

AK 25445

3/6

Leo Keiz Collection

1960s

Kaiser, Georg

Napoleon in New Orleans

English adaptation by MAY Slater

"N A P O L E O N I N N E W O R L E A N S"

A N E W P L A Y

B Y

GEORG KAISER

English Adaptation by Max Slater

KURT HELLMER
AUTHOR'S REPRESENTATIVE
52 VANDERBILT AVENUE
NEW YORK 17, N. Y.
TELEPHONE: MU-6-2222

C H A R A C T E R S

QUATRESOUS

BARON DERGAN

GLORIA DERGAN

CAROTTE

YOUYOU

POLLY

PEPA

THE DUVAL FAMILY

NOTE: Legend has it that Napoleon was spirited away from his exile on St. Helena, with someone else taking his place in prison. It is also related that the last years of his life were spent in America. And to this day, they still show his ~~his~~ house and grave in the city of New Orleans...

S E T T I N G

The scene is the vast, ornate main hall in the mansion of Baron DERGAN, an exiled French aristocrat residing in New Orleans. At first impression the high ceilinged hall looks somewhat like a museum. The walls are covered with weapons, flags, smoky battle paraphernalia, faded uniform pieces, etc., and the collection hardly permits a clear view of the walls themselves. ~~USR~~ a broad marble staircase leads to the private rooms. In the center of the gallery above is a large door with golden ornamentation. The corridor of the balcony like gallery leads to other rooms off stage.

The center wall downstairs is dominated by a double glass door, leading to a spacious terrace. Beyond it marble columns and part of a huge garden can be seen. The general impression is that of a very large stately manor.

A large oak table dominates the center of the room.

SCENE ONE

the master of the house,
When the curtain rises Baron DERGAN, /is guiding THE DUVAL FAMILY through his collection. Dergan has the bearing, suavity and fine features of an aged French aristocrat. He is dressed ^{conservatively} ~~EXPENSIVELY~~ /but expensively. The Duval family consists of the parents - aged about 35 - and their two children. JACQUES is a boy of about 14, Marie-Louise a lovely girl of 10, with long blonde hair. Baron Dergans commentary has just been interrupted by Marie-Louise.

Marie-Louise

What is Toulon, Mama?

Mme. Duval

Be quiet, Marie-Louise!

Dergan

(continuing his commentary during the above exchange)
.....and these are cannon balls from the port of Toulon. From the forbidding gorge of ~~dark~~ cannons Napoleon was born. Like a farmer he sowed the seeds of iron guns around him, relentlessly planting his deadly roots, hurrying on to new fields, looking for fertile battle grounds for his harvest of victories. Precious ripe fruits growing on the stem of bayonets. Toulon. This was the beginning. His artillery blasted the enemy to smoke and ashes...

(At his moment QUATRESOUS, a tall, skinny creature, shabbily dressed, with only one arm, enters through the garden doors. He bows deeply. The Baron acknowledges this while speaking, signals him to wait). Quatresous carries a bundle under his arm)

.....Rivoli! The first wild fighting. The gusts of March announcing the arrival of spring.

(he stands in front of a moth eaten, stuffed uniform)

Jaques

Why does the man only have one arm?

Mr. Duval

Jaques! Behave yourself or...

Dergan

....The seeds have taken root now, wherever they are planted. The thunder of the cavalry shakes the ground. New victories blossom in a blaze of glory, competing for brightness with the sun itself.

(In front of another group)

With spring comes Arcole. The storm blows more powerfully. Who takes the flag at the bridge, while the best around him hesitate? Who leads them into the rain of bullets? Is he falling? How could he fall? His glory is shielded by the cloth of the flag itself. Disastrous spring lightning mows down his enemies, yet his battle fields remain untouched.

(In front of another group)

And why should not the desert too become fertile for him? Europe does not offer enough plowing ground for his kind of harvest. What is a hero's life but victory and glory?

Marie-Louise

Why is the man so ~~sad~~ sad, Mama?

Mme. Duval

Psst.....

Dergan

Aegypt! The eternal pyramids. What conqueror could resist such temptation for immortality?

(Walking to the next group)

Austerlitz! The summer of his glory. The end of summer means Jena and Auerstaedt. No farmer could store his yield - this grain of glory - more eagerly, for the hard winter to come; and this winter was hard

~~4~~ 4

Dergan(contin)

indeed.

