

GENE: God, it's all so ugly.

ALICE, *smiling*: Yes, my gentle Gene . . . a lot of life is.

GENE: Now, look, don't go trying to make me out some soft-hearted . . . *He can't find the word*. I know life is ugly.

ALICE: Yes, I think you know it. You've lived through a great deal of ugliness. But you work like a Trojan to deny it, to make it not so. *After a moment . . . not arguing*: He kicked me out. He said he never wanted to see me again. He broke Mother's heart over that for years. He was mean . . . unloving. . . . He beat the Hell out of you when you were a kid. . . . You've hated and feared him all your adult life . . .

GENE, *cutting in*: Still he's my Father, and a man. And what's happening to him appalls me as a man.

ALICE: We have a practical problem here.

GENE: It's not as simple as all that.

ALICE: To me it is. I don't understand this mystical haze you're casting over it. I'm going to talk to him tomorrow, after the session with the lawyer, about a housekeeper. *Gene reacts but says nothing*. Just let me handle it. He can visit us, and we can take turns coming to visit him. Now, I'll do the dirty work. Only when he turns to you, don't give in.

GENE: I can't tell you how ashamed I feel . . . not to say with open arms, "Poppa, come live with me . . . I love you, Poppa, and I want to take care of you." . . . I need to love him. I've always wanted to love him.

SEXUAL PERVERSITY IN CHICAGO

by David Mamet

David Mamet's four-character comedy explores contemporary sexual relationships through a series of witty vignettes that are written in a style that might be called surreal. This scene is from the last half of the play.

Deborah has recently moved into Danny's apartment. The "affair" is now giving way to the mundane tasks of "living together." It is morning and they are getting ready for work.

DANNY: Do we have any shampoo?

DEBORAH: I don't know.

DANNY: You wash your hair at least twice a day. Shampoo is a staple item of your existence. Of course you know.

DEBORAH: All right. I *do*. Know.

DANNY: Do we have any shampoo?

DEBORAH: I don't know. Is your hair dirty?

DANNY: Does my hair look dirty?

DEBORAH: Does it feel dirty? *Pause*. It looks dirty.

DANNY: It feels greasy. I hate it when my hair feels greasy.

DEBORAH: Well, I'm not going to look. If you want to know if there's any shampoo, you go look for it.

DANNY: You don't have to look. You know very well if there's any shampoo or not. You're making me be ridiculous about this. *Pause*. You wash yourself too much anyway. If you really used all that shit they tell you in *Cosmopolitan* (and you *do*) you'd be washing yourself from morning 'til night. Pouring derivatives on yourself all day long.

DEBORAH: Will you love me when I'm old?

DANNY: If you can manage to look eighteen, yes.

DEBORAH: Now, that's very telling.

DANNY: You think so?

DEBORAH: Yes.

DANNY: I'm going to wash my hair. Is there any shampoo?

DEBORAH: Yes. And no.

DANNY: Now what's that supposed to mean?

DEBORAH: Everything. And nothing. *Pause*. Would you get my hose?

DANNY: No. Where does this come from? This whole fucking behavior. You're making it up. "Get my hose." You want your hose, I'll get your hose. Here's your fucking hose. *Rummages in dresser*. Where's your hose? *Pause*. What do they call them, anyway? Nobody says 'hose.'

DEBORAH: Pantyhose.

DANNY: Where are they?

DEBORAH: Get some out of the laundry bag.
 DANNY: You're going to wear dirty hose?
 DEBORAH: I think I'm out of clean ones.
 DANNY: So you're going downtown in dirty hose?
 DEBORAH: Do you want me walking around with a naked lala?
 DANNY: If it makes you happy, Deb. I'm on the side of whatever makes you happy.

Deborah retrieves dirty hose from bag and starts changing into them.

DANNY: You make me very horny.
 DEBORAH: It's the idea of the dirty panties, Dan. You're sick.
 DANNY: I love your breasts.
 DEBORAH: "Thank you." *Pause.* Is that right?
 DANNY: Fuck you.
 DEBORAH: No hard feelings.
 DANNY: Who said there were?
 DEBORAH: You know there are.
 DANNY: Then why say there aren't?

THE LION IN WINTER

by James Goldman

ACT I, SCENE 2

The time is Christmas, 1183. The place is the court of Henry II of England. His queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine, has been summoned from her fortress (where she has been held prisoner by Henry) to join the family for the holidays.

Initially a love match, the relationship between Eleanor and Henry has turned into a battle of wits and a struggle for power, land, and the allegiance of their three sons. The most recent conflict has focused on the succession to the throne. Henry fa-

vors his youngest, John, while Eleanor continues to scheme in favor of Richard, the eldest. Their middle son, Geoffrey, hopes to play both brothers against each other and come out the sole heir.

In the opening scene of the play we find Henry with his young mistress, Alais. Alais came to court as a child when she was betrothed to Richard in exchange for a valuable piece of French land, the Vexin. Alais is in love with Henry and does not wish to marry any of his sons, but, while Henry loves her, he does not want to return the property to her brother, the king of France.

In this scene, Alais has just left. Henry and Eleanor begin discussing their children and reminiscing about the past in a manner to which both have become very accustomed: taunting, treacherous, and full of deception at every turn. This is the facade that characterizes their relationship and often masks the mutual respect and admiration they have for each other.

HENRY, *rises, crosses to right 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 left.* 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.