

HENRY

MONOLOGUE #1: 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 by the time this fine Christmas holiday is over, I'll make an heir of John, a petty prince of Richard and I'll still have you. You can always believe me; even when I lie. And I know, there are so many enemies — and some of them are more canny folk than I, or more cruel or more ruthless or dishonest. But not all rolled up in one. The priests write all the history these days and they'll do me justice. Henry, they'll say, was a master bastard.

MONOLOGUE #2: 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. 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 judgement 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. Give me a little peace.

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MONOLOGUE #3: 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. *(To his sons.)* You're not mine. I deny you. None of you will ever get my crown. I leave you nothing and I wish you plague. May all your children breech and die.