(In front of next group)

Moscow. The city which promised warmth went up in flames. One needs shelter when the snow comes down, choking the throats. There - before Moscow - his army perished never to rise again.

(Moving to another group)

Leipzig! The enemy's teeth buried in his flanks like a pack of wolves. A hundred times outnumbered...

Mr. Dupont

(trying to escape the long lecture gracefully)

Thank you ever so much, Baron Dergan. We must go now. Au revoir.

(General ad lib of the rest of the Duval family: Au revoir.

Merci. Thank you. Goodbye, etc. One can still hear them chattering, after they are out of sight. Dergan, moved by his own lecture, continues the tour alone, speaking to himself)

Waterloo! Yes. He did rise out of the water and attacked the coast of France with just a cluster of his soldiers ..

(he turns to Quatresous)

...men like you...his striking force. They won and again made their leader the emperor of France. Now they are blind to his greatness, deaf to his deeds, which they once praised but ~~now~~ now forgotten...

Quatresous

Not by everyone.

Dergan

Tell me - who did not forget? Who does not defile his name just thinking of him?

Quatresous

You

Dergan

I? Who am I? Can I become the saviour of his glory? Could my faith erase the shame of a whole world? Here in this far corner of the globe, in this new land called America. It is like burying a treasure in the jungle and finding quick growing weeds covering the roots next morning. Impossible to find a single trace. Who will come after me? I have no son to lead into this room and say: This is your heritage. I gave you the impatient pounding blood in your veins; you are a Dergan. It was a Dergan who once found France too small for him and lured by the great ocean reached these shores. Faithful to his birth place he named it NEW Orleans! And sealed the contract linking in spirit the old and new worlds. A pact which shall not be broken by any Dergan, however he may seek glory. A son of mine would have treasured such an admonition,

(With a gesture indicating the collection)

..revered this testament like a holy shrine. These flags weapons and tunics, singed and turned purple in the fire of battle, each carry marks of hits and blows. Clouds of gunpowder drifting downhill from blasting cannons, blackening the color of this flag. Blood rusting of the tips of the bayonets. Are these not the same weapons which stormed the hills, silencing the ~~the~~ enemy's guns? Did this flag not lead the assault and unfolded in victory? I can see every battle fought with these arms. Fists tensely gripped around the rifle butts, relaxing only when nothing

~~5~~ 5

Dergan(cont)

alive stirs around them. Yes, these are true proofs of deeds so gigantic, that one could almost doubt their authenticity, if these witnesses were not assembled here. I am the last of the Dergans.

I rescued from oblivion and the past what the present - too complacent to the mighty movements of war - does not appreciate. ~~XXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Will the dawn see a new future arise - sparked from this very boom? If so my work shall not have been in vain. I will have fulfilled my duty.

(Quatresous sighs. Dergan turns to him)

You brought this first piece to me, do you remember?

Quatresous

It was ^{OWN} my uniform.

Dergan

They announced an invalid at the gate. A veteran from France. I ordered them to let you in.

Quatresous

A graceful gesture, if I may so.

Dergan

An inspiration, if I may so myself. You came into this room. The walls were still bare...

Quatresous

Very bare..

Dergan

... and I aquired this uniform.

Quatresous

You paid very well, as I recall.

Dergan

And what did I say before I dismissed you?

Quatresous

You gave me an order for more.

Dergan

Which you fulfilled promptly.

Quatresous

When someone has contacts with other veterans, he can get certain things..

Dergan

You had to make considerable efforts. Dont be so modest, soldier.

Quatresous

I have comrades in Marseilles and know a few captains on the boats around here.

Dergan

I am deeply grateful to your comrades and the captains.

Dergan(cont)

Any wish I pronounced has come true. It seems a miracle that this collection is so complete. Some time ago I thought that we had reached the end, and I arranged a permanent display of all the items, spanning from battle field to battle field. Toulon at the beginning- Waterloo at the end. What could come after Waterloo? What do you have in this bundle?

Quatresous
(taking a faded linen jacket out of ^a satchel, spreading it carefully on the table)

Dergan
A jacket made of coarse linen like farmers wear? What does it mean?

Quatresous
St. Helena.

Dergan
(with emotion) So this is how they robbed him, making him cover his nakedness with the jacket of a peasant? Do they expect him to raise cabbages and beets? Making him bend and pick up crumbs, to work with a shovel? This is murder. The foul doings of highway bandits, torturing their victim lying on the ground, roasting him on hot rocks and finally ~~denying~~ declining him a drink of water, as he dies from thirst.

