'm losing too, John. All my dreams for you are lost.

JOHN. You've led me on.

HENRY. I never meant to.

JOHN. You're a failure as a father, you know that.

HENRY. (*Crossing R.*) I'm sorry, John.

JOHN. (*Follows HENRY to C.; sits on floor D. S. of table.*) Not yet you're not. But I'll do something terrible and you'll be sorry then.

ELEANOR. Did you rehearse all this or are you improvising?

HENRY. Good God, woman, face the facts.

ELEANOR. Which ones? We've got so many.

HENRY. Power is the only fact. (*Indicating RICHARD.*) He is our ablest son. He is the strongest, isn't he? How can I keep him from the crown? He'd only take it if I didn't give it to him.

RICHARD. No—you'd make me fight to get it. I know you: you'd never give me everything.

HENRY. True—and I haven't. You get Alais and you get the kingdom but I get the one thing I want most. If you're king, England stays intact. I get that. It's all yours now—the girl, the crown, the whole black bloody business. Isn't that enough? (*Exits U. R.*)

ALAIS. (*U. R. C.*) I don't know who's to be congratulated. Not me, certainly. (*To ELEANOR.*) You got me for your Richard. How'd you manage it? Did you tell him he's your wooly lamb? Or say how much you like it in your castle?

ELEANOR. (*Nodding.*) It's all lies but I told him.

ALAIS. Kings, queens, knights everywhere you look and I'm the only pawn. I haven't got a thing to lose: that makes me dangerous. (*Exits U. R.*)

ELEANOR. Poor child.

JOHN. Poor John—who says poor John? Don't everybody sob at once. My God, if I went up in flames, there's not a living soul who'd pee on me to put the fire out.

RICHARD. Let's strike a flint and see. (*Crosses and sits on D. L. stool.*)

JOHN. He hates me. Why? What should he hate me for? Am I the eldest son? Am I the heir? Am I the hero? (*Rises; crosses to RICHARD.*) What's my crime? Is it some childhood score, some baby hurt? When I was six and you were sixteen, did I brutalize you? What?

ELEANOR. (*Rises.*) For whatever I have done to you, forgive me.

JOHN. (*Turns to her.*) What could you have done? You were never close enough.

ELEANOR. (*Moves toward him.*) When you were little, you were torn from me: blame Henry.

JOHN. I was torn from you by midwives and I haven't seen you since.

ELEANOR. Then blame me if it helps.

RICHARD. No, it's the midwives' fault. They threw the baby out and kept the afterbirth.

JOHN. (*Crosses to RICHARD. So quietly it's probably true.*) You're everything a little brother dreams of. You know that? I used to dream about you all the time.

ELEANOR. (*Arms open.*) Oh, Johnny . . .

JOHN. (*Turns to her.*) That's right, Mother; mother me.

ELEANOR. Yes, if you'd let me.

JOHN. (*Going to her.*) Let you? Let you put your arms around me just the way you never did? (*They are close.*) You can do it. Think I'm Richard. (*She puts her arms around him. Close to breaking.*) That's it. That's the way. Now kiss my scabby cheek and run your fingers through my hair.

ELEANOR. John, John . . .

JOHN. (*Wrenching away, moves R.*) No—it's all false. You know what I am? I'm the family nothing. Geoffrey's smart and Richard's brave and I'm not anything.

ELEANOR. You are to me.

JOHN. I'll show you, Eleanor. I haven't lost yet. (*Moving to go.*) Geoff.

GEOFFREY. In a minute.

JOHN. What's that?

GEOFFREY. Run along. I'm busy now.

JOHN. I give the orders. I'm the master. When I call, you come.

GEOFFREY. (*Sits D. R. bench.*) There's news in Chinon, John. That falling sound was you.

JOHN. The woods are full of chancellors.

GEOFFREY. And the castles full of kings.

JOHN. Oh, you're not really leaving me?

GEOFFREY. No; I've already left.

JOHN. I don't care. I don't need anybody. (*Exits U. R.*)

GEOFFREY. Well, Mummy, here I am.

ELEANOR. John's lost a chancellor, has he?

GEOFFREY. And you've gained one.

ELEANOR. (*Moving to table.*) It's a bitter thing your Mummy has to say.

GEOFFREY. She doesn't trust me.

ELEANOR. (*Sits at table.*) You must know Henry isn't through with John. He'll keep the Vexin 'til the moon goes blue from cold and as for Richard's wedding day, we'll see the second coming first; the needlework alone can last for years.

GEOFFREY. I know. You know I know. I know you know I know, we know that Henry knows and Henry knows we know it. We're a knowledgeable family. (*Rises.*) Do you want my services or don't you?

ELEANOR. Why are you dropping John?

GEOFFREY. (*R. of ELEANOR.*) Because you're going to win.

ELEANOR. I haven't yet.

GEOFFREY. (*Crosses L. above table.*) You will with me to help you. I can handle John. He'll swallow anything I tell him and I'll take him by the hand and walk him into any trap you set.

ELEANOR. You're good, you're first class, Geoff. Did John agree?

GEOFFREY. (*L. of table.*) To what?

ELEANOR. To making you his chancellor for betraying me?

GEOFFREY. I have some principles.

ELEANOR. Then how much did you get from Henry?

GEOFFREY. Get from Henry?

ELEANOR. What's the fee for selling me to him? Or have you found some way of selling everyone to everybody?

GEOFFREY. Not yet, Mummy, but I'm working on it. I don't care who's king but you and Henry do. I want to watch the two of you go picnicking on one another.

ELEANOR. Yes, it's true; you really mean it.

GEOFFREY. Do you blame me?

ELEANOR. You've a gift for hating.

GEOFFREY. (*Crossing R. below table.*) You're the expert; you should know.

ELEANOR. You've loved me all these years.

GEOFFREY. (*Turns to ELEANOR.*) Well, God forgive me, I've upset the queen. Madam, may you rot.

ELEANOR. (*Rises.*) We need you. Help us.

GEOFFREY. What? And miss the fun of selling you?

ELEANOR. Be Richard's chancellor.

GEOFFREY. Rot. (*Exits U. R.*)

ELEANOR. (*Crosses to bench.*) Oh, Geoffrey. Well, that's how deals are made. We've got him if we want him. I should like some wine. (*Sits.*) Why did I have to have such clever children? He will sell us all, you know; but only if he thinks we think he won't. Scenes. I can't touch my sons except in scenes. (*Looking at him as he hands her the wine.*) What's the matter, Richard?

RICHARD. Nothing.

ELEANOR. It's a heavy thing, your nothing. When I write or send for you or speak or reach, your nothings come. Like stones.

RICHARD. Don't play a scene with me.

ELEANOR. I wouldn't if I could.

RICHARD. There'd be no profit in it. That's my one

advantage over you. You're wiser, shrewder, more experienced. I'm colder; I feel less.

ELEANOR. (*Rises and crosses to table; sits.*) Why, you don't know yourself at all. I've known who I am some years now. I had, at one time, many appetites. I wanted poetry and power and the young men who create them both. I even wanted Henry, too, in those days. Now I've only one desire left: to see you king.

RICHARD. The only thing you want to see is Father's vitals on a bed of lettuce. You don't care who wins as long as Henry loses. You'd see Philip on the throne. You'd feed us to the Franks or hand us to the Holy Romans. You'd do anything.

ELEANOR. (*Nodding wearily.*) That's good to know.

RICHARD. You are Medea to the teeth but this is one son you won't use for vengeance on your husband.

ELEANOR. I could bend you. I could wear you like a bracelet—but I'd sooner die.

RICHARD. You're old enough to die, in any case.

ELEANOR. How my captivity has changed you. Henry meant to hurt me and he's hacked you up instead. More wine. (*He takes the glass, goes and pours. Gazing at the hand that held the glass.*) Men coveted this talon once. Henry was eighteen when we met and I was Queen of France. He came down from the North to Paris with a mind like Aristotle's and a form like mortal sin. We shattered the Commandments on the spot. I spent three months annulling Louis—and in spring, in May not far from here, we married. Young Count Henry and his countess. But in three years time, I was his queen and he was King of England. Done at twenty-one. Five years your junior, General.

RICHARD. (*Brings her the wine and stands L. of table.*) I can count.

ELEANOR. No doubt the picture of your parents being fond does not hang in your gallery—but we were fond. There was no Thomas Becket then, or Rosamund. No rivals—only me. And then young Henry came and you

and all the other blossoms in my garden. Yes, if I'd been sterile, darling, I'd be happier today.

RICHARD. Is that designed to hurt me?

ELEANOR. What a waste. I've fought with Henry over who comes next, whose dawn is it and which son gets the sunset and we'll never live to see it. Look at you. I loved you more than Henry and it's cost me everything.

RICHARD. What do you want?

ELEANOR. I want us back the way we were.

RICHARD. That's not it.

ELEANOR. All right, then. I want the Aquitaine.

RICHARD. Now that's the mother I remember. (*Crosses R. below table.*)

ELEANOR. (*Grabs his arm.*) No, it's not at all, but if you find her more congenial, she's the one you'll get. (*Rises; crosses L.*) We can win. I can get you Alais. I can make the marriage happen—but I've got to have the Aquitaine to do it. I must have it back.

RICHARD. You were better in your scene with Geoffrey.

ELEANOR. (*Crosses to above table.*) Shall I write my will? "To Richard, everything." Would you believe me then? Where's paper?

RICHARD. Paper burns.

ELEANOR. And tears and turns to pudding in the rain. What can I do?

RICHARD. (*Sits D. R. bench.*) I did think Geoffrey put it nicely. You can rot.

ELEANOR. (*Crosses to RICHARD. Kneels beside him.*) I love you.

RICHARD. You love nothing. You are incomplete. The human parts of you are missing. You're as dead as you are deadly. (*RICHARD rises and starts out.*)

ELEANOR. Don't leave me.

RICHARD. (*Comes back to L. of ELEANOR.*) You were lovely once. I've seen the pictures.

ELEANOR. Oh, don't you remember how you loved me?

RICHARD. Vaguely—like a legend.

ELEANOR. (*Rising.*) You remember. We were always

hand in hand. (*Thrusting her hand in his.*) That's how it felt.

RICHARD. As coarse and hot as that.

ELEANOR. (*Snatching her arm away.*) This won't burn. I'll scratch a will on this. (*Baring her forearm, a small knife suddenly in her other hand.*) To Richard, everything. (*Sits on bench.*)

RICHARD. (*As she draws the blade across the flesh, quickly moves to stop her; kneels beside her.*) Mother!

ELEANOR. Remember how I taught you numbers and the lute and poetry.

RICHARD. (*Softly, as they hold each other.*) Mother.

ELEANOR. See? You do remember. I taught you dancing, too, and languages and all the music that I knew and how to love what's beautiful. The sun was warmer then and we were every day together.

DIM AND BLACKOUT

ACT I

SCENE 4

SCENE: *The Reception Hall again. Immediately following. A Christmas tree has been added U. L. C.*

AT RISE: JOHN, seated on D. L. stool, is drinking from a bottle as GEOFFREY, slightly breathless, hurries in from R.

GEOFFREY. (*Crossing to JOHN.*) John—there you are.

JOHN. Go find yourself another fool.

GEOFFREY. You're angry: good. Now, here's my plan.

JOHN. (*Rising.*) You are a rancid bastard. Want to fight?

GEOFFREY. John, use your head. Would I betray you?

JOHN. (*Crossing below GEOFFREY to R.*) Why not? Everybody else does.

GEOFFREY. (*Following.*) John, I only turned on you to get their confidence. It worked; they trust me.

JOHN. (*Turns to GEOFFREY.*) I tell you, your leg could fall off at the pelvis and I wouldn't trust the stump to bleed.

GEOFFREY. If you're not king, I'm nothing. You're my way to power, John.

JOHN. (*Crossing L.*) I still don't trust you.

GEOFFREY. (*Sits D. s. edge of table.*) Always put your faith in vices. Trust my slyness if you think I'm sly. Make use of me, deceive me, cast me off—but not until I've made you king.

JOHN. (*Crosses to GEOFFREY.*) You think I can't out-think you, do you? All right, what's your plan?

GEOFFREY. We've got to make a deal with Philip.

JOHN. Why?

GEOFFREY. Because you're out and Richard's in.

