LEADING PLAYER

Enter Charlemagne!

CHARLES

This part is to be portrayed by an actor of enormous POWER!

LEADING PLAYER

We join Charlemagne in the midst of his royal council. It’s been a looong day...

(PLAYERS enter to the left and right of the throne, half as noble members of the court, the other half as lowly peasants)

Noble

And that is why, sire, I humbly beseech you to reduce-

CHARLES

Denied! Next!

Noble

Oh great leader, blessed by God, sent from heaven to protect-

CHARLES

Oh, not this bullshit again! What is it?

Noble

Sire, due to famine our fields are barren-

CHARLES

Denied! Next!

Noble

Sire-
CHARLES

Denied! Next!

NOBLE

But I protest! This is unjust and tyrannical!

CHARLES

Take that man out and hang him! Out! Out! Out! Everybody out!

PIPPIN

No! Wait, sire!

CHARLES

I said everybody out!

PIPPIN

Father, it’s me!

CHARLES

What!?

PIPPIN

Pippin.

CHARLES

... Pippin? Pippin! (CHARLES leaps into PIPPIN’s arms excitedly) Ha ha ha! My boy! (He leaps out of PIPPIN’s arms) But wait! Why are you doing here?

PIPPIN

I’m home! I finished school!

CHARLES

Oh! Oh, really? Well how did it go?
PIPPIN

Very well, very well, my tutors are so impressed! I-

CHARLES

(Interrupting PIPPIN) Oh! Good, good, good, ‘cause I'm a great believer in education.

PIPPIN

And yet you have become the most powerful man in the world without it!

CHARLES

Oh, p’shaw, Pippin. The most powerful man in the world? What about the Pope?

PIPPIN

Oh, sir. I rank you ahead of the Pope.

CHARLES

I happen to agree with you! (He leaps up and embraces PIPPIN) It’s good to see you Pippin. (He begins to exit)

PIPPIN

(Chasing after CHARLES) Uh, wait father; I just have one more thing to-

CHARLES

(Interrupting PIPPIN) Oh! Oh! Oh! You know, we have a library now. Perhaps you could find a book-

PIPPIN

Thank you, I-

CHARLES

-because, you know, tomorrow is for you!
PIPPIN

But it’s still today!

CHARLES

Yes, but for how long? Because you see Pip- (He looks about, paranoid)
Because, you see Pippin, sunrise and sunset are similar, but they are not identical.

(He kisses PIPPIN on the cheek and exits, PIPPIN stands, confused)

PIPPIN

(Pursuing CHARLES) Wait, father, what does that even mean- Father, wait!

CHARLES

Yes?

PIPPIN

I know what I want to do!

CHARLES

Good. Oh! Good! Good! Good! What?

PIPPIN

I wanna be a soldier!

CHARLES

Ahahahaha! Denied!

PIPPIN

Father, I’m your only son.

CHARLES

Yes.
PIPPIN
Well, that means I’ll king one day.

CHARLES
Yes.

PIPPIN
And fighting wars is an important part of being king.

CHARLES
Fighting wars is the most important part of being king. After all, the Pope and I have dedicated ourselves to spreading Christianity throughout the entire world... even if we have to kill every non-Christian to do it.

PIPPIN
Exactly, so I want to join you in your campaign against the Visigoths!

CHARLES
Denied!

PIPPIN
That’s not fair! You’re taking Lewis!

CHARLES
Lewis is an ideal warrior! He’s fearless! ...And stupid! (taking the sword from PIPPIN’s hands) But you, Pippin, you! You’re educated.

PIPPIN
Oh, and for what!? Look, father, you’re dedicated to something, and I just want to be dedicated to something too. Otherwise my life will have no meaning at all.
CHARLES

Oh, you want your life to have meaning. That’s very ambitious of you Pippin. Denied.

PIPPIN

But father, you-

CHARLES

Denied!

PIPPIN

Father, you created this entire kingdom out of nothing, and now all I’m asking for is my chance. My chance to fight for my country, for my family, for my king. (He kneels, then makes a grand bow)

CHARLES

(Finding this adorable) Oh..... (He leaps up, causing PIPPIN to rise; he then gives PIPPIN the sword and starts off) You get yourself a decent helmet and you come along!