Quatresous
That St. Helena sure got a hell of a climate.

Dergan
How did this coat happen to fall into your hands?

Quatresous
If I had not promised to be silent about it...

Dergan
Did you obtain it by illegal means?

Quatresous
The emperor himself took it off his shoulders and handed it to the first mate.

Dergan
The first mate?

Quatresous
Do you insist on the name, Sir?

Dergan
Not if it seems dangerous to divulge it.

Quatresous
That will make the telling of my story much easier.- Not a single soul arriving in St. Helena from the coast of France is permitted near the emperor.

Quatresous(cont)

Just the people living on the island are admitted to the fortress on business only. There are guards everywhere.

Dergan their are

Three thousand men ~~in~~ armed ~~to~~ teeth/guarding Napoleon. Six hundred cannon muzzles cover the bastion, and a battle fleet circles day and night around the island.

Quatresous

Yes, to reach his Majesty one would have to transform himself into a fish crossing the water, then becoming a fox to slip though all the traps.

Dergan

How did your mate succeed?

Quatresous

By exchanging costumes with a native lad whose assignment is to deliver supplies for the detention kitchen. I picked up gossip around the piers that this ship - the "Antoinette" - was getting ready to sail for St. Helena the next morning with a cargo of fruit badly needed on the island. ~~He extracted the necessary information and gave him certain instructions, you see.~~

SO I BEFRIENDED THE MATE AND GAVE HIM

Dergan

What did you tell him?

Quatresous

To approach the emperor for a personal souvenir for you.

Dergan

For me?

Quatresous

For someone in the new world with more faith in him than those in the old one.

Dergan

You permitted the mate to mention my name?

Quatresous

He did pronounce it before the emperor. For just a second the ~~em~~ emperor's face lit up with joy - then looked grim again. All of a sudden he took off this jacket he wore and handed it to him with these words: "My faithful friend will have to content himself with this. I possess nothing else to reward him for his love to me."

Dergan

(covers his face with his hands for a few seconds, then crisscrosses the room, speaking to himself)

The island lacks fresh fruit; we have it in abundance, generous nature blooms and ripens more than is needed. Here. Not overthere. Overthere are no shady trees to make the heat bearable. (Looks towards the garden) There no endless pergola of leaves, To soothe us, to make us well again. No birds humming, no fragrance of flowers.

7
8

Dergan(cont)

A harmonious sunset. The emperor should be here. After so much action so much quiet is needed. He should be liberated from St. Helena. But how? Three thousand guards, six hundred cannon barrels, ships days and nights. Every step closely watched. He would be missed the next minute, even he could slip away unnoticed, he would be recaptured and doubly tortured. The emperor must always be visible behind the window bars. Yet did not the mate cease to be a sailor once inside the compound? Were he not able to make his way unmolested into the emperors presence, once he exchanged clothes with the islander? Do you follow my thinking, soldier?

Quatresous

It I try to follow, Sir, but I am afraid you lost me a little just now..

Dergan

The emperor could be the one who leaves St. Helena, and another one could stay behind and become the royal captive! Is there such a man in this world? One who would be jailed and remains there voluntarily? Thus liberating and replacing Napoleon from a cage, which never must seem empty. Who is willing to take the eagles place, to allow him to escape from his torturers? I was dreaming aloud, too beautiful to one who is awake.

Quatresous

If I could slip a fat reward to the mate...

have

Dergan

How much ~~xxx~~/you given him the last time?

Quatresous

Every sous I could find in my pocket.

Dergan

You shall be rewarded as generously as if you had brought the emperors inauguration robe. (He hands him a full purse of money.)

the Quatresous

I will share this with ^{the}mate.

Dergan

It will never be a just compensation for your patriotic services.

Quatresous

Vive l'Empereur!

(He salutes and bows again when reaching the terrace door, then disappears through the garden. Dergan remains alone for a moment, eyeing his collection, caressing and straightening out wrinkles in the jacket. GLORIA enters from upstairs. She is very young and graceful, and wears a beautiful white dress. Dergan meets her at the bottom of the staircase; he kisses her hands)

Gloria

You had a visitor. I heard you talking to him.