JOHN. What kind of deal?

GEOFFREY. A war. If we three join and fight now, we can finish Richard off.

JOHN. You mean destroy him?

GEOFFREY. Yes.

JOHN. And Mother, too?

GEOFFREY. And Mother, too. Well, do we do it? Is it on?

JOHN. (*Crosses R.*) I've got to think.

GEOFFREY. We're extra princes now. You know where extra princes go.

PHILIP. (*Entering from L. arch.*) I see I'm early for my audience. Or am I late?

GEOFFREY. (*Rising and crossing to PHILIP.*) No, you're exquisitely on time. I feel the strangest sense of kinship with you, Philip.

PHILIP. (*At C.*) So you've sensed it, too.

GEOFFREY. How far around the corner were you?

PHILIP. How'd you know?

GEOFFREY. You came in so conveniently.

PHILIP. I'll learn.

GEOFFREY. Well, was there anything you didn't overhear?

PHILIP. (*Moves D. s.*) John's answer. Does he want a war or doesn't he?

GEOFFREY. (*Following.*) Do you? If John asks for your soldiers, will he get them?

PHILIP. It John wants a war, he's got one.

GEOFFREY. John, you hear that?

JOHN. I'm still thinking.

GEOFFREY. Let me help. It's either Richard on the throne or you.

JOHN. (*Crossing to PHILIP.*) You think we'd win?

PHILIP. I know it.

(HENRY and ALAIS are heard off L.)

JOHN. Father's coming.

GEOFFREY. (*Crossing R. PHILIP follows.*) This way. We've got plans to make. (*Turning back.*) John.

JOHN. (*Hides bottle behind Christmas tree.*) In a minute.

(PHILIP and GEOFFREY exit R.)

HENRY. (*Entering through L. arch with ALAIS. He carries a sheaf of state papers and documents. He crosses to behind table. ALAIS stands in front of arch.*) I'd appreciate a little quiet confidence. I have enough nits picking at me.

JOHN. (*Crosses to L. of table.*) Father, have you got a minute?

HENRY. What for?

JOHN. If you had a minute, we could talk.

HENRY. I'm busy now. Have you seen Philip? (HENRY sits.)

JOHN. Look: you know that hunting trip we're taking on my birthday?

HENRY. Well?

JOHN. Forget it. I'm not going.

HENRY. Why not?

JOHN. I'm just not.

HENRY. But John, the trip's all planned.

JOHN. (*Crossing R. Moving to go.*) I'll go get Philip for you.

HENRY. You did have a good time last year, didn't you?

JOHN. (*D. R. of table.*) I loved it.

HENRY. (*Rises. Crosses to JOHN and embraces him.*) What's wrong, lad?

JOHN. You're busy.

HENRY. True enough but—

JOHN. You've got more important things to do.

HENRY. I can't make things all right if I don't know what's wrong.

JOHN. (*Breaking away.*) You're giving Richard everything.

HENRY. You think I'd do that?

JOHN. (*Pouting.*) You don't love me any more.

HENRY. Don't pout—and stand up straight. (*Crosses to behind table.*) How often do I have to tell you?

JOHN. When's my coronation?

HENRY. (*Sits.*) When I say so.

JOHN. That's no answer. (*He starts off R.*)

HENRY. John.

JOHN. (*Turns to HENRY.*) Tell her how much you love her. You're a wonder with the women. (*Exits R.*)

HENRY. What in hell was that about?

ALAIS. (*Crossing to HENRY.*) He heard you disinherit him upstairs and wondered if you meant it.

HENRY. If I meant it? When I've fathered him and mothered him and babied him? He's all I've got. How often does he have to hear it? Every supper? Should we start the soup with who we love and who we don't?

ALAIS. I heard you promise me to Richard.

HENRY. You don't think I meant it?

ALAIS. I think you enjoy it, passing me from hand to hand. What am I to you—a collection plate? Or am I all you've got, like John?

HENRY. (*Rises.*) I've got to get the Aquitaine for John.

ALAIS. I talk people and you answer back in provinces.

HENRY. (*Crosses D. S. of table.*) They get mixed up. (*Moves to L. C.*) What's the Aquitaine to Eleanor? It's not a province, it's a way to torture me. That's why she's upstairs wooing Richard, wheezing on the coals. She'll squeeze it out of him. God, but I'd love to eavesdrop. (*Doing ELEANOR.*) I taught you prancing, lamb, and lute and flute—

ELEANOR. (*Enters through L. arch, laughing, carrying a great pile of Christmas boxes.*) That's marvelous; it's absolutely me. (*He takes some from her. Peering at him benignly.*) There you are. I thought as long as I was coming down I'd bring them. Where's the tree?

HENRY. (*Leading the way to it.*) Whatever are you giving me?

ELEANOR. You're such a child: you always ask.

HENRY. (*Reading from a large package.*) "To Henry." (*Weighing it.*) Heavy. (*Delighted.*) It's my headstone. Eleanor, you spoil me.

ELEANOR. (*Arranging packages.*) I never could deny you anything.

ALAIS. (*Crossing to L. arch.*) You've grown old gracefully, you two; I'll give you that.

HENRY. Don't go. It nettles her to see how much I need you.

ALAIS. You need me, Henry, like a tailor needs a tinker's dam.

HENRY. (*Crossing to her.*) Alais—

ALAIS. I know that look. He's going to say he loves me.

HENRY. Like my life. (*She turns sharply, exits.*) I talk like that to keep her spirits up. Well, how'd you do with Richard? Did you break his heart?

ELEANOR. (C.) You think he ought to give me back the Aquitaine?

HENRY. I can't think why he shouldn't. After all, I've promised him the throne.

ELEANOR. The boy keeps wondering if your promises are any good.

HENRY. There's no sense asking if the air's good when there's nothing else to breathe.

ELEANOR. Exactly what I told him.

HENRY. Have you got it? Will he give it back?

ELEANOR. How can you think I'd ever pass it on to John?

HENRY. It matters to me desperately.

ELEANOR. Why should it? Does it matter what comes after us?

HENRY. Ask any sculptor, ask Praxiteles, "Why don't you work in butter?" Eleanor, because it doesn't last.

ELEANOR. (*Crosses to above table.*) Is Johnny bronze? He'll go as green from mold as any of our sons.

HENRY. (*Following.*) I know that. Richard gets the throne. You heard my promise. What else do you want?

ELEANOR. (*Sits.*) No Aquitaine for John.

HENRY. I've got to give him something. Isn't some agreement possible?

ELEANOR. Love, in a world where carpenters get resurrected, anything is possible.

HENRY. You bore him, dammit; he's your son.

ELEANOR. Oh, heavens yes. Two hundred eighty days I bore him. I recall them all. You'd only just found Rosamund—

HENRY. (*Moves D. L.*) Why her so damn particularly? I've found other women.

ELEANOR. Countless others.

HENRY. (*Turns to her.*) What's your count? Let's have a tally of the bedspreads you've spread out on.

ELEANOR. Thomas Becket's.

HENRY. (*Crossing to L. of her.*) That's a lie.

ELEANOR. I know it. Jealousy looks silly on us, Henry.

HENRY. (*Crossing R. behind her.*) Yes—doesn't it?

ELEANOR. You still care what I do.

HENRY. (*D. R. of table.*) I want the Aquitaine for John. I want it and I'll have it.

ELEANOR. Is that menace you're conveying? Is it to be torture? Will you boil me or stretch me, which? Or am I to be perforated?

HENRY. (*Leans across table to ELEANOR.*) I have the documents and you will sign.

ELEANOR. How can you force me to? Threats? Sign or I refuse to feed you? Tears? Oh, sign before my heart goes crack. Bribes, offers, deals? I'm like the earth, old man; there isn't any way around me.

HENRY. I adore you.

ELEANOR. Save your aching arches; that road is closed.

HENRY. (*Moves above table to R. C.*) I've got an offer for you, *ma jolie*.

ELEANOR. (*Rises, crosses to him.*) A deal, a deal. I give the richest province on the continent to John for what? You tell me, mastermind. For what? (*Moves R. below table.*)

HENRY. Your freedom.

ELEANOR. Oh.

HENRY. Once Johnny has the Aquitaine, you're free. (*Crosses to her.*) I'll let you out. Think: on the loose in London, winters in Provence, impromptu trips to visit Richard anywhere he's killing people. All that for a signature.

ELEANOR. You're good.

HENRY. I thought it might appeal to you. You always fancied traveling.

ELEANOR. Yes, I did. I even made poor Louis take me on Crusade. How's that for blasphemy? (*Crosses below HENRY to L.*) I dressed my maids as Amazons and rode bare-breasted half way to Damascus. Louis had a seizure and I damn near died of windburn but the troops were dazzled. Henry, I'm against the wall.

HENRY. Because I've put you there, don't think I like to see it.

ELEANOR. I believe it; you do feel for me. To be a prisoner, to be bricked in when you've known the world—I'll never know how I've survived. These ten years, Henry, have been unimaginable. And you can offer me the only thing I want if I give up the only thing I treasure, and still feel for me. You give your falcons more affection than I get.

HENRY. My falcons treat me better.

ELEANOR. Handle me with iron gloves, then.

HENRY. (*Crossing to her.*) Sign the papers and we'll break the happy news. The queen is free, John joins the landed gentry, Philip's satisfied and Richard gets a princess.

ELEANOR. Yes. Let's have it done. I'll sign. On one condition.

HENRY. (*Crosses to table, picks up document.*) Name it.

ELEANOR. Have the wedding now.

HENRY. (*Puts document on table, turns to her.*) What's that?

ELEANOR. Why, I've surprised you. Surely it's not sudden. They've been marching down the aisle for sixteen years and that's a long walk. John can be the best man—that's a laugh—and you can give the bride away. I want to watch you do it.

HENRY. Alais—I can live without her.

ELEANOR. (*Moves to him.*) And I thought you loved her.

HENRY. So I do.

ELEANOR. Thank God. You frightened me: I was afraid this wouldn't hurt. (*ELEANOR moves D. L.*)

HENRY. You fill me full of fear and pity. What a tragedy you are.

ELEANOR. I wonder, do you ever wonder if I slept with Geoffrey?

HENRY. With my father?

ELEANOR. It's not true but one hears rumors. Don't you ever wonder?

HENRY. (*Crossing to her.*) Is it rich, despising me? Is it rewarding?

ELEANOR. No—it's terrible.

HENRY. Then stop it.

ELEANOR. How? It's what I live for.

HENRY. Rosamund, I loved you.

ELEANOR. (*Crossing U. C. calling.*) John—Richard—Geoffrey.

HENRY. (*Moves to below table.*) Where's a priest? I'll do it. I'll show you. By Christ, I will. (*As PHILIP, JOHN and GEOFFREY enter from R., ALAIS and RICHARD from L.*) Somebody dig me up a priest.

JOHN. (U. C.) What for? What's happened?

ELEANOR. Richard's getting married.

JOHN. Now? He's getting married now?

ELEANOR. I never cease to marvel at the quickness of your mind.

JOHN. You can't hurt me, you bag of bile, no matter what you say. (*To HENRY.*) But you can. Father, why?

HENRY. Because I say so. (*Motions to GEOFFREY D. R.*) You. Bring me a bishop.

ELEANOR. (*As GEOFFREY exits R.*) Get old Durham. He's just down the hall. (*Turning to ALAIS in L. arch RICHARD stands behind her.*) You'll make a lovely bride. I wonder if I'll cry. (*ELEANOR crosses to D. L. stool and sits.*)

ALAIS. You sound as if you think it's going to happen.

ELEANOR. (*Nodding.*) And I do.

ALAIS. He's only plotting. Can't you tell when Henry's plotting?

ELEANOR. Not this time.

ALAIS. He'll never give me up.

HENRY. (*Seated D. S. edge of table.*) You think I won't?

ALAIS. (*Crossing to him.*) Because you told me so.

HENRY. You're not my Helen; I won't fight a war to save a face. We're done.

ALAIS. I don't believe you.

HENRY. Wait ten minutes.

GEOFFREY. (*Entering from R.*) I've sent word to Durham. He'll be waiting in the chapel.

HENRY. (*Rises.*) Good—let's get it over with.

ALAIS. Don't do this to me, Henry.

HENRY. (*To RICHARD.*) Take her.

