

38



John Stride as Julien Sorel with June Tobin as Louise de R nal, the first woman in his life

JOHN, 26, SPURNS £100,000

IMAGINE—and this will come as no great hardship to football pool punters everywhere—that you have just won £100,000 on the Treble Chance.

Now imagine you are refusing to accept it. Turning it down. Every penny. And hoping for something better to turn up.

You feel ill? Well, join with me in staggered silence while we meet the daring young man who I thought at first was doing something perilously close to it.

Name: John Stride. Profession: actor. Rating: brilliant. Claim to fame: a superb portrayal of Romeo for the Old Vic last season.

Said John yesterday, without so much as a nervous twitch: "I have just turned down a £100,000 Hollywood film contract.

"I had a very good, human reason," he explained. "I did not want to spend the next seven years—the length of the contract—being told exactly what, and what not, to do."

Fine, coming from an oil tycoon, I suggested—but a little irrational from a lad of 26 currently between acting jobs.

Grinned John expansively: "Not really. I am also haggling over a contract that will give me £100,000 in five years.

But I refuse to sign unless they let me choose my parts."

I left—somehow feeling that he was taking chances with my money



John Stride, Charles Kay and Geraldine McEwan in a scene from Brecht's adaptation of Marlowe's "Edward II."