He is still with us. Dergan

Where is he? Gloria

Somewhere in the garden. Dergan

Who is it, father? Gloria

The emperor. Dergan
(Gloria looks at him in surprise)
Do you want to see him?

As long as he can not see me. Gloria

Is my child afraid? Dergan

I am nothing before his glory. Gloria

No one is. (He leads her to the glass door) We must not be seen, Dergan
just a little peeking. What can you see?

Nothing yet. Gloria

Does his presence blind you? Dergan

The bushes are too dense. Gloria

Watch the clearings between them. Dergan

There! Gloria

The clouds have disappeared. Dergan

I saw him passing by with strong, quick steps. Gloria

He is gone again. A miraculous appearance. Dergan

Only a branch still trembles where I glimpsed his silhouette. Gloria

Dergan
Come. Your doubts turn our distinguished visitor into just another mirage. (He leads her to the table) Then let me ask you this: Is that a ~~xxx~~ jacket?

Gloria
It certainly is.

Dergan
Feel it with your fingers, touch it gently.

Gloria
It is so....rough.

Dergan
Coarse and rough it is.

Gloria
To whom does it belong?

Dergan
It is the emperors jacket. It was draped around his shoulders only a short while ago. Do you believe now that he is here? That he is free now from wearing this vulgar prison garb ~~of~~ they made him wear on St. Helena.

Gloria
You know that I want to believe anything you tell me.

Dergan
~~One~~ One should not believe too much in what only might come true later. Still this we must believe: The emperor is here, looking exactly as our inner eye remembers him; crossing our garden under the green crowns of trees. He has come to soothe our grief for his misfortune. Do you think he would be touched when he ...

Gloria
...when he sees that we live here among his glories?

Dergan
He knows it, Gloria. He knows everything now. The existence of this room in a new world which better preserves the heritage of his victorious battles than the old one. He knows we keep the flame alive.

Gloria
He knows about you then?

Dergan
He who remembers everything and forgets nothing included me in his memory.

Gloria
How did he find out?

Dergan
A sailor disguised succeeded in reaching the emperor and told him about me. The one who once gave away thrones took this jacket off

~~110~~ //

Dergan(cont)

his shoulders and sent it as a present to me.

Gloria

Was this sailor here today?

Dergan

Not him. The one who instructed the mate, the one who made all this possible paid me a visit. I owe everything in this collection to this one good man.

Gloria

Could not the sailor disguise himself once more? Could he not make the emperor walk between the rose bushes in our garden, father?

Dergan

(comes close to her, excitedly) You are pronouncing exactly what I just said before to my visitor. It fell on deaf ears. Someone would have to trade his own life, throw himself voluntarily into the hell of St. Helena until doomsday. Where is there such a man?

Gloria

Please forgive that I am only your daughter.

Dergan

Were you my son, you mean, you would....

Gloria

As your son I would gladly to do anything to free the emperor from St. Helena!

End of Scene One

~~12~~ 12

SCENE TWO

The shabby interior of a dilapidated shack in New Orleans. The furniture consists of crates of all shapes and ~~all~~ sizes. CAROTTE is stretched out on a half crate, which is used as a bed, somewhere in the center of the room. POLLY stands behind Carotte, combing his red hair and equally ~~KAISYAKI~~ flamboyant bushy beard. YOUYOU squats in front of an upturned barrel, playing solitaire. PEPA stands ~~EKE~~ at the ~~the~~ window, anxiously looking out on the road.

Youyou

He probably kept him there and fed him to the dogs.

Pepa

(spits at Youyou) Foul mouth.

Youyou

The dogs would not get their moeny's worth with only one arm to chew on.

(Pepa swiftly kicks the barrel from under Youyou's behind, then calmly returns to her post at the window) The unperturbed Youyou patiently puts the barrel back in its former position, continues to play his game of solitaire)

Carotte

One must never make jokes about the physical handicaps of our fellow men. The absence of a limb or an organ - whichever it may be - should be looked upon with compassion.

Youyou

How can you look upon something which isn't there.

Carotte

Spiritually speaking.

Polly

(kisses him on his head) Beautifully said. Just for this I could eat your lice.

Youyou

I am going to ask the cards what has happened to him. Ace, knight, heart...

Pepa

Stop consulting your filthy cards.

(Youyou expects another assault by Pepa, hides the cards quickly under his shirt)

Youyou

Not much filthier than our future after so many sunny days.

Carotte

Still no sign of him?