(*RICHARD crosses to ALAIS; HENRY crosses D. L. to ELEANOR.*)

ALAIS. No, wait. You don't want me, Richard.

HENRY. (*To ALAIS.*) Go to him.

ALAIS. Not yet— (*To PHILIP, R. C.*) I am your sister. Can't you find some pity for me? (*Crosses to ELEANOR.*) *Maman*, you won't let this happen? (*Turning.*) Henry, if you ever loved me— (*The procession has formed. GEOFFREY and PHILIP R., JOHN C. HENRY takes ALAIS' hand and hands her to RICHARD. Procession starts to move R. HENRY offers his arm to ELEANOR and they follow RICHARD and ALAIS.*) I won't do it. I won't say the words, not one of them. Henry, please. It makes no sense. Why give me up? What do you get? What are you gaining? (*She breaks away from RICHARD and turns to HENRY.*)

HENRY. (*At C.*) Why, the Aquitaine, of course.

RICHARD. (*Stopping dead.*) What's that? (*Crosses to HENRY.*)

HENRY. Your mother gets her freedom and I get the Aquitaine. (*To ELEANOR.*) That is the proposition, isn't it? You did agree.

RICHARD. (*To ELEANOR.*) Of course she did. I knew, I knew it. It was all pretense. You used me. God, and I believed you. I believed it all.

ELEANOR. (*Crosses to RICHARD.*) I meant it all.

RICHARD. (*Starts for L. arch.*) No wedding. There will be no wedding.

HENRY. (*Following.*) But, my boy—

RICHARD. (*Turns to him.*) Not at this price.

HENRY. But Durham's waiting.

RICHARD. (*R. C.*) She's not worth the Aquitaine.

HENRY. (*R. of RICHARD.*) You've simply got to marry her. It isn't much to ask. For my sake, Richard—

RICHARD. Never.

HENRY. But I've promised Philip. Think of my position.

RICHARD. Damn the wedding and to hell with your position.

HENRY. You don't dare defy me.

RICHARD. Don't I?

HENRY. (*To PHILIP, D. R.*) You're the King of France, for goodness sake. Speak up. Do something.

RICHARD. (*Crosses to R. C. to PHILIP.*) Make a threat, why don't you? Scare me.

PHILIP. Duncie.

RICHARD. Am I?

PHILIP. (*Crossing to RICHARD.*) He never meant to have the wedding.

HENRY. Come again?

PHILIP. (*Crossing to HENRY.*) You're good at rage. I like the way you play it.

HENRY. Boy, don't ever call a king a liar to his face.

PHILIP. I'm not a boy—to you or anybody.

HENRY. Boy, you came here asking for a wedding or the Vexin back. By God, you don't get either one. It's no to both.

PHILIP. You have a pact with France.

HENRY. Then damn the document and damn the French. She'll never marry, not while I'm alive.

PHILIP. Your life and never are two different times.

HENRY. Not on my clock, boy.

(*PHILIP exits through L. arch.*)

RICHARD. Listen to the lion. Flash a yellow tooth and frighten me.

HENRY. (*Moves D. L.*) Don't spoil it, Richard—take it like a good sport.

RICHARD. How's your bad leg?

HENRY. Better, thank you.

RICHARD. (*Crossing to HENRY.*) And your back and all the rest of it. You're getting old. One day you'll have me once too often.

HENRY. When? I'm fifty now. My God, boy, I'm the oldest man I know. I've got a decade on the Pope. What's it to be? The broadsword when I'm eighty-five?

RICHARD. I'm not a second son. Not now. Your Henry's in the vault, you know.

HENRY. I know; I've seen him there.

RICHARD. I'll have the crown.

HENRY. You'll have what Daddy gives you.

RICHARD. I am next in line.

HENRY. (*Brushing him aside, crosses to table.*) To nothing.

RICHARD. Then we'll have the broadswords now.

HENRY. (*Turning to him.*) This minute?

RICHARD. On the battlefield.

HENRY. So we're at war.

RICHARD. Yes, we're at war. I have two thousand at Poitiers.

HENRY. Can they hear you? Call and see who comes. You are as close to Poitiers as you're going to get. (*HENRY crosses to behind table, sits.*)

RICHARD. (*Crosses to L. of table.*) You don't dare hold me prisoner.

HENRY. You're a king's son, so I treat you with respect. You have the freedom of the castle.

RICHARD. You can't keep me here.

HENRY. Until we've all agreed that John comes next, I can and will.

RICHARD. The castle doesn't stand that holds me. Post your guards. (*Exits through L. arch.*)

JOHN. (*Standing U. R., moves to L. arch.*) My God,

I'm king again. Fantastic. It's a miracle. (*To GEOFFREY who joins him.*) Are you happy for me, Geoff?

GEOFFREY. (*As they exit together.*) I'm happy for us both.

ELEANOR. (*D. R. of table.*) I came close, didn't I? (*To ALAIS, D. R.*) I almost had my freedom and I almost had you for my son. (*Crosses L. below table.*) I should have liked it, being free. (*To HENRY.*) You played it nicely. You were good.

HENRY. I really was. I fooled you, didn't I? God, but I do love being king.

ELEANOR. Well, Henry, liege and lord, what happens now?

HENRY. (*Rises, tears document.*) I've no idea. I know I'm winning and I know I'll win but what the next move is— (*Crosses to ELEANOR.*) You're not scared?

ELEANOR. No.

HENRY. I think you are.

ALAIS. (*Moves to R. of table.*) I was. You mustn't play with feelings, Henry; not with mine.

HENRY. (*D. S. of table.*) It wasn't possible to lose you. I must hold you dearer than I thought. (*Turns to ELEANOR.*) You've got your enigmatic face on. What's your mood, I wonder.

ELEANOR. Pure delight. I'm locked up with my sons: what mother wouldn't dream of that? (*She moves to go, stops in the L. arch.*) One thing.

HENRY. Yes?

ELEANOR. May I watch you kiss her?

HENRY. Can't you ever stop?

ELEANOR. I watch you every night. I conjure it before I sleep.

HENRY. Leave it at that.

ELEANOR. My curiosity is intellectual: I want to see how accurate I am.

HENRY. (*Turning to ALAIS, opening his arms.*) Forget the dragon in the doorway: come. (*Holding her.*) Believe I love you, for I do. Believe I'm yours forever, for I am.

Believe in my contentment and the joy you give me and believe— (*Breaking, turning to ELEANOR.*) You want more? (*Their eyes burn at each other. Then, turning slowly back to ALAIS.*) I'm an old man in an empty place. Be with me.

(*They kiss. ELEANOR stands in the doorway, watching.*)

DIM AND BLACKOUT

ACT I

SCENE 5

SCENE: ELEANOR's chamber. Not long afterwards.

AT RISE: ELEANOR is alone on Stage. She is seated at the table. On the table is a jewel box filled with jewels, and a hand mirror. She is putting on jewelry. Rings, bracelets, necklaces; she is covered with the stuff.

ELEANOR. (*Putting on a great bib necklace.*) How beautiful you make me. What might Solomon have sung had he seen this? (*Picking up a mirror, unable to look.*) I can't. I'd turn to salt. (*Putting the mirror down.*) I've lost again. I'm done, for now. Well—there'll be other Christmases. (*Picking up another elaborate necklace.*) I'd hang you from the nipples but you'd shock the children. (*Putting it on.*) They kissed sweetly, didn't they. I'll have him next time. I can wait. (*Picking up a crown.*) Ah, there you are; my comfort and my company. We're locked in for another year: four seasons more. Oh, what a desolation, what a life's work. (*Putting it on as GEOFFREY enters U. R.*) Is it too much? Be sure to squint as you approach. You may be blinded by my beauty.

GEOFFREY. (*R. of ELEANOR.*) Richard's raging all around the castle.

ELEANOR. Is he? Why?

GEOFFREY. He says it's got to do with being held a prisoner but I think he likes to rage.

ELEANOR. And John?

GEOFFREY. John's skipping after Richard, saying naughty things.

ELEANOR. And you?

GEOFFREY. I thought you might be lonely.

ELEANOR. (*Taking off the crown, holding it out.*) Here, Chancellor. Try it on for size.

GEOFFREY. Why do you think so little of me?

ELEANOR. Little? Never that. Whatever you are, you're not little.

GEOFFREY. (*Moves below table to D. L.*) I remember my third birthday. Not just pictures of the garden or the gifts, but who did what to whom and how it felt. My memory reaches back that far and never once can I remember anything from you or Father warmer than indifference. Why is that?

ELEANOR. (*Putting crown back in box.*) I don't know.

GEOFFREY. That was not an easy question for me and I don't deserve an easy answer.

ELEANOR. There are times I think we loved none of our children.

GEOFFREY. (*Sits L. edge of table.*) Still too easy, don't you think?

ELEANOR. I'm weary and you want a simple answer and I haven't one. (*Starting to remove the jewelry.*) I was thinking earlier of Peter Abelard. I was a Queen of fifteen in those days and on dull afternoons I'd go watch Heloise watch Abelard spread heresy like bonemeal in the palace gardens. Here the Seine and there the cypress trees and how it bored me. Thought, pure thought, flashed clear as water all around me and all I could think about was how to make a Caesar of a monkish husband. I'd like to hear the old man talk again; I'd listen now.

For my ambition's thin with age and all the mysteries are as plump as ever. (*Looking at GEOFFREY.*) I read minds. In yours, a shapely hand is writing, "Clever Mother, what's your clever reason for this clever talk?" It isn't clever but you'll make it so. (*Patting his cheek.*) I am so sick of all of you.

JOHN. (*Enters U. R. Stands R. of ELEANOR.*) I thought I'd come and gloat a little.

ELEANOR. Mother's tired. Come stick pins tomorrow morning; I'll be more responsive then.

JOHN. (*Moves D. R.*) It's no fun goading anyone to-night.

ELEANOR. (*Holding her hand out.*) Come, let me look at you. (*JOHN crosses to her.*) I'm full of looks this evening. I have looked a little in the mirror and I've read a passage in your brother's mind; what's there to see in you? (*GEOFFREY crosses U. L.*) A little me, a little Henry and a lot of someone I don't know. Oh, John . . .

RICHARD. (*Entering U. R., crossing D. R.*) The bastard's boxed us up.

(*JOHN moves to above table.*)

ELEANOR. (*From far away.*) What's that, dear?

RICHARD. We're his prisoners, if that interests you.

ELEANOR. Why should it? I'm his prisoner anyway.

RICHARD. (*Crosses D. L.*) I've got to get to Poitiers. Henry wants a war, I'll give him one.

ELEANOR. I don't see how.

RICHARD. (*Turns to her.*) You seem to take that calmly.

ELEANOR. Well?

RICHARD. It was—correct me if I'm wrong, but it was my impression that you wanted Henry's throne for me.

ELEANOR. We've lost it this time, Richard. We can't win.

RICHARD. You think I'm finished, do you?

ELEANOR. So I do. I've suffered more defeats than you

have teeth. I know one when it happens to me. Take your wormwood like a good boy. Swallow it and go to bed.

RICHARD. I will be king.

ELEANOR. And so you will. But not this year—and what's it matter to me, anyway? The world stops when I die.

RICHARD. Yours does; mine doesn't.

ELEANOR. Leave it, Richard. Let it go for now. I have.

RICHARD. I can't.

JOHN. (*Crosses to him.*) It's not so hard. Try saying after me: John wins, I lose.

RICHARD. What if John died?

JOHN. What's that?

RICHARD. What if he left us suddenly?

JOHN. You wouldn't dare.

RICHARD. (*Takes out his dagger.*) Why on earth wouldn't I?

JOHN. (*Runs D. R.*) A knife—he's got a knife.

ELEANOR. Of course he has a knife. He always has a knife. We all have knives. It is eleven eighty-three and we're barbarians. How clear we make it. Oh, my piglets, we're the origins of war. Not history's forces nor the times nor justice nor the lack of it nor causes nor religions nor ideas nor kinds of government nor any other thing. We are the killers; we breed war. We carry it, like syphilis, inside. Dead bodies rot in field and stream because the living ones are rotten. For the love of God, can't we love one another just a little? That's how peace begins. We have so much to love each other for; we have such possibilities, my children. We could change the world.

