



# The Lion in Winter: A Play

*James Goldman*

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## **The Lion in Winter: A Play** James Goldman

Insecure siblings fighting for their parents' attention; bickering spouses who can't stand to be together or apart; adultery and sexual experimentation; even the struggle to balance work and family: These are themes as much at home in our time as they were in the twelfth century. In James Goldman's classic play *The Lion in Winter*, domestic turmoil rises to an art form.

Keenly self-aware and motivated as much by spite as by any sense of duty, Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine maneuver against each other to position their favorite son in line for succession. By imagining the inner lives of Henry, Eleanor, and their sons, John, Geoffrey, and Richard, Goldman created the quintessential drama of family strife and competing ambitions, a work that gives visceral, modern-day relevance to the intrigues of Angevin England.

Combining keen historical and psychological insight with delicious, mordant wit, the stage play has become a touchstone of today's theater scene, and Goldman's screenplay for the 1968 film adaptation won him an Academy Award. Told in "marvelously articulate language, with humor that bristles and burns" (*Los Angeles Times*), *The Lion in Winter* is the rare play that bursts into life on the printed page.

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