(Pepa shakes her head)

Maybe it is still to early to be worried.

(Carotte starts to hiccup)
Polly ~~immediately~~ slaps him on the back)

Pepa
Then why do you always get the hiccups, when something seems to go wrong?

(Carotte starts to get over his hiccup spell)
I am worried about his safe return. One idiot consults those stupid cards to look into our future. The other has his mane combed like a horse, bellows like a donkey in distress. Just like nothing ever happened. As if hadn't been you two who encouraged him to bring the jacket to the old Baron.

(They look at her in surprise)

Carotte
Who sent who with the jacket to the Baron?

Pepa
(reluctantly) Alright - so he wanted to go himself - but you pushed him.

Carotte
(benevolently)
The truth never tolerates half truths.
(to Polly)
You are pulling to hard.

Pepa
I will be very tender from now on.

Youyou
That was definately an idea a man with two healthy arms never would have thought of.

Pepa
(getting angrier)
Right. You were smarter this time. You were too shrewd to burn your own fingers on that jacket. Not sticking in the eye, like that fancy material for the flag. One has to be a patriotic Baron to get drunk on junk like that. Those rusty bayonets thrust at the Baron by Quatresous.

Youyou ~~immediately~~
One good thrust with a bayonet between the Barons eyes and Quatresous would have less trouble with him.

lousy Pepa
Those ~~lousy~~/jokes should make your tongue blush like the color of your hair.

~~immediately~~ Polly
Youyou
How could we profit from a dead Baron, I ask you? Besides everything else they would be after us for murder. Gives me the shivers.

Carotte
Pipe down, Youyou. Dont scare us after we have gone this far.

Carotte(cont)

I get sick at my stomach when I consider that that noble aristocrat could have died such a horrible death by the one hand of Quatresous. At a time when we were doing such great business with this ~~man~~ man.

GENTLE

Youyou

He will sart hiccuping again in a moment, if you dont lay off him, Pepa.

Polly

Leave the boys alone, Pepa. Say you are sorry.

Pepa

Ybuyou never stops needling and pricking.

Youyou

Pricking?

Pepa

There he goes again, see?

Carotte

You two better make peace. (With some hesitation Youyou and Pepa shake hands) There is no point that we should part as enemies. (He sits up) What we accomplished so far should not be overshadowed by fighting between us. We should respect each other. After all made his own contribution to the cause. Quatresous, myself and Youyou. Polly and Pepa - the girls. (Yes They look at him surprised) Yes - I said girls. Unselfish love is a sort of chastity. We are only talking about ~~the~~ present occupations. It was altogether a happy association. We complemented each other, and I cant think of any other occasion where five such radically different characters as we understood each other so perfectly. It was a glorious time. Money floating down from heaven - and for what? For ~~fasty~~ weapons, abandoned around the docks, useless scraps, repaired by a blacksmith. We made glorious use of them. I was a blacksmith apprentice before I ran away from home; I still remember a thing or two.

Polly

You remembered a lot.

Carotte

Enough as to not to overestimate my skills, and to respect other peoples talents. Youyou is tops in burglary. He can ssqueeze through any hole. In spite of being so well larded. The bayonets and the old rifles were entirely hos contributions.

Youyou

I can get in anywhere. I can inhale in a way that my stomach becomes a shallow cave, and expand to blow myself up like a balloon.

Carotte

What did you do before?

Youyou

I was an actor.

~~Yoyou~~
~~Carotte~~
Carotte

You never told us that.

Youyou

You would have laughed.

Carotte

You could have put on a show for us from time to time. For example when the girls had to sew those uniforms together. (Turning to Polly and Pepa) What would have done without you two couturieres with the lovely derrieres?

9 (He roars with laughter at his pun)
And those flags they pieced together! Finest craftsmanship!

Polly

I did it for you, Carotte.

Pepa

I did for Quatresous.

Carotte

Right. We must not forget to mention Quatresous, our right hand. Or is it our left hand? Anyway, a wretched crippled veteran, shuttling back and forth...

Youyou

A veteran habitue of a whorehouse, who lost his arm in a fight on the premises of the establishment.

(Pepa is ready to use her fingernails on Youyou, because of this remark)

Carotte

His arm was cut off in combat, dont you know? That really impressed the patriotic Baron. Stumped the old bastard. Ha ha! That's a good one! He was received with open arms at the gate - yet having only one himself.