GEOFFREY. And while we hugged each other, what would Philip do?

JOHN. Oh, good God, Philip! (*Sits on bench.*) We're supposed to start a war. If Father finds out, I'll be ruined.

GEOFFREY. (*Crosses to JOHN.*) Steady, John; don't panic.

JOHN. Some advisor you are.

GEOFFREY. Don't do anything without me. Let me handle it.

JOHN. (*Rising.*) If you're so smart, why am I always doing something dumb? (*Exits U. R.*)

ELEANOR. (*Alive again, rises.*) Well, Geoffrey. He's made a pact with Philip. You advised John into making war. That peerless boy; he's disinherited himself. When Henry finds out, when I tell him what John's done—I need a little time. Can you keep John away from Philip till I say so?

GEOFFREY. Anything you say. (*Exits U. R.*)

ELEANOR. (*To RICHARD.*) I want you out of here before this breaks. And that needs Philip. He has soldiers with him if he'll use them. Go to him, be desperate, promise anything: the Vexin, Brittany. Then once you're free and John is out of favor, we'll make further plans.

RICHARD. You talk to Philip. You're the diplomat; you see him.

ELEANOR. You're a friend. You know him; I don't. Quickly now. (*He crosses U. R.*) And Richard. (*He turns in archway.*) Promise anything. (*He exits.*) I haven't lost, it isn't over. Oh, I've got the old man this time. The damn fool thinks he loves John, he believes it. That's where the knife goes in. Knives, knives . . . it was a fine thought, wasn't it? Oh, Henry, we have done a big thing badly. (*Looking for her mirror.*) Where's that mirror? I am Eleanor and I can look at anything. (*Gazing into the mirror.*) My, what a lovely girl. How could her king have left her?

DIM AND BLACKOUT

ACT I

SCENE 6

SCENE: PHILIP's chambers. Immediately following. A bed with canopy and closed curtains D. L., a tapestry drape U. S.; two chairs, a low table with decanter and two glasses D. L. C.

AT RISE: PHILIP, preparing for bed, is just opening the bed curtains. He turns as GEOFFREY comes skidding into the room from R. calling:

GEOFFREY. Philip, Philip— Is John here?

PHILIP. Here? In my room?

GEOFFREY. Come on, Philip; this is me.

PHILIP. I've been expecting him.

GEOFFREY. (*R. of table.*) The whole thing breaks tonight; we've reached the end of it.

PHILIP. If that's a warning, thank you.

GEOFFREY. What if it's an offer?

PHILIP. (*Sits L. chair.*) "What if" is a game for scholars: what if angels sat on pinheads.

GEOFFREY. What if I were king?

PHILIP. It's your game, Geoff; you play it.

GEOFFREY. (*Above table.*) All of England's land in France, from Normandy down to the Spanish border, once I'm King.

PHILIP. All that. What could I do that's worth all that?

GEOFFREY. By morning, I can be the chosen son. The crown can come to me. But once it does, once Henry's favor falls my way, the war begins.

PHILIP. We have so many wars. Which one is this?

GEOFFREY. (*Sits R. chair.*) The one that Richard, John and Eleanor will make. I'll have to fight to keep what Henry, in his rage, is going to give me.

PHILIP. Yes, you will.

GEOFFREY. That's why I need you, Philip. Will you fight with me against them all?

PHILIP. (*Rising, crossing u. s. around chair.*) Against them all?

GEOFFREY. Don't tell me it's a risk. I wouldn't hand you half of France to fight an easy war.

PHILIP. I wouldn't want you for an enemy.

GEOFFREY. Are we allies, then?

PHILIP. We were born to be.

GEOFFREY. (*Shakes PHILIP's hand.*) I should say something solemn but I haven't time. (*Starts off R.*) I'm off to Father with the news that John's a traitor. (*Turns back to PHILIP.*) After that—

JOHN. (*Bursting, purple, from behind the tapestry.*) You stink, you know that? You're a stinker and you stink.

GEOFFREY. Come on. We're finished here.

JOHN. I'll kill you. Where's a dagger?

GEOFFREY. Hush, John, or you'll spoil everything.

JOHN. (*Rushing around the room.*) A sword, a spear, a candlestick. (*Reaching for a candlestick on u. s. column.*) It's lights out, stinker.

GEOFFREY. (*Stopping him.*) Dumb. If you're a prince, there's hope for every ape in Africa. I had you saved. I wasn't on my way to Father—but he was. He would have gone to Henry and betrayed you. Look: it's in his face.

JOHN. (*Looking at PHILIP in dismay.*) Oh. It's true. I don't know who my friends are.

RICHARD. (*Offstage R., calling from c distance.*) Philip.

GEOFFREY. (*Indicating the tapestry.*) May we?

PHILIP. That's what tapestries are for.

JOHN. (*Starts off R.*) I've ruined everything. I'll never learn.

(*GEOFFREY pulls him behind the tapestry and closes it.*)

PHILIP. (*Crossing to R.*) Is someone there? I heard my name.

RICHARD. (*Appearing from R.*) I called it.

PHILIP. Richard. Hello, Richard.

RICHARD. You're half way to bed. I'll wait for morning.

PHILIP. Come in.

RICHARD. Mother sent me.

PHILIP. Come in anyway. (*Crossing L. to the table, filling glasses from the decanter.*) Our alchemists have stumbled on the art of boiling burgundy. It turns to steam and when it cools we call it brandywine.

RICHARD. I'm Henry's prisoner.

PHILIP. So you said you'd go to war and Henry drew the drawbridge on you.

RICHARD. Do you find that charming?

PHILIP. No.

RICHARD. Then why the charming smile?

PHILIP. I thought, I can't think why, of when you were in Paris last. Can it be two whole years ago?

RICHARD. (*Crosses to R. of table.*) It can. I need an army, Philip.

PHILIP. (*Handing him brandy.*) It will take the cold away.

RICHARD. I must have soldiers.

PHILIP. Have I aged? Do I seem older to you? (*Crosses above RICHARD to D. R.*) They've been two fierce years: I've studied and I've trained to be a king.

RICHARD. I'll have your answer—yes or no.

PHILIP. (*Sharp.*) You'll have it when I give it. (*Friendly again.*) See? I've changed. I'm not the boy you taught to hunt two years ago. Remember? Racing after boar, you flying first, me scrambling after, all day into dusk—

RICHARD. (*Puts his glass down, starts to leave.*) I'll try another time.

PHILIP. (*Stopping him.*) Don't go.

RICHARD. I must know: will you help me?

PHILIP. Sit and we'll discuss it. (*RICHARD moves to the decanter, fills his glass, sits in R. chair.*) You never write.

RICHARD. To anyone.

PHILIP. (*Slowly crossing L. to above table.*) Why should I make you King of England? Aren't I better off with John or Geoffrey? Why have you to fight when I could have the cretin or the fiend?

RICHARD. Would we fight?

PHILIP. We're fighting now. (*Terminating the interview, he puts his glass down and crosses to the bed.*) Good night.

RICHARD. You're still a boy.

PHILIP. In some ways. (*Turns to him.*) Which way did you have in mind?

RICHARD. You haven't asked how much you're worth to me.

PHILIP. (*Behind L. chair.*) You'll tell me.

RICHARD. You can have the Vexin back.

PHILIP. And what else?

RICHARD. All of Brittany.

PHILIP. That's Geoffrey's.

RICHARD. Does that matter?

PHILIP. Possibly to Geoffrey. And what else?

RICHARD. That's all your help is worth.

PHILIP. And in return, what do you want from me?

RICHARD. Two thousand soldiers.

PHILIP. And what else?

RICHARD. Five hundred knights on horse.

PHILIP. And what else?

RICHARD. Arms and siege equipment.

PHILIP. And what else?

RICHARD. I never wrote because I thought you'd never answer. (*PHILIP says nothing. RICHARD rises, starts to exit R.*) You got married.

PHILIP. Does that make a difference?

RICHARD. (*Stops R. c.*) Doesn't it?

PHILIP. I've spent two years on every street in hell.

RICHARD. That's odd: I didn't see you there. (*PHILIP crosses to RICHARD and takes his hand. They start moving to the bed. As they reach the bed, RICHARD stops.*) You haven't said you love me.

PHILIP. When the time comes.

HENRY. (*Offstage R., calling.*) Philip.

RICHARD. Don't go.

PHILIP. (*A finger to RICHARD's lips.*) Hush. (*He opens the bed curtains, gestures for RICHARD to go through.*)

RICHARD. Philip . . . (*Climbing through the curtains.*) Hurry.

HENRY. (*Still Offstage.*) Philip, lad.

PHILIP. (*He smiles, closes the curtains, crosses R.*) Is someone there?

HENRY. (*Entering.*) I am. It's not too late at night?

PHILIP. I've been expecting you.

HENRY. Oh; have you?

PHILIP. (*Crosses to table, indicating the glasses.*) See—two glasses. I did hope you'd come.

HENRY. (*Crosses above table.*) Good; we can't leave negotiations where they are. I've seen more royal rooms. Poor Chinon wasn't meant to sleep so many Kings. I keep looking for your father in you.

PHILIP. (*Pouring brandy.*) He's not there.

HENRY. (*Behind L. chair.*) I miss him. Has Richard or the Queen been here to see you?

PHILIP. Does it matter? If they haven't yet, they will.

HENRY. (*Crossing R. below table.*) I want to reach a settlement. I left you with too little earlier.

PHILIP. Yes; nothing is too little.

HENRY. (*R. of table.*) I am sorry you're not fonder of me, lad. Your father always said, "Be fond of stronger men."

PHILIP. No wonder he loved everyone.

HENRY. They'll offer you whole provinces to fight me.

PHILIP. Shocking. My advice to you is discipline your children.

HENRY. I came here to offer peace.

PHILIP. Piss on your peace.

HENRY. Your father would have wept.

PHILIP. My father was a weeper.

HENRY. Fight me and you'll lose.

PHILIP. (*Sits in R. chair, facing HENRY.*) I can't lose, Henry. I have time. Just look at you. Great heavy arms—they'd crush me like a leaf of lettuce. But each year they get a little heavier. The sand goes pit-pat in the glass. I'm in no hurry, Henry. I've got time.

HENRY. (*Crossing to him.*) Suppose I hurry things along? What if I say that England is at war with France.

PHILIP. Then France surrenders. I don't have to fight to win. Take all you want—this county, that one. You won't keep it long.

HENRY. What kind of courage have you got?

PHILIP. The tidal kind: it comes and goes.

HENRY. (*Crosses above table to L. of table, picks up decanter.*) By God, I'd love to turn you loose on Eleanor. More brandywine?

PHILIP. You recognize it?

HENRY. (*Sits, pours himself some brandy.*) They were boiling it in Ireland before the snakes left. Well—things look a little bleak for Henry, don't they. You'll say yes to Richard when he comes; arms, soldiers, anything he asks for.

PHILIP. I'd be foolish not to.

HENRY. And withdraw it all before the battle ever started.

PHILIP. Wouldn't you, in my place?

HENRY. Why fight Henry when his sons will do it for you.

PHILIP. Yes, exactly.

HENRY. You've got promise, lad. That's first class thinking.

PHILIP. Thank you, sir.

HENRY. (*Emptying his glass.*) Good night.

PHILIP. (*Uncertain for the first time.*) Good night? You're going? (*HENRY nods benignly.*) But we haven't settled anything.

HENRY. (*Rises, crosses to behind PHILIP, pats his shoulder.*) We open Christmas packages at noon. 'Till then. (*HENRY starts out.*)

PHILIP. (*Rises.*) You can't be finished with me.

HENRY. (*Turns to him.*) But I am—and it's been very satisfactory.

PHILIP. What's so satisfactory?

HENRY. (*Comes back to behind R. chair.*) Winning is. I did just win. Surely you noticed.

PHILIP. Not a thing. You haven't won a damn thing.

HENRY. I've found out the way your mind works and the kind of man you are. I know your plans and expectations. You have bumbled every bit of strategy you've got. I know exactly what you will do and exactly what you won't. And I've told you exactly nothing. To these aged eyes, boy, that's what winning looks like. *Dormez bien.* (*Starts out again.*)

PHILIP. (*Stopping him.*) One time, when I was very small, I watched some soldiers take their dinner pig and truss it up and put the thing, alive and kicking, on the fire. That's the sound I'm going to hear from you.

