

**Scene Ten**

*Trumpets play. The cast, change places. The lights go down and up to indicate the progress of the play.*

*Sound of trumpets. The play starts. Enter **KENT** and **GLOUCESTER**.*

**NIGEL/KENT** I thought the king had more affected the Duke of Albany than Cornwall.

**DENIS/GLOUCESTER** It did always seem so to us: but now, in the division of the kingdom, it appears not which of the dukes he values most; for equalities are so weighed, that curiosity in neither can make choice of either's moiety. The king is coming.

*Sennet. Enter **KING LEAR**, **GONERIL**, **REGAN**, **CORDELIA**.*

**JEFFERSON/KING LEAR** Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

**DENIS/GLOUCESTER** I shall, my liege.

*Exeunt Gloucester*

**JEFFERSON/KING LEAR** Give me the map there.

Know that we have divided

In three our kingdom: and 'tis our fast intent

To shake all cares and business from our age;

Conferring them on younger strengths, while we unburthen'd crawl toward death.

Which of you shall we say doth love us most?

That we our largest bounty may extend where nature doth with merit challenge.

Goneril our eldest born speak first.

**LAUREN/GONERIL** Sir I love you more than words can wield the matter; dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty; beyond what can be valued rich or rare; no less than life with grace, health, beauty, honour; as much as child e'er loved, or father found; a love that makes breath poor and speech unable; beyond all manner of so much I love you.

**JESSICA/CORDELIA** (*aside*) What shall Cordelia do? Love and be silent.

*Spotlight picks out **DOROTHY** as **FOOL**.*

**DOROTHY/FOOL** They'll have me whipped for speaking true; thou  
It have me whipped for lying; and sometimes I am whipped for holding my peace.  
I had rather be any kind of thing than a fool!  
And yet I would not be thee nuncle.

*Spotlight picks out **MARY** as **REGAN** and **LAUREN** as **GONERIL**.*

**MARY/REGAN** This house is little; the old man and's people cannot be well bestowed.

**LAUREN/GONERIL** Tis his own blame; hath put himself from rest and must needs taste his folly.

*Spotlight picks out **KENT** and **LEAR**.*

**NIGEL/KENT** Answer my life in my judgement, thy youngest daughter does not love thee least, nor are those empty hearted whose low sounds reverb no hollowness.

**JEFFERSON/LEAR** Kent on thy life no more.

**NIGEL/KENT** A life I never held but as a pawn to wage against thine enemies; nor fear to lose it, thy safety being motive.

**JEFFERSON/LEAR** Out of my sight.

**NIGEL/KENT** See better, Lear, and let me still remain the true blank of thine eye.

**JEFFERSON/LEAR** Now by Apollo.

**NIGEL/KENT** Now by Apollo, King, thou swearst thy gods in vain.

**JEFFERSON/LEAR** O Vassal, miscreant!

*Spotlight picks out JESSICA as CORDELIA and JEFFERSON as LEAR.*

**JESSICA/CORDELIA** O look upon me sir, and hold your hand in benediction o'er me. No sir you must not kneel.

**JEFFERSON/LEAR** Pray do not mock me I am a very foolish fond old man.

*Spotlight picks out DENIS as GLOUCESTER with his hands over his eyes.*

**DENIS/GLOUCESTER** All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund? Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature, To quit this horrid act.

**DENIS/GLOUCESTER** *reveals a pair of googly eyes on springs. Spotlight picks out REGAN and GONERIL.*

**MARY/REGAN** Sick O sick!

**LAUREN/GONERIL** If not I'll ne'er trust medicine.

**MARY/REGAN** My sickness grows upon me.

**GONERIL** *screams and dies. We are now at the end of the play. GONERIL and REGAN lie dead on the floor. Spotlight picks out JEFFERSON as LEAR who strides across the stage, tears streaming down his face; JESSICA as CORDELIA limp in his arms.*

**JEFFERSON/KING LEAR** O you are men of stones!

Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so

That heaven's vault should crack:  
She's gone for ever.

I know when one is dead, and when one lives;  
She's dead as earth.

**JEFFERSON** *has really pulled it off. He is genuinely good.*

**JEFFERSON/LEAR** I might have sav'd her; now she's gone for ever! Cordelia, Cordelia...

**JEFFERSON** *suddenly panics as he becomes aware that JESSICA is unconscious.*

**JEFFERSON** *(snapping out of character)* Cordelia? Jessica? Shit! Jessica? She's unconscious! Come on say something!

**NIGEL/KENT** Royal Lear...

**JEFFERSON** Not you for fuck's sake.

*Suddenly all members of the cast come alive and surround DOROTHY led by LAUREN.*

**NIGEL/KENT** *(trying to stay in character)* Perchance there might be an apothecary in the establishment?

**DOROTHY** Shut up Nigel.

*Appealing to audience.*

Is there a doctor in the house?

**DENIS** I'll call an ambulance.

**DENIS** *runs off.*

**LAUREN** She's had an allergic reaction.

**JEFFERSON** Oh my God - the goddam chocolates ... She's in anaphylactic shock. We'll need adrenaline, a laryngoscope and ventilatory support.

**DOROTHY** You're not a doctor.

**JEFFERSON** No, but I played one in a movie. She's going to need an emergency tracheotomy. We're going to have to go through the cricothyroid membrane.

**NIGEL** Are you acting now?

**JEFFERSON** I have no idea. But there was something about a pen ...

**LAUREN** An epi-pen?

**JEFFERSON** That's it, she must have one somewhere.

**DOROTHY** Let's look in her bag!

**DOROTHY** *exits.* **LAUREN** *is taking charge, using her medical training.*

**LAUREN** Put her in the recovery position!

**DENIS** *comes back.*

**DENIS** The paramedics are on the way.

**JEFFERSON** They've got to watch out for peri-operative complications. Pneumothorax in particular.

**LAUREN** I expect they know that.

**JEFFERSON** Come on Jessica don't die on me.

*He is near to tears. We hear the sound of the ambulance. DOROTHY comes back with the bag.*

**JEFFERSON** *tips it out all over stage and finds the epi-pen. He knows exactly what to do.*

This is it.

**DENIS** Are you sure you know what you are doing?

**JEFFERSON** I may have been struck off but I was innocent!

**DOROTHY** What are you talking about?

**JEFFERSON** Never mind. Here goes.

*He removes the cap from the pen and plunges it into JESSICA's thigh. He holds it there and counts very professionally ...*