

We're Having A Little War

Hail and Reign

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~context~

Stephen of Blois has been crowned King of England despite the fact that he is not the rightful heir to the throne. The actual heir – the incorrigible, foul-mouthed, rather amusing Matilda – is enraged to hear that her crown has been stolen from her. Matilda, stuck in France, is determined to lead an army to retrieve her rightful inheritance.

MATILDA

(Singing.)

SO THEY'RE TRYING TO SWINDLE THIS DEAR MISS.
WELL, THOSE BASTARDS WON'T GET AWAY WITH THIS.
BY THE TIME THAT HOLLY'S FIT TO DECK
I'LL BE QUEEN AND HEADS HERE WILL BE SHORT A NECK.
TO GET MY THRONE BACK, WE SHALL HAVE A WAR NOW.
IT'S TIME TO SEE WHO GOD IS FOR NOW.

MATILDA storms out.

CHRONICLER

Thus, ladies and gentlemen, the war began. The war over the throne of England. The war between Stephen and Matilda.

(Singing.)

YES, WE'RE HAVING A LITTLE WAR, MY FRIENDS.
A SUPREMELY WASTEFUL YET SO TASTEFUL WAR.
FOR TOO LONG NOW WE'VE SOUGHT ONE.
IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE WE FOUGHT ONE.
WELL, MY GOODNESS, IT SEEMS THAT WE'VE GOT ONE.
THANK THE LORD.
GRAB YOUR SWORD.

The PLAYERS march onstage, dressed in wartime attire; the MALE PLAYERS as GENERALS, the FEMALE PLAYERS as SOLDIERS.

CHRONICLER, PLAYERS

(Singing.)
YES, WE'RE HAVING A LITTLE WAR, MY FRIENDS.
A DELIGHTFUL, THRILLING, GRAVEYARD-FILLING WAR.

MALE PLAYERS

(Singing.)
HOW I PRAYED WE'D PURSUE ONE.

FEMALE PLAYERS

(Singing, to EACH OTHER.)
D'YOU RECALL HOW TO DO ONE?

CHRONICLER

(Singing.)
MORE IMPORTANTLY, HOW TO LIVE THROUGH ONE?
COME ON, GUESS.

CHRONICLER, PLAYERS

(Singing.)
LET'S PRAY 'YES.'

CHRONICLER

(Singing.)
BOREDOM LIFE YIELDS
WHEN YOU HAVE FIELDS
THAT YOU CAN TILL AT EASE.

FEMALE PLAYERS

(Singing.)
SCREW PLANTING SEEDS.
EACH TRUE MAN NEEDS
THE CHANCE TO KILL AT EASE.

MALE PLAYERS

(Singing.)
IT'S THAT OLD ATTLA-TEASE.

CHRONICLER, ALL PLAYERS

(Singing.)
OH, IT WILL BE GRAND
WHEN WAR SKIPS CROSS THIS LAND.
YES, WE'RE HAVING A LITTLE WAR, MY FRIENDS.
A SUPERB, BREATHTAKING, WIDOW-MAKING WAR.

FEMALE PLAYERS

(Singing.)
TIME TO HITCH UP YOUR PANTS NOW.

MALE PLAYERS

(Singing.)
GRAB YOUR BAND-AIDS AND LANCE NOW.

CHRONICLER

(Singing.)
LET US JUMP TO THE NORTH COAST OF FRANCE NOW...

MUSIC continues. The CHRONICLER gestures. MATILDA, clutching the STUFFED ANIMAL, with a suitcase marked "England or Bust," charges towards the MALE PLAYERS, who salute.

MATILDA

General, is the army ready to sail?

MALE PLAYER #1

We should be in England by twilight, Your Majesty. The news there is most encouraging. The King of Scotland has invaded and many barons have risen in support of your cause.

MATILDA

They had better! Those who are MIA will soon be RIP. When my son and I enter London...

MALE PLAYER #2

Alas, Your Majesty, your son has joined his father to recapture your father's lands in Normandy.

(Handing HER a letter.)

He wrote you this.

MATILDA

(Heartfelt disappointment.)

What? But he said... I have this present to...

(HER face freezes into stone.)

I don't give a damn. So Henry frolics with Daddy. They can go charge sand castles together. When I'm Queen of England, I'll give my son real castles to play with. Now let's get this blasted war on the road.

(Singing.)

EACH CANNON BLAST
I PRAY WILL LAST
IN PERPETUITY.
BRING ON THE LOOT.
THIS WAR WILL SUIT
'KING' STEPHEN TO A T.
JUST WAIT! I'LL SEE TO IT, HE
WILL TREAT WITH A GROAN
THE DAY HE STOLE MY THRONE.

MATILDA fumes out, as:

CHRONICLER, PLAYERS

(Singing.)

YES, WE'RE HAVING A CIVIL WAR, MY FRIENDS.
A SUBLIME, UNEQUALED, HIDE-THE-WEAK-WILLED WAR.

MALE PLAYERS

(Singing.)

GOD, WE CAN'T WAIT TO RUN ONE.

FEMALE PLAYERS

(Singing.)

MAKE THIS WAR HERE A FUN ONE.

WILLIAM MARSHAL

(Singing, sticking HIS head in.)

I'M SO YOUTHFUL I NEVER HAVE DONE ONE.

CHRONICLER, PLAYERS

(Singing.)

OH, WILL MIRACLES NEVER CEASE?
WE'VE A WAR TO BRING AN END TO ALL THIS PEACE.
WAR IS SOMETHING TO TREASURE.
ONE OR TWO IS GOOD MEASURE.
HERE'S ONE MORE NOW FOR YOUR VIEWING PLEASURE.
OH, WE'RE HAVING A CIVIL WAR.
HAVING A CIVIL WAR.
HAVING A CIVIL WAR.
A DAMNED FULFILLING
TAKE-TOP-BILLING
KEEP-ON-KILLING
CHILLING WAR.