HENRY. (*At c.*) And I thought you lacked passion.

PHILIP. You—you made my father nothing. You were always better. You bullied him, you belied with his wife, you beat him down in every war, you twisted every treaty, you played mock-the-monk and then you made him love you for it. I was there: his last words went to you.

HENRY. He was a loving man and you learned nothing of it.

PHILIP. I learned how much fathers live in sons. A king like you has policy prepared on everything. What's the official line on sodomy? How stands the crown on boys who do with boys? (*Sits R. chair.*)

HENRY. (*Crosses to U. R. of PHILIP.*) Richard finds his way into so many legends. Let's hear yours and see how it compares.

PHILIP. He found me first when I was fifteen. We were hunting. It was nearly dark. I lost my way. My horse fell. I was thrown. I woke to Richard touching me. He asked me if I loved him—Philip, do you love me?—and I told him yes.

HENRY. (*Sits in L. chair, pours himself some wine.*)
I've heard much better.

PHILIP. You know why I told him yes? So one day I could tell you all about it. (*Rises, moves U. S.*) You cannot imagine what that yes cost. Or perhaps you can. Imagine snuggling to a chanced whore and, bending back your lips in something like a smile, saying, "Yes I love you and I find you beautiful." (*Crosses to R. C.*) I don't know how I did it.

RICHARD. (*Charging from the bed.*) No—it wasn't like that.

PHILIP. But it was.

RICHARD. (*U. S. of table.*) You loved me.

PHILIP. Never.

RICHARD. Get your sword. You've got one. Pick it up.

PHILIP. (*To HENRY.*) He's your responsibility; you talk to him. (*PHILIP crosses D. R.*)

RICHARD. (*To HENRY.*) Get out. Please! I don't want you here.

HENRY. It's no great joy to be here.

RICHARD. (*Crosses to him.*) So the royal corkscrew finds me twisted, does he?

HENRY. (*Rises, crosses R. below table.*) I'll go tell your mother: she'll be pleased.

RICHARD. (*Following.*) She knows—she sent me.

HENRY. (*Turns to him.*) How completely hers you are.

RICHARD. You've had four sons. Who do you claim? Not Henry? Not my buried brother. Not that monument to muck, that epic idiot, oh, surely not.

HENRY. The boy is dead.

RICHARD. Let's praise him, then. (*Slowly crosses R. above HENRY.*) Who can forget his roquefort smile, his absent brow, those apey eyes, that spoon-edged mind. Why him? Why him and never me?

HENRY. (*Moves D. L. C.*) He was the oldest—he came first.

RICHARD. Christ, Henry, is that all?

HENRY. You went with Eleanor.

RICHARD. You never called for me. You never said my name. I would have walked or crawled. I'd have done anything.

HENRY. (*Starting out R.*) It's not my fault. I won't be blamed.

RICHARD. I only wanted you.

HENRY. (*Turns to him.*) No—it's my crown. You want my kingdom.

RICHARD. (*Crossing D. L.*) Keep your kingdom.

HENRY. That I will.

RICHARD. I hope it kills you.

HENRY. I thank God I have another son. Thank God for John.

GEOFFREY. (*Stepping from behind the tapestry, and closes it behind him.*) Who shall we thank for Geoffrey? (*To HENRY.*) You don't think much of me.

HENRY. Much? I don't think of you at all.

GEOFFREY. Nurse used to say I had your hands; I might have more of you. Try seeing me. I haven't Richard's military skill; but he was here betraying you, not I. I haven't John's I don't know what—God knows what you can see in John—and he's betrayed you, too. There's only me.

HENRY. You think I'd ever make you king?

GEOFFREY. You'll make me king because I'm all you've got. (*Indicating RICHARD.*) I was to be his Chancellor. Ask him why.

HENRY. (*Starts out again.*) I've heard enough.

GEOFFREY. For moving John to treason.

HENRY. (*Stops; comes back to GEOFFREY.*) I don't doubt he offered, I don't doubt you tried and I don't doubt John loves me.

GEOFFREY. Like a glutton loves his lunch. (*With which he pulls the tapestry from in front of JOHN.*)

JOHN. (*To GEOFFREY, from the heart.*) You turd.

(*GEOFFREY pulls John forward.*)

HENRY. Well, John?

JOHN. It isn't what you think.

HENRY. What do I think?

JOHN. What Geoffrey said. I wouldn't plot against you, ever.

HENRY. I know; you're a good boy.

JOHN. Can I go now, please? It's late. I ought to be in bed. *(He starts out R.)*

HENRY. You fool.

JOHN. Me? What have I done now?

HENRY. *(Crossing to him.)* Couldn't you wait? Couldn't you trust me? It was all yours. Couldn't you believe that?

JOHN. Will you listen to the grief?

HENRY. Who do you think I built this kindgom for?

JOHN. *(Backing L.)* Me? Daddy did it all for me? When can I have it, Daddy? Not until we bury you?

HENRY. You're just like them. And after all I've given you.

JOHN. I got it; I know what you gave.

HENRY. I loved you.

JOHN. You're a cold and bloody bastard, you are, and you don't love anything.

GEOFFREY. I'm it, I'm all that's left. Here, Father; here I am.

HENRY. My life, when it is written, will read better than it lived. Henry Fitz-Empress, first Plantagenet, a king at twenty-one, the ablest soldier of an able time. He led men well, he cared for justice when he could and ruled, for thirty years, a state as great as Charlemagne's. He married, out of love, a woman out of legend. Not in Alexandria or Rome or Camelot has there been such a queen. She bore him many children—but no sons. King Henry had no sons. He had three whiskered things but he disowned them. You're not mine. We're not connected. I deny you. None of you will get my crown. I leave you nothing and I wish you plague. May all your children breach and die. *(Moving unsteadily toward the exit.)* My

boys are gone. I've lost my boys. *(Stopping, glaring up.)* You dare to damn me, do you? Well, I damn you back. God damn you. All my boys are gone. I've lost my boys. Oh Jesus, all my boys. *(Exits R.)*

BLACKOUT AND CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE 1

SCENE: HENRY's chamber. Shortly later. There is a bed D. R. C., a chair L. C., and a chest D. L. on the chest, a brazier, two cups, boxes of spices, and a wine pot.

AT RISE: ALAIS is alone on Stage. Dressed for bed, she kneels by the small charcoal brazier, preparing a pot of spiced wine.

ALAIS. (*Singing softly as she adds dabs of this and that.*)

The Christmas wine is in the pot,
The Christmas coals are red.
I'll spend the day
The lovers' way,
Unwrapping all my gifts in bed.

(ELEANOR appears U. C. behind her.)
The Christmas goose is on the spit,
The Christmas . . .

(*She senses someone, turns.*)

ELEANOR. (*Moving D. S.*) No one else is carolling to-night. It might as well be Lent. When I was little, Christmas was a time of great confusion for me: the Holy Land had two kings, God and Uncle Raymond, and I never knew whose birthday we were celebrating.

ALAIS. (*Rises.*) Henry isn't here.

ELEANOR. Good; we can talk behind his back.

ALAIS. He's outside, walking.

ELEANOR. In this cold?

ALAIS. He'll never notice it. What happened?

ELEANOR. Don't you know?

ALAIS. He came and stood a while by the fire and went away. You would have liked the way he looked.

ELEANOR. (*Crossing L.*) There was a scene with beds

and tapestries and many things got said. (*She kneels beside the chest.*) Spiced wine—I'd forgotten Henry liked it. May I stay?

ALAIS. (*Puts box of spices on large chest U. L.*) It's your room just as much as mine: we're both in residence.

ELEANOR. Packed in, like the poor, three to a bed.

ALAIS. Did you love Henry—ever?

ELEANOR. Ever? Back before the flood?

ALAIS. As long ago as Rosamund.

ELEANOR. (*Rises, crosses to C.*) Ah, that's pre-history, lamb; there are no written records or survivors.

ALAIS. There are pictures. She was prettier than you.

ELEANOR. Oh, much. Her eyes, in certain light, were violet and all her teeth were even. That's a rare fair feature, even teeth. She smiled to excess but she chewed with real distinction.

ALAIS. And you hate her even now.

ELEANOR. No . . . but I did. He put her in my place, you see, and that was very hard. Like you, she headed Henry's table; that's my chair.

ALAIS. And so you had her poisoned.

ELEANOR. That's a folk tale. (*Crosses to L. of bed.*) Oh, I prayed for her to drop and sang a little when she did but even Circe had her limits. No, I never poisoned Rosamund. (*Turns to ALAIS.*) Why aren't you happy? Henry's keeping you. You must be cleverer than I am.

ALAIS. Green becomes you. You must always wear it.

ELEANOR. Are you dressing me in envy?

ALAIS. I've tried feeling pity for you but it keeps on turning into something else.

ELEANOR. Why pity?

ALAIS. You love Henry but you love his kingdom, too. You look at him and you see cities, acreage, coastline, taxes. All I see is Henry. (*Crosses to her.*) Leave him to me, can't you?

ELEANOR. But I left him years ago.

ALAIS. (*Backs away.*) You are untouchable. And I thought I could move you. Were you always like this?

Years ago, when I was young and worshipped you, is this what you were like?

ELEANOR. Most likely. (*Sits L. end of bed.*) Child, I'm finished and I've come to give him anything he asks for.

ALAIS. Do you know what I should like for Christmas? I should like to see you suffer.

ELEANOR. (*Nodding.*) Alais, just for you.

ALAIS. (*Throwing herself into ELEANOR'S arms.*) Maman, oh Maman.

ELEANOR. (*Holding her, rocking her gently, singing softly.*)

The Christmas wine will make you warm—
Don't shiver, child.

ALAIS. I'm not.

ELEANOR.

The Christmas logs will glow.

There's Christmas cheer and comfort here—

Is that you crying?

ALAIS. *Non, Maman.*

ELEANOR.

Hold close and never let me go.

(HENRY appears U. C.)

HENRY. (*Pale, calm, quiet.*) The sky is pocked with stars. What eyes the wise men must have had to spot a new one in so many.

ELEANOR. You look cold.

ALAIS. (*Rises, crosses to brazier.*) I've mulled some wine.

HENRY. (*As ALAIS gets some wine for him.*) I wonder, were there fewer stars then—I don't know. I fancy there's a mystery in it. (*ALAIS hands him a cup of wine.*) What's this?

ALAIS. Warm wine.

HENRY. Why, so it is. (*Cupping her face in his hands.*) You are as beautiful as I remembered. (*Brisk, finding the energy somewhere.*) Off to bed. My widow wants to see me.

ALAIS. (*Crosses U. C.*) Let me stay.

HENRY. Wait up for me. I won't be long.

ALAIS. She came to find out what your plans are.

HENRY. I know that.

ALAIS. She wants you back.

HENRY. (*To ELEANOR.*) Old as I am?

ELEANOR. Old as you are.

ALAIS. Oh, eat each other up for all I care. I'm an orphan and I'll never have a husband and my lover's wife has fangs for teeth and everybody's going to die. We've got no Romans and no Christians but the rest of the arena, that we have. (*Exits U. C.*)

ELEANOR. I'm rather proud; I taught her all the rhetoric she knows.

HENRY. (*Pouring wine for her.*) So you want me back.

ELEANOR. She thinks I do. She thinks the need for loving never stops.

HENRY. She's got a point. I marvel at you: after all these years, still like a democratic drawbridge, going down for everybody.

ELEANOR. (*As he gives her wine.*) At my age, there's not much traffic any more.

HENRY. To your interminable health. (*They drink.*) Well, wife, what's on your mind?

ELEANOR. Oh Henry, we have made a mess of it.

HENRY. Yes, haven't we?

ELEANOR. Could we have done it worse?

HENRY. You look like Doomsday.

ELEANOR. Late nights do that to me. Am I puffy?

HENRY. Possibly: it's hard to tell—there's all that natural sag.

ELEANOR. I've just seen Richard.

HENRY. Splendid boy. (*HENRY crosses U. S., puts his cup down on low wall.*)

ELEANOR. He says you fought.

HENRY. We always do.

ELEANOR. It's his impression that you plan to disinherit them.

HENRY. I fancy I'll relent. Don't you?

