

The Death of Alexander

by Manuel Strid

Alexander the Great has finished his conquest of the known world, but he is mortally ill and breathing his last breaths in his bedroom with his prized generals by his side.

ALEXANDER

My life has been well spent, but now with my only friend dead and all of the world conquered, there is not much more to live for.

PTOLEMY

If that is true, my lord, then you must decide whom you want for king.

ALEXANDER

Oh, that matters little, for no leader will ever be as great as I. [As he says this, his eyes start to close and as he falls to sleep, the light turns to dark as the generals and doctors try to wake him. The stage shifts and Alexander wakes up on the battlefield of Chaeronea where he is preparing to lead his legion to victory against the Sacred Battalion.]

ALEXANDER

[to his legion] We must attack from behind and encircle the Sacred Battalion to ensure victory. It might seem difficult, but my masterful planning and genius in battle will lead us to victory. Now, follow your future king! [His legion screams in loud war cries as they charge, and then the stage goes dark as it shifts to another dream. Alexander is alone next to his father's deathbed.]

ALEXANDER

[speaking out loud to himself] Now that my father is dead, I must take charge and show the people what a real king is. [After this, he walks out the door and to the balcony where thousands of citizens are waiting for him to address his father's death.]

ALEXANDER

[in a loud voice so all can hear] My father has passed away tonight. [A mixture of loud sounds erupt from the crowd.] But let us not dwell on the past, but let us look forward to the future where I will be king of all known lands! [The crowd erupts into cheers, but slowly fades into darkness as the

stage changes. The light comes back and now Alexander is drunk at a banquet in the palace and is announcing the duties of his generals.]

ALEXANDER

[speaking drunkenly] Cleitus you are to take sixteen thousand mercenaries to fight the nomads in Central Asia.

CLEITUS

[speaking in a mad, drunken tone] My lord, you are to send me off with these second-rate soldiers! I deserve better after all I have done!

ALEXANDER

Enough of this! When I, the great king of the world, with hundreds of times greater accomplishments than even my father, say something, it is final! I always have the final say!

CLEITUS

That is a title that you received from your father—a greatness that you did not deserve, for you are not even the legitimate heir of Philip II! [The generals and people all circle around gasping at these bold claims.]

ALEXANDER

Guards! Size him! No one disrespects me!

LEADER OF GUARDS

[rushing in and seeing the incident] My lord, we cannot intervene in a quarrel between friends.

ALEXANDER

All right, then, I will take care of this myself! [He grabs an apple and throws it at Cleitus' head.] Give me a dagger or a spear! [He shouts this to the people around him and sees a dagger on the table. He reaches for it, but two men restrain him. He fights against them at the same time two men hold back Cleitus from attacking Alexander.]

ONE OF THE MEN RESTRAINING ALEXANDER

[speaking loudly to Alexander] Stop fighting! You must calm down my lord!

CLEITUS

[yelling loudly at Alexander while being restrained] You are a false king and have never really earned anything in your life! [Upon hearing this Alexander breaks free from the men restraining him and reaches for a spear. He grabs it

and throws it directly through Cleitus' heart. The people and generals surrounding him gasp. All chaos breaks out.]

ALEXANDER

[speaking to the crowd] No one disrespects my achievements or military genius—*ever!* [The people around him start to exit the room. As the light goes dark and the light come back again, Alexander is back at his death bed and he opens his eyes. Startled, the generals are relieved.]

PEDDICAS

[speaking joyfully] We thought you were dead, my lord. What a great relief to see you alive!

PTOLEMY

Now, my lord, it is time to choose a successor from one of us, for your son is surely too young and your brother too lame!

ALEXANDER

[speaking tiredly] Yes, yes and my life is near its end. Generals, I will give you all this signet ring. [He motions to Pediccas and whispers in his ear.] May the strongest among you become king. [He then lifts his voice to address all the generals.] I must warn you—no matter who becomes king, the land will fall into war and destruction. [His voice slowly fades and he lies down, dead.]

PEDICCAS

I must bury him in Egypt and pay him the greatest respect, as I am the one he loved the most. He must be worshiped like a god! [The generals each take a turn saying goodbye to his remains finally Sisygambis, the Persian noble, comes in.]

SISYGAMBIS

[speaks out loud in a half sob to herself and the dead Alexander] We were so alike, you and I, Alexander—both better than everyone else and deserving more than they gave us. The simple Greeks could not understand what it was to be better than everyone else. Only Hephaestion really understood, and that is why he was your only friend. Now I must leave you, Alexander, and I hope you will find peace with the gods. [Sisygambis leaves and Alexander is taken away. The lights go dark.]