(The others react to his humor with grim expressions)
Baron Dergan receives him in his mausoleum. "What do you have for me today?"- " Everything your highness ordered. Holy treasures from Napoleons altar, and we must all sacrifice before him." The Baron sacrificed plenty alright. Many a solid gold coin came our way.

‡ (He sighs)
The jacket was a mistake. We should never have allowed him to take the rags of a New Orleans cotton picker, abandoned in a field...

Youyou

Abandoned? He pinched them.

Carotte

Call it what you like, why split hairs? Ouch.

(Polly was too rough on him)

The trick pulled on the Baron, making him believe that garment came from Napoleon himself..it was too dangerous from the outset. That sacred tunic from St. Helena must have opened the Barons eyes. The game will be up now. Quatresous acted too boldly, and we will

Carotte(cont)

all pay for this mistake. They are going to whip us out of town, with wild dogs at our heels. Maybe we should leave right now, before they send their vicious pack after us.

(He rises)

Pepa - see if the path is still open. Do you see a cloud of dust?

Pepa

I see lots of dust.

Carotte

Are they closing in on us?

Pepa

(screaming)

Quatresous is coming!

(General excitement)

Carotte

Is he running ?

Youyou

(at the window)

He walks slowly.

Carotte

Nobody following him?

Youyou

Not a soul to be seen.

Carotte

Does he carry the bundle with him?

Youyou

He's got no bundle.

Pepa

He can see me now.

Carotte

(pushes her away from the window, holding his hands over her mouth)

Don't scream. It could be a trap to smoke us out of here. Let's wait and see if they let him come in.

(The four huddle close together, looking expectantly towards the door. Finally Quatresous enters, relaxed and unhurried. He looks at his companions in surprise)

Quatresous

Why do you stare at me like this?

Carotte

(in a whisper)

Are you sure.....?

Quatresous
Sure that I am sure that I am still Quatresous? Of course I am sure.

Carotte
The Baron? He was not suspicious?

Quatresous
My Baron?! He eats out of my hand.

Carotte
You put that jacket over him.....?

Quatresous
I do things like that with one hand.
(He takes out the purse with the money, waving it over his head; the others begin to shout and dance deliriously around him, trying to grab the loot)

Pepa
(pushing the others away from Quatresous)
Don't knock him down. Who earned the money? He did it all alone.

Carotte
(shouting the others down)
Stop it. Pepa is right. He should keep the money for himself and tell ~~us~~ ~~about~~ his stroke of genius. He will make us roar with laughter. Belly laughs are worth a pot of gold.
(He escorts Quatresous to the crate in the center, forces him to sit)

Quatresous
It went very smoothly.

Carotte
Still you were prepared for the worst.

Quatresous
Scratch my stump, Pepa. The weather is going to change. It tickles and itches. Wind coming from the gulf, one can smell the city. A sure ~~right~~ sign that...

Carotte
Forget about the weather now, Quatresous.

Carotte
Let him talk.

Quatresous
I had ~~no~~ plan, just played it by ear... One must always ~~appear~~ seem more stupid than the next fellow, this way half the game is won already.

Youyou
Not to have a plan is the best plan.

Pepa
(scornfully) Go ahead - lick his boots.
(she spits at Youyou)

Polly
Please spit in another direction, Pepa. (wipes her blouse)

Carotte

If anyone interrupts again, I swear I will belt him...
(to Quatresous) They will be quiet . How did it go?

Quatresous

I made my usual entrance through the garden, crossing the terrace into that pompous hall. One day you should all really see that one. Pure marble. The floor under your feet shines like a mirror, and you have to walk with stiff knees, otherwise you would fall flat on your face. Nobody's ass could stand that hard marble floor, not even the royal one of a king or queen. That is how they get that aristocratic posture, being afraid to fall ^{flat} on their faces.

Carotte

Oh, is that why they always seem so aloof and arrogant?

Quatresous

The staircase leading to the private chambers is of pure marble. I peeked from downstairs, you know. The Baron's bedroom door is gold plated, shining and glittering like a never ending sunset.

Youyou

Marble and gold, hm? A delightful combination.

Carotte

We others will never lay eye on such treasures.

Pepa

And you really saw the whole house this time?

Quatresous

Every corner in it. He always wants me to look at everything. Today he was showing some people how he had arranged the final display, as he puts it. It's in special groups, naming the battles, with description plates, and such nonsense. I tell you there is no room left for even one lousy rifle.