ELEANOR. (*Slowly rises and crosses to brazier.*) I don't much care. In fact, I wonder, Henry, if I care for anything. I wonder if I'm hungry out of habit and if all my lusts, like passions in a poem, aren't really recollections. (*Puts cup down.*)

HENRY. I could listen to you lie for hours. So your lust is rusty. Gorgeous, gorgeous.

ELEANOR. I'm so tired, Henry.

HENRY. Sleep, then. Sleep and dream of me with croutons. (*Crosses R. to below bed.*) *Henri a la mode de Caen.*

ELEANOR. Henry, stop it.

HENRY. Eleanor, I haven't started.

ELEANOR. What is it you want? You want the day? You've carried it. It's yours. I'm yours.

HENRY. My what? You are my what?

ELEANOR. Your anything at all. You want my name on paper? I'll sign anything. You want the Aquitaine for John? It's John's. It's his, it's yours, it's anybody's. Take it.

HENRY. In exchange for what?

ELEANOR. (*Crossing R. to below chair.*) For nothing, for a little quiet, for an end to this, for God's sake sail me back to England, lock me up and lose the key and let me be alone. (*HENRY nods appreciatively, applauds. Clap-clap-clap.*) You have my oath. I give my word. (*Clap-clap. Nodding, bone weary, sinking slowly into the chair.*) Oh. Well. Well, well.

HENRY. (*R. of chair, slowly circles in front of her.*) Would you like a pillow? Footstool? What about a shawl? (*She stares dully through him.*) Your oaths are all profanities. Your word's a curse. Your name on paper is a waste of pulp. I'm vilifying you, for God's sake. Pay attention. (*No response. He grabs R. arm of chair.*) Eleanor! (*She reaches out, takes his hand and kisses it.*) Don't do that. (*She drops the hand.*)

ELEANOR. (*Flatly, from far away.*) Like any thinking

person, I should like to think there was— I don't care whose or which—some God. Not out of fear: death is a lark; it's life that stings. But if there were some God, then I'd exist in his imagination, like Antigone in Sophocles'. I'd have no contradictions, no confusions, no waste parts or misplaced elements and then, oh Henry, then I'd make some sense. I'd be a queen in Arcady and not an animal in chaos. How, from where we started, did we ever reach this Christmas?

HENRY. Step by step. (*Picks up his cup and crosses to above the bed.*)

ELEANOR. What happens to me now?

HENRY. (*Lying down.*) That's lively curiosity from such a dead cat. If you want to know my plans, just ask me.

ELEANOR. Conquer China, sack the Vatican or take the veil; I'm not among the ones who give a damn. Just let me sign my lands to John and go to bed.

HENRY. No, you're too kind. I can't accept.

ELEANOR. Oh, come on, man. I'll sign the thing in blood or spit or bright blue ink. Let's have it done.

HENRY. Let's not. No, I don't think I want your signature on anything.

ELEANOR. You don't?!

HENRY. Dear God, the pleasure I still get from goading you.

ELEANOR. You don't want John to have my provinces?

HENRY. (*Nodding, smiling.*) Bull's eye.

ELEANOR. (*Rising.*) I can't bear you when you're smug.

HENRY. I know, I know.

ELEANOR. (*Crossing to him.*) You don't want Richard and you don't want John.

HENRY. (*Sitting up.*) You've grasped it.

ELEANOR. (*U. S. of bed.*) All right, let me have it. Level me. What do you want?

HENRY. (*Facing front. Quietly.*) A new wife.

ELEANOR. Oh. (*ELEANOR sits beside him.*)

HENRY. Aesthete and poetaster that you are, you worship beauty and simplicity. I worship with you. Down with all that's ugly and complex—like frogs or pestilence or our relationship. I ask you, what's more beautiful and simple than a new wife?

ELEANOR. So I'm to be annulled, am I? Well, will the Pope annul me, do you think?

HENRY. (*Rises, crosses to brazier, pours wine.*) The Pontiff owes me one Pontificate; I think he will.

ELEANOR. Out Eleanor, in Alais. Why?

HENRY. Why? Not since Caesar, seeing Brutus with the bloody dagger in his hand, asked "you, too" has there been a dumber question.

ELEANOR. I'll stand by it. Why?

HENRY. A new wife, wife, will bear me sons.

ELEANOR. That is the single thing of which I should have thought you had enough.

HENRY. I want a son. (*He drinks and puts the cup down.*)

ELEANOR. Whatever for? Why, we could populate a country town with country girls who've borne you sons. How many is it? Help me count the bastards.

HENRY. All my sons are bastards.

ELEANOR. You really mean to do it.

HENRY. (*Crossing r. to below chair.*) Lady love, with all my heart. (*Sits.*)

ELEANOR. Your sons are part of you.

HENRY. Like warts and goiters—and I'm having them removed.

ELEANOR. We made them. They're our boys.

HENRY. I know—and good God, look at them. Young Henry: vain deceitful, weak and cowardly. The only patriotic thing he ever did was die.

ELEANOR. I thought you loved him most.

HENRY. I did. And Geoffrey—there's a masterpiece. He isn't flesh: he's a device; he's wheels and gears.

ELEANOR. Well, every family has one.

HENRY. But not four. Then Johnny. Was his latest treason your idea?

ELEANOR. John has so few ideas; no, I can't bring myself to claim it.

HENRY. I have caught him lying and I've said he's young. I've seen him cheating and I've thought he's just a boy. I've watched him steal and whore and whip his servants and he's not a child. He is the man we've made him.

ELEANOR. Don't share John with me; he's your accomplishment.

HENRY. And Richard's yours. (*Rises, crosses to her.*) How could you send him off to deal with Philip?

ELEANOR. I was tired. I was busy. They were friends.

HENRY. Eleanor, he was the best. The strongest; bravest, handsomest and from the cradle on you cradled him. I never had a chance.

ELEANOR. (*Rises, crosses to c.*) You never wanted one.

HENRY. How do you know? You took him. Separation from your husband you could bear. But not your boy.

ELEANOR. (*Turns to him.*) Whatever I have done, you made me do.

HENRY. You threw me out of bed for Richard.

ELEANOR. Not until you threw me out for Rosamund.

HENRY. It's not that simple. I won't have it be that simple.

ELEANOR. I adored you.

HENRY. Never.

ELEANOR. I still do.

HENRY. Of all the lies, that one is the most terrible.

ELEANOR. I know: that's why I saved it up for now. (*And suddenly they are in each other's arms.*) Oh Henry, we have mangled everything we've touched.

HENRY. Deny us what you will, we have done that. And all for Rosamund.

ELEANOR. No, you were right: it is too simple. Life, if it's like anything at all, is like an avalanche. To blame

the little ball of snow that starts it all, to say it is the cause, is just as true as it is meaningless.

HENRY. Do you remember when we met?

ELEANOR. Down to the hour and the color of your stockings.

HENRY. I could hardly see you for the sunlight.

ELEANOR. It was raining but no matter.

HENRY. (*Sitting L. end of bed.*) There was very little talk as I recall it.

ELEANOR. (*Kneels beside him.*) Very little.

HENRY. I had never seen such beauty—and I walked right up and touched it. God, where did I find the gall to do that?

ELEANOR. In my eyes.

HENRY. I loved you.

ELEANOR. No annulment.

HENRY. What?

ELEANOR. There will be no annulment.

HENRY. Will there not?

ELEANOR. No; I'm afraid you'll have to do without.

HENRY. Well—it was just a whim.

ELEANOR. I'm so relieved. I didn't want to lose you.

HENRY. (*Rises, crosses to c.*) Out of curiosity, as intellectual to intellectual, how in the name of bleeding Jesus can you lose me? Do you ever see me? Am I ever with you? Ever near you? Am I ever anywhere but somewhere else?

ELEANOR. I'm not concerned about your geographical location.

HENRY. (*Crossing to above bed.*) Do we write? Do I send messages? Do dinghies bearing gifts float up the Thames to you? Are you remembered?

ELEANOR. You are.

HENRY. You're no part of me. We do not touch at any point. How can you lose me?

ELEANOR. Can't you feel the chains?

HENRY. (*Kneeling across the bed to her.*) You know enough to know I can't be stopped.

ELEANOR. (*Rises, sits L. end of bed.*) But I don't have to stop you; I have only to delay you. Every enemy you have has friends in Rome. We'll cost you time.

HENRY. (*Crossing to L. of ELEANOR.*) What is this? I'm not moldering; my paint's not peeling off. I'm good for years.

ELEANOR. How many years? Suppose I hold you back for one; I can—it's possible. Suppose your first son dies; ours did—it's possible. Suppose you're daughtered next; we were—that, too, is possible. How old is Daddy then? What kind of spindly, ricket-ridden, milky, semi-witted, wizened, dim-eyed, gammy-handed, limpy line of things will you beget?

HENRY. It's sweet of you to care.

ELEANOR. And when you die, which is regrettable but necessary, what will happen to frail Alais and her prune prince? You can't think Richard's going to wait for your grotesque to grow?

HENRY. You wouldn't let him do a thing like that?

ELEANOR. Let him? I'd push him through the nursery door.

HENRY. You're not that cruel.

ELEANOR. (*Rises, crosses c.*) Don't fret. We'll wait until you're dead to do it.

HENRY. Eleanor, what do you want?

ELEANOR. (*Turns to him.*) Just what you want: a king for a son. You can make more. I can't. You think I want to disappear? One son is all I've got and you can blot him out and call me cruel. For these ten years you've lived with everything I've lost and loved another woman through it all. And I'm cruel. I could peel you like a pear and God himself would call it justice. Nothing I could do to you is wanton; nothing is too much.

HENRY. I will die some time soon. One day I'll duck too slow and at Westminster, they'll sing out *Vivat Rex* for someone else. I beg you, let it be a son of mine.

ELEANOR. I am not moved to tears.

HENRY. I have no sons.

ELEANOR. You've got too many sons. You don't need more. (ELEANOR crosses to brazier.)

HENRY. Well, wish me luck. I'm off. (Starts out U. C.)

ELEANOR. To Rome?

HENRY. (Stops.) That's where they keep the Pope.

ELEANOR. You don't dare go.

HENRY. (Crossing to her.) Say that again at noon, you'll say it to my horse's ass. Lamb, I'll be rid of you by Easter: you can count your reign in days. (HENRY starts out again.)

ELEANOR. You go to Rome, we'll rise against you.

HENRY. Who will?

ELEANOR. (Crossing to L. of chair.) Richard, Geoffrey, John and Eleanor of Aquitaine.

HENRY. (Comes to R. of chair.) The day those stout hearts band together is the day that pigs get wings.

ELEANOR. There'll be pork in the treetops come the morning. Don't you see? You've given them a common cause: new sons. You leave the country and you've lost it.

HENRY. (Moves R.) All of you at once.

ELEANOR. And Philip, too. He'd join us.

HENRY. Yes, he would.

ELEANOR. Now how's your trip to Rome?

HENRY. You'd truly do this to me?

ELEANOR. (Sits in chair.) Oh, I've got you, got you, got you.

HENRY. Should I take a thousand men-at-arms to Rome or is that showy?

ELEANOR. Bluff away. I love it.

HENRY. Ah, poor thing. How can I break the news? You've just miscalculated.

ELEANOR. Have I? How?

HENRY. (At R. of chair.) You should have lied to me. You should have promised to be good while I was gone. I would have let your three boys loose. They could have fought me then.

ELEANOR. You wouldn't keep your sons locked up here?

HENRY. Why the devil wouldn't I?

ELEANOR. You don't dare.

HENRY. Why not? What's to stop me? Let 'hem sit in Chinon for a while.

ELEANOR. No; I forbid it.

HENRY. (Starts out.) She forbids it.

ELEANOR. (Calling after him.) Did your father sleep with me or didn't he?

HENRY. (Comes back.) No doubt you're going to tell me that he did.

ELEANOR. Would it upset you?

HENRY. What about the thousand men? I say be gaudy and to hell with it.

ELEANOR. Don't leave me, Henry. I'm at rock bottom—I'll do anything to keep you.

HENRY. I think you think you mean it.

ELEANOR. Ask for something.

HENRY. Eleanor, we're past it; years past.

ELEANOR. Test me. Name an act.

HENRY. There isn't one.

ELEANOR. About my fornication with your father—

HENRY. (Moves R.) Yes, there is. You can expire.