Carotte

Then what happened? You showed him what you had in your bundle, right?

Quatresous

After he gave me the grand tour I sprung the great revelation on him.

Carotte

How did you explain the origin of the jacket?

Quatresous

With any words on the tip of my tongue. I heard myself dishing out a tale about some first mate I met by chance here in New Orleans. I told him he was sailing with a cargo of oranges for St. Helena, and that I had talked him into trying to get near the emperor. To get close to Napoleon he had to disguise himself as one of the natives on the island, and in this way he slipped through the guards.

Youyou

Did you also tell him the mate pinched the jacket right off the emperors back?

Quatresous

Of course not. The emperor was touched by the mate's tale about the the Baron and his collection, that he sent it to himx to make his little museum complete - to crown it so to speak. As I said to the old goat: " I wanted to get you something worn by the emperor himself." "That linen jacket is a personal gift from Napoleon to you, Baron."

Carotte

He believed that?

Quatresous

You should have heard him. Passion makes a man blind. He keeps talking about crazy things in his stupor. For instance he would like to rescue Napoleon from St. Helena - "liberate" him, as he puts it. Hallu- zination of a sick mind, I am telling you. This is a scheme - listen to this: Someone disguised slips past the guards like the mate did, and is smuggled into the emperors private quarters, takes his place. Do you follow? The real Napoleon exchanges clothes with this fellow and leaves the island dressed like one of the natives working there. Nobody ~~notices~~ will notice the empty cage, because his cell will never be empty for one moment.- The imperial refugee hides right here in New Orleans, pampered by the Baron until the end of his days. I pretended to listen to this maniacs proposals with a serious expression. Here worship makes people feeble minded. Where in gods name, I am asking you, can you find a creature idiotic enough to let himself be jailed in that hellhole of an island? For what reward? For whose gratitude? Does this simpleton not ask himself such question?

Pepa

(embracing him)

Dont get excited. You will never see him again.

Youyou

Are we going to stay here?

Pepa

We are not begging you to.

Youyou

Are you at least going to invite us for a farewell drink, Quatresous?

Pepa

He will invite you to kiss his...

Quatresous

No Pepa, no. Let us not say auã revoir with bitterness... We will all get drunk and feel like those hangers-on at Napoleons court, living off the fat of the land. (Trying to cheer them up, he waves the money purse in front of Carotte's nose) Do you hear it jingling?

Carotte

(crossing the room) Keep your money.

Quatresous

What is the matter with him?

Carotte
We will make much more money.

Quatresous
How?

Carotte
When we liberate Napoleon from St. Helena.

Quatresous
Do you by chance own some cannons and a small fleet?

Carotte
More than that.

Quatresous
Would you let us in on your secret, if you please?

^{on}
~~prescription~~ Carotte
I got no secret. The ~~plan~~ for this operation came from you, given by the Baron himself with that purse.

Quatresous
When did the Baron ever prescribe anything for me? For my indigestion, maybe?

Carotte
That "crazy" plan the Baron proposed so enthusiastically - it ~~will~~ can become reality.

Quatresous
(beginning to understand) You mean that you want...

Carotte
Not me.

Quatresous
Do you want me to...

Carotte
Not you either.

Quatresous
Youyou?
~~Quatresous~~ Carotte
None of us - and yet it will be one of us.

Quatresous
My poor head is...

Youyou
I know a funny riddle too. It is hollow inside and still...

Carotte
Will you listen to me, please, all of you! Close the window first. Not even a flie must listen to what we are planning.

(Pepa closes the window. The room is dark, only a few sunrays falling upon the faces of the gang.)

21

~~210~~

Carotte(cont)

Come closer around me.

(They form a semi-circle around him)

The Baron shall have Napoleon as a house guest. Everything his patriotic little heart desires will be fulfilled. Only we are going to call the turns. We will deliver to him a genuine emperor as real as the jacket he got today. He never saw St. Helena and yet he comes from St. Helena. We name this man Napoleon, the liberated. Never shall an emperor be more honored than this impostor pretending to be what he is not.