ELEANOR. You first, old man. I only hope I'm there to watch. You're so afraid of dying. You're so scared of it.

HENRY. Poor Eleanor; if only she had lied.

ELEANOR. She did. She said she never loved your father.

HENRY. (White.) I can always count on you.

ELEANOR. (Rises.) I've never touched you without thinking "Geoffrey, Geoffrey."

HENRY. (Sits L. end of bed.) When you hurt me, I'll cry out.

ELEANOR. (Moving R. above bed.) I've put more horns on you than Louis ever wore.

HENRY. Am I supposed to care?

ELEANOR. I'll kill you if you leave me.

HENRY. You can try.

ELEANOR. (Kneels across bed to HENRY.) I loved your father's body. He was beautiful.

HENRY. It never happened.

ELEANOR. I can see his body now. Shall I describe it?

HENRY. Eleanor, I hope you die.

ELEANOR. (*Touching HENRY's arm.*) His arms were rough, with scars here—

HENRY. Stop it!

ELEANOR. I can feel his arms. I feel them.

HENRY. AAH!

ELEANOR. What's that? Have I hurt you?

HENRY. Oh my God, I'm going to be sick. (*Runs out U. C.*)

ELEANOR. (*Hurling it after him as he exits.*) We did it You were in the next room when he did it! (*He is gone. There is a long pause.*) Well, what family doesn't have its ups and downs? (*At the brazier, spreading her hands over it.*) It's cold. I can't feel anything. (*Huddling close to the coals.*) Not anything at all. (*Hugging herself, arms around tight.*) We couldn't go back, could we, Henry?

DIM AND BLACKOUT

ACT II

SCENE 2

SCENE: ALAIS' chamber. It is early the next morning.

AT RISE: ALAIS, dressed for bed as we saw her last, sits deeply asleep in the chair, D. L. HENRY, in tremendous spirits, enters briskly, looks at her, smiles. He moves to the window, throws back the curtain.

HENRY. Get up, wake up, it's morning.

ALAIS. (*Startled, sitting bolt upright.*) Henry?

HENRY. (*Moves R. to C.*) When the king is off his ass, nobody sleeps.

ALAIS. What's wrong?

HENRY. We're packing up and moving out.

ALAIS. (*Rising.*) Is there a war? What's happened?

HENRY. (*Picks her up in an embrace. Puts her down R. of him.*) Merry Christmas.

ALAIS. Henry, what's the matter?

HENRY. Nothing, for a change; would you believe it?

ALAIS. Where've you been all night?

HENRY. You know what a *mesnie* is? It's a train, an entourage. It's made of soldiers, cooks and clerics, wagons, barrows, linen, treasure, chickens, butts of wine and spices. I've been all night making one.

ALAIS. What for?

HENRY. (*Sits D. L. chair.*) We're off to Rome to see the Pope.

ALAIS. (*Crossing to him.*) He's excommunicated you again.

HENRY. He's going to set me free. I'm having Eleanor annulled. The nation will be shocked to learn our marriage wasn't consummated.

ALAIS. (*Crossing R.*) What happened last night when I left?

HENRY. We hugged and kissed a little.

ALAIS. Oh, be serious.

HENRY. And then, I told her you and I were getting married.

ALAIS. Are we?

HENRY. By the Pope himself.

ALAIS. (*Crossing to him.*) You mean it?

HENRY. (*Starts to rise.*) Shall I kneel?

ALAIS. (*Stopping him.*) It's not another trick?

HENRY. The bridal party's drilling on the cobblestones.

ALAIS. She loves you, Henry.

HENRY. See for yourself.

ALAIS. She'll find a way to stop us.

HENRY. How? She won't be here. We're launching her for Salisbury Tower when the winds change. She'll be barging down the River Vienne by lunchtime.

ALAIS. (*Moves to bench.*) If she doesn't stop us, Richard will.

HENRY. Suppose I do the worrying?

ALAIS. (*Sits.*) He won't like losing me.

HENRY. He's lost a damn sight more than you. I've corked him up.

ALAIS. You've what?

HENRY. He's in the cellar with his brothers and the wine. The royal boys are ageing with the royal port. You haven't said "Yes." Would you like a formal declaration? (*Rises, kneels in front of her, showing her his profile.*) There—my finest angle; it's on all the coins. Sad Alais, will you marry me?

ALAIS. I can't believe it.

HENRY. Be my queen.

ALAIS. I never hoped for this. I mean, I always hoped but never thought—I mean—

HENRY. (*Sits beside her.*) We'll love each other and you'll give me sons.

ALAIS. I don't know what I mean.

HENRY. (*His arm around her.*) Let's have five—we'll do Eleanor one better. Why, I'll even call the first one Louis if you like. Louis le Premier—how's that for a king of England?

ALAIS. Henry—you can't ever let them out.

HENRY. You've lost me. Let who out?

ALAIS. Your sons. You've put them in the dungeon and you've got to keep them there forever.

HENRY. Do I now?

ALAIS. If they're free when you die, it's the dungeon or the nunnery for me. I don't care which—a cell's a cell—but, Henry, what about the child?

HENRY. (*Rises, moves L.*) Don't bother me about the child. The damn thing isn't born yet.

ALAIS. If they're free, they'll kill it. I'm the one who'll live to see that and I will not see our children murdered.

HENRY. You don't make the ultimatums: I do.

ALAIS. Not this time. Either you keep them down forever or you find yourself another widow. I don't want the job.

HENRY. Do you know what you're asking me to do?

ALAIS. You locked your queen up.

HENRY. But my boys—how can I?

ALAIS. That's for you to face.

HENRY. You have no children.

ALAIS. And I never will.

HENRY. But they're my sons.

ALAIS. (*Rising.*) I hate your sons. I'm not the one who wants a new line. If you want it, that's the price.

HENRY. You'll come to Rome if I say so. You'll marry me if I say so. The boys go free if I say so. My terms are the only terms. The difficulty is, you see, the difficulty is you're right. (*So weary, sits D. L. chair.*) Incredible, but I have children who would murder children. Every time I've read *Medea*, I've thought: "No; the thing's absurd. Fish eat their young, and foxes: but not us." And yet she did it. I imagine she was mad; don't you? Yes, mad she must have been. (*He rises and crosses U. R.*)

ALAIS. Henry—are you going down?

HENRY. Down? Yes.

ALAIS. To let them out or keep them in?

HENRY. (*Turns to her.*) Could you say, to a child of yours, "You've seen the sunlight for the last time"?

ALAIS. Can you do it, Henry?

HENRY. Well, I'd be a master bastard if I did.

ALAIS. I must know. Can you?

HENRY. I shall have to, shan't I? (*He exits.*)

DIM AND BLACKOUT

ACT II

SCENE 3

SCENE: *The Wine Cellar. Immediately following. Great barrelheads along the walls. A number of tall candlesticks, most with lighted candles. A column with large base R. C.*

AT RISE: RICHARD, JOHN and GEOFFREY are on Stage.
 JOHN, at a cask of wine D. L. is on the verge of replacing a bung with a spigot. RICHARD, holding two cups, stands L. of him. GEOFFREY is pacing R. JOHN is saying:

JOHN. The trick is not to dribble when you bang the bung. *(He bangs it and slips the spigot into place.)* Voila. I had an alcoholic Latin tutor—cup— *(RICHARD hands him a cup.)* who taught me all he knew.

GEOFFREY. Which wasn't much.

JOHN. I know I might as well be drunk.

GEOFFREY. If I were you, I'd worry.

JOHN. You know me—cup— *(He gives RICHARD the full one, takes the empty.)* I'd just worry over all the wrong things.

GEOFFREY. Don't you know what's going to happen?

JOHN. *(Rising.)* No, and you don't either. You and your big cerebellum. *(Crosses R., doing GEOFFREY.)* "I'm what's left. Here, Daddy; here I am." And here you are.

RICHARD. But not for long.

GEOFFREY. *(At C.)* You think we're getting out?

RICHARD. *(L.)* No; deeper in. The fortress at Vaudreuil has dungeons down two hundred feet. That's where I'd keep us.

GEOFFREY. And if I were Father, I'm not sure I'd keep the three of us at all. You don't take prisoners, no, you don't. And with good reason. Dungeon doors can swing both ways but caskets have no hinges.

JOHN. I know you. You only want to frighten me.

GEOFFREY. *(Crossing to JOHN.)* John, the condition of your trousers, be they wet or dry, could not concern me less. I think I'm apt to die today and I am sweating, John. I'm sweating cold.

JOHN. We've got friends.

GEOFFREY. Name one. *(Crossing U. R.)*

JOHN. Someone's got to rescue us.

GEOFFREY. *(Crossing D. R. of column.)* I don't know who or how or why.

RICHARD. He isn't going to see me beg. He'll get no satisfaction out of me.

GEOFFREY. Why, you chivalric fool—as if the way one fell down mattered.

RICHARD. When the fall is all there is, it matters.

JOHN. Can't we run or hide or anything?

RICHARD. Just in the wine.

JOHN. *(Stricken, as he hears the sound of a bolt from U. L.)* Geoff—look. *(JOHN crosses U. L.)*

(ELEANOR enters from U. L. She carries a large covered breakfast tray. Like HENRY, she hasn't slept.)

ELEANOR. My barge is leaving at eleven and I've come to say goodbye.

GEOFFREY. *(As she crosses to the large column base with the tray.)* Does Henry know you're here?

ELEANOR. The queen still has some privileges. I bring you breakfast.

JOHN. *(Crosses D. L., gets more wine.)* I'm not hungry.

GEOFFREY. *(R. of ELEANOR.)* What's he planning?

RICHARD. *(L. of ELEANOR.)* Is he going to keep us here?

ELEANOR. First, have a little nourishment.

RICHARD. For God's sake, Mother—

ELEANOR. Eat.

(With which she drops the tray on the base. It makes a great metallic clatter. RICHARD looks at her, removes the cover to the tray. He sees a stack of daggers and short swords.)

GEOFFREY. *(Taking one.)* Well, Eleanor.

RICHARD. *(In his element. Calm, certain.)* How heavy is the outside guard?

ELEANOR. There's just the turnkey.

RICHARD. What about the courtyard and the gates?

ELEANOR. They're putting Henry's train together and it's chaos. You can walk right out.

RICHARD. We'll go to Poitiers. He'll expect that but we'll meet him with an army when he comes. (*Turning to GEOFFREY and JOHN.*) Keep close to me and when you run, run hard.

GEOFFREY. Why run at all? I think we ought to stay.

JOHN. (D. L.) Stay here?

GEOFFREY. Till Henry comes. (*To ELEANOR.*) He will come, won't he—and he'll come alone. (*Crosses to RICHARD.*) I count three knives to one.

RICHARD. You think we could?

JOHN. (*Backing away.*) I'd only do it wrong. You kill him and I'll watch.

GEOFFREY. (*Moves below RICHARD to JOHN.*) The three of us together: we must all three do it. I want us all responsible.

ELEANOR. Don't listen to him. Take the knives and run.

GEOFFREY. (*Crosses to ELEANOR.*) And miss this opportunity?

ELEANOR. Get out.

GEOFFREY. (*To RICHARD.*) I'll be behind the door with John. You'll want to do it from the front. (*Turning to ELEANOR.*) And you, you lucky girl, you get to see the pageant. (*Crosses to column base.*)

ELEANOR. Mother's looking for a name for you—if English has one adequately foul.

GEOFFREY. Now hold on. I've been vilified enough. I've had enough of it. You brought the cutlery, you hauled it down here. Don't you dare tell me this wasn't in your mind.

ELEANOR. I tell you. I deny it.

GEOFFREY. Swear on something. I'm agog to hear what you consider holy. (*She turns abruptly, starts for the door.*)

RICHARD. (*Following her.*) Where are you going?

ELEANOR. Up for air.

GEOFFREY. (*To RICHARD, who moves to intercept her.*) Don't stop her.

RICHARD. But she'll warn him.

GEOFFREY. Let her go. She isn't going to tell him anything.

ELEANOR. (*Comes back.*) You think I'm going to let this happen?

GEOFFREY. Frankly, Mother, your position on the board is poorish. If you tattled, there would be a rash of executions and you don't want that. No, you don't want to lose a one of us: not even me.

ELEANOR. You're clever but I wonder if you're right.

GEOFFREY. Oh, lady, don't you know where you are? You're in stalemate. Warn him, it's the end of us: warn him not and it's the end of him. It's that clear.

ELEANOR. (*Not very loud.*) Guard.

GEOFFREY. Go on, dear. Call again—and pitch it up a little. (*Crosses D. R.*)

ELEANOR. I'll have him take the knives away.

RICHARD. (*Crosses to L. of ELEANOR.*) And be the one to put us in Vaudreuil, down two hundred feet?

ELEANOR. Then run away; escape. You've still got time.

RICHARD. No. Geoffrey's right; we'll stay.

ELEANOR. You, too? Oh, Richard.

RICHARD. Oh, oh, oh. There's nothing in your oh's: they're empty.

ELEANOR. You're not an assassin.

RICHARD. Look again.

ELEANOR. You're not. You're my Richard and you love me.

RICHARD. Let me kiss the nasty scratch and make it well.

ELEANOR. Yes, do. Come let me hold you.

RICHARD. You're more beautiful than ever. There is much that's beautiful in evil when it's absolutely pure. You are so foul you're fair. You stand there looking like

a saint in pain when you brought us the knives to do your work.

ELEANOR. That's not true.

RICHARD. You did bring these things.

ELEANOR. Don't say that.

RICHARD. (*Crosses below ELEANOR to above column base.*) Here—you want him dead, you do it.

ELEANOR. You unnatural animal.

RICHARD. Unnatural, Mummy? You tell me what's nature's way? If poisoned mushrooms grow and babies come with crooked backs, if goiters thrive and dogs go mad and wives kill husbands, what unnatural? Here stands your lamb. Come cover him with kisses; he's all yours.

ELEANOR. (*Moves L.*) No, you're not mine. I'm not responsible.

RICHARD. (*Follows.*) Where do you think I learned this from? Who do you think I studied under? How old was I when you fought with Henry first?

ELEANOR. Young . . . I don't know.

RICHARD. How many battles did I watch?

ELEANOR. (*Moves R. below RICHARD.*) But those were battles—not a knife behind a door.

RICHARD. I've never heard a corpse ask how it got so cold. You've got a mind: you tell me, what was on it when you had your soldiers point their crossbows at him?

ELEANOR. That was in the field.

RICHARD. I don't care if it's in the dahlia bed—what were you thinking, Eleanor?

ELEANOR. Of you.

RICHARD. Of your unnatural animal?

ELEANOR. I did it all for you.

RICHARD. You wanted Father dead.

ELEANOR. No, never that.

RICHARD. You tried to kill him, didn't you?

ELEANOR. Yes.

RICHARD. Why? What did you want?

ELEANOR. (C.) I wanted Henry back.

RICHARD. (*Replaces knife in tray.*) You lie.

ELEANOR. I wanted Henry. Isn't there a chair?

JOHN. (*Handing her his cup of wine.*) Here. (*She takes it, reaches out to touch his cheek. Drawing away.*) None of that. (*Moves U. L.*)

ELEANOR. I've done without it this long; I'll endure.

GEOFFREY. She'll warn him. I was wrong. She'll do it if she gets the chance.

ELEANOR. Then you're in stalemate, aren't you, lamb?

GEOFFREY. (R. of column base.) How so?

ELEANOR. You don't dare let me stay here and you don't dare let me out. Dear me, whatever shall we do with Mother? (*ELEANOR crosses D. L., puts cups next to wine barrel.*)

GEOFFREY. Offhand, there are several possibilities.

(*The sound of a BOLT heard U. L.*)

JOHN. (*Runs to the tray, slams the cover on and crosses D. R.*) Watch it.

(HENRY. enters, U. L., carrying an armful of huge candlesticks. ALAIS follows with a lit taper.)

HENRY. (*As he fills the empty candlesticks and ALAIS, with a taper, lights them.*) It wants light. What we do in dungeons needs the shades of day. I stole the candles from the chapel. No one minded. Jesus won't begrudge them and the chaplain works for me.

(HENRY at candlestick D. L. of wine barrel. ALAIS stays D. R.)

ELEANOR. (R. of HENRY.) You look dreadful.

HENRY. So do you.

ELEANOR. I underslept a little.

HENRY. We can all rest in a little while. (*The candles are lit. The room is warm and cheery.*) That's better. Bright and clear, just like the morning.

ELEANOR. (*Moves to tray.*) Here: I'll take the breakfast things.

RICHARD. (*Blocks her.*) Not yet.

ELEANOR. They've gotten cold.

RICHARD. They're good cold.

HENRY. (D. L.) Listen to me. What's the answer? Can I ever let you out?

RICHARD. (*Crossing to him.*) What do you want from us? You must be mad. Why did you have to come here? Damn you, why'd you come?

HENRY. You think I want to lock you up?

RICHARD. You've got to. You can't let me out. You know you can't. I'll never stop.

HENRY. I can't stop either.

RICHARD. There's only fighting left.

HENRY. Not even that. What have you got to fight me with?

(GEOFFREY and RICHARD quickly move toward the tray.

ELEANOR gets there first and stops them.)

ELEANOR. My children. In the past, I've come and gone and loved you when it suited me. I never nursed you, warmed you, washed you, fed you, but today I felt such love for each of you and so I brought you breakfast.

RICHARD. Mother.

HENRY. Let her be.

ELEANOR. I thought I had no other choice but I was wrong again. (*She lifts the cover off and leans it against the column.*)

HENRY. (*Crosses to tray.*) Brave boys; that's what I have. Three warriors. Who had first crack? How was I divided up? Christ—

RICHARD. You drove us to it.

HENRY. Why stop now? You're killers, aren't you? I am. I can do it. (*To GEOFFREY.*) Take a knife. (*To RICHARD.*) Come on. What is it? Come for me.

RICHARD. I can't.

HENRY. You're Richard, aren't you?

RICHARD. But you're Henry.

HENRY. Please— We can't stop and we can't go back. There's nothing else.

JOHN. (D. R.) Daddy? Take me back. Please. Can't we try again?

HENRY. Again?

JOHN. We always have before.

HENRY. Oh yes— We always have.

JOHN. (*Running toward him, arms outstretched.*) Oh, Daddy— (*He comes skidding to a stop as HENRY draws his sword, holds it dead still, leveled at JOHN's vitals. JOHN falls to the floor, sobbing.*)

ELEANOR. Go on. Execute them. You're the King. You've judged. You've sentenced. You know how.

HENRY. By God, I will. Come Monday and they'll hang you with the washing. There'll be princes swinging from the Christmas trees.

ELEANOR. Why wait? They are assassins, aren't they? This was treason, wasn't it? You gave them life—you take it.

HENRY. Who's to say it's monstrous? I'm the King. I call it just. (*Holds his sword in front of him.*) Therefore, I, Henry, by the Grace of God King of the English, Lord of Scotland, Ireland and Wales, Count of Anjou, Brittany, Poitou and Normandy, Maine, Gascony and Aquitaine do sentence you to death. Done this Christmas Day in Chinon in God's year eleven eighty-three. (*He moves to RICHARD, sword raised. He swings the sword through the air and brings it crashing to the cellar floor. RICHARD staggers very slightly but beyond that neither moves nor registers a thing. A whimper is heard in the ensuing silence. It comes from HENRY, crumpled on the floor beside his sword. Then, soft and thoughtful:*) Surely that's not what I intended. Children . . . Children are . . . They're all we have. (*Spent, shattered, unable to look at anyone or anything, he waves them from the room.*) Go on. I'm done, I'm done. I'm finished with you. Never come again.

(JOHN, GEOFFREY and RICHARD *exit* U. L.)

ELEANOR. You spare the rod, you'll spoil those boys.

HENRY. I couldn't do it, Eleanor.

ELEANOR. Nobody thought you could.

HENRY. I did.

ALAIS. You saved them. You maneuvered it.

ELEANOR. Did I?

ALAIS. They're free because of you. They'll kill him one day; you know that.

ELEANOR. (*Nodding.*) The next time or the next.

ALAIS. You always win, *Maman*.

ELEANOR. Except the prize.

(HENRY *slowly rises.*)

ALAIS. (*Crossing to him.*) Come rest.

HENRY. I want no women in my life.

ALAIS. You're tired.

HENRY. I could have conquered Europe, all of it, but I had women in my life.

ALAIS. I'll warm some wine.

HENRY. I've shot your world, you silly bitch, and there you stand, all honey and molasses. Sweet? You make my teeth ache. (*They embrace.*)

ELEANOR. That's touching. Is it for my benefit?

HENRY. Your benefit? (*To ALAIS.*) Get out. Go on. Go!

ALAIS. (*Crossing.*) When you want me, I'll be waiting. (*Exits U. L.*)

HENRY. (*Turning on ELEANOR.*) For your benefit? I've done enough on your account. I should have killed you years ago.

ELEANOR. There's no one peeking. Do it now.

HENRY. I've wasted fortunes, squandered lives, spent everything—to buy this pit. I've got an eye for value. This is what I've made. I meant to do so much.

ELEANOR. Is this a play for pity?

HENRY. (*Crossing to her.*) Not from you. You put me here. You made me do mad things. You've bled me.

ELEANOR. Shoulder it yourself. Don't put it on my back. You've done what you have done and no one but yourself has made you do it. Pick it up and carry it. I can. My losses are my work.

HENRY. What losses? I've been cheated, not you. I'm the one with nothing.

ELEANOR. (*Slowly crossing c.*) Lost your life's work, have you? Provinces are nothing: land is dirt. I've lost you. I can't ever have you back again. You haven't suffered. I could take defeats like yours and laugh. I've done it. If you're broken, it's because you're brittle. You are all I've ever loved. Christ, you don't know what nothing is. I want to die.

HENRY. You don't.

ELEANOR. I want to die.

HENRY. I'll hold you.

(*She moves away, HENRY follows.*)

ELEANOR. (*Sinks down beside wine barrel.*) I want to die.

HENRY. (*Beside her.*) Stop saying that. Let me do something, damn you. This is terrible.

ELEANOR. Henry, I want to die.

HENRY. You will, you know. Wait long enough and it'll happen.

ELEANOR. (*Smiling.*) So it will.

HENRY. We're in the cellar and you're going back to prison and my life is wasted and we've lost each other and you're smiling.

ELEANOR. It's the way I register despair. There's everything in life but hope.

HENRY. We have each other and for all I know that's what hope is.

ELEANOR. We're jungle creatures, Henry, and the dark is all around us. See them? In the corners, you can see the eyes.

HENRY. And they can see ours. (*Rises picking up sword.*) I'm a match for anything. Aren't you?

ELEANOR. I should have been a great fool not to love you.

HENRY. (*Sheathes his sword.*) Come along; I'll see you to your ship.

ELEANOR. So soon?

HENRY. There's always Easter Court.

ELEANOR. You'll let me out for Easter?

HENRY. (*Nodding.*) Come the resurrection, you can strike me down again.

ELEANOR. Perhaps I'll do it next time.

HENRY. And perhaps you won't.

ELEANOR. (*Rises. Taking his arm, moving to go.*) It must be late and I don't want to miss the tide.

HENRY. (*As they go.*) You know, I hope we never die.

ELEANOR. I hope so, too.

HENRY. You think there's any chance of it?

CURTAIN

PROPERTY FLOT

Personal Props:

HENRY—sword

RICHARD—sword—dagger

ELEANOR—dagger

PRE-SET—

Stage Right:

7 bunches of holly

Wine decanter

Goblet

Jewel box with jewels and crown

Hand mirror

Henry bed

Stage Left:

Wine jug (JOHN)

2 documents (HENRY)

5 Xmas packages (ELEANOR)

5 large candles (HENRY)

1 taper (ALAI)

Matches

Brandywine decanter

2 glasses

Dagger (RICHARD)

2 candlesticks with candles

Wooden mallet

2 pewter cups

Covered tray with swords and daggers

Chest:

Brazier, wine pot, ladle, spice box, wine decanter, 2 pewter cups

Philip's bed—curtains closed, sheets turned down

Christmas tree

Philip's table

Chair

2 wine barrels

Scene 1—ALAI

Chair D. L.

Bench U. C.

Curtain on S. L. wall open

Henry—coat on bench