(He puts his hands upon Quatresous shoulders)

Go back to the Baron, faithful warrior, and give him your best spiel. Tell him you could hardly sleep because of what he said to you. You would have loved nothing better than to take on this masquerade yourself. Alas - you only have got one arm. And two arms are the minimum requirement for a leader, so he can lift them up and at the same time wave to the crowd. So you looked around everywhere and had the good luck to find a man, a mighty brave man, willing to do what the Baron had in mind. This great patriot will sacrifice himself and substitute for Napoleon on St. Helena until the end of his days - or until they discover the ruse.

Quatresous.

(after a long pause)

Who is going to play Napoleon?

Carotte

Little Youyou here just told us today that he was an actor.

Youyou

(with pride)

You would never know the difference between a real majesty and myself.

The Others

What about us? Where do we come in? What are we going to do?

Carotte

Nobody leaves here empty handed. Napoleon will reward the last of the faithful in a royal manner. We all helped to make his escape from the island possible. How could he not invite us to remain in his imperial company. We shall be the emperors court.

Youyou

I will make each of you Marshall of France.

Carotte

(bowing towards Polly)

Madame La Marechale?

Polly

Monsieur Le Marechal?

Quatresous

(joining in the fun)

Madame La Marechale?

Pepa

Marechal Quatresous!

~~771~~
Youyou

(he climbs on top of the crate in the center of the shack, uses a straw basket as Napoleons hat, assuming the familiar historical postures of Napoleon)

Marshall Carotte! Introduce Lady Carotte to me, if you please.

(Carotte and Polly bow deeply before Youyou; he acknowledges this by nonchalantly waving ~~waving~~ his "hat." - Quatresous and Pepa also curtsy before Youyou)

At ease, my good friends. Pay no attention to our royal presence.

(In the twilight of the shack the movements of the group develop into a rhythmic dance, ghostly and shadowy. Youyou keeps waving his hat back and forth. The couples bow and bow again. A cloud of dust - from the barren ground - envelops the eery silhouettes)

End of Scene ~~ONE~~ Two

~~24~~

Scene Three

The mansion of Baron Dergan, as in Scene One. Gloria and Baron Dergan stand near the wide open glass doors, looking out on the garden.

Dergan

What a glorious day it is. It seems as if America is trying to concentrate all her wonders in our garden; to celebrate the impossible becoming possible. Not a breeze. The sky royal blue, stretched in an endless arc like a heavenly awning. Nature herself is breathless, and the birds respectfully leave their branches. Untimely humming must not disturb this momentous occasion. The freshly cropped lawn seems rolled out like a soft carpet. Just look at those trees.

Gloria

Yes, father?

Dergan

Dont their trunks look like classical columns, their thick crowns forming an arch of triumph for the royal welcome?

Gloria

Oh yes, I can see it your way..Today seems like a holiday to me.

Dergan

The eye builds more boldly than any tool. Do such images built on desires really lack reality? They do not. Always remember that we once imagined a familiar figure among the shrubbery? It disappeared and yet today we succeeded to recapture the vision our heart longed for. We made the dream come true. Only a few heart beats separate us from this great moment.

Gloria

How happy you are.

Dergan

Is happy the right word? I feel only humility. I bend my knee..

(he does)

...and ask you to do likewise.

(Gloria follows suit)

A merciful blessing has fallen upon me. Where there is no merit there must be no pride. I pray to have drained the last drop of vanity ~~at~~ out of my blood.

Gloria

You have done so much. Just look around you.

Dergan

A farmer plants ten tiny cotton seeds, hoping for a thousand thick cotton balls. My efforts are in no proportion to the fruit they bear. I even feel ashamed. Is it really enough that I withdraw from this mansion? That we two from now on will live in the gardners house? We must go on. All this around us is the glorious past. We must do everything possible for a glorious future.

Gloria
Everything is ready to receive him.

Dergan
The emperor liberated from St. Helena.

Gloria
The emperor reaching the shore of the gulf of New Orleans.

Dergan
The boat which carried him across the ocean could not ride higher than my hopes. We must have confidence in our dreams, otherwise they will crumble like sand castles. This gigantic scheme seemed too big for the will of any man. I forced myself to doubt ~~its~~ its success, so that I could believe even more.

Gloria
Your faith won out over all obstacles.

Dergan
(smiling)
Faith and faithful helpers to our cause. Before noon we shall see the end of a trip which took much too long. Everything had to be done in great secrecy. I would like to have looked into the eyes of that unselfish man, to embrace him before he set off on his journey of sacrifice. What a decision to make, to write a finish to one's life. The name of this unknown will be written ~~in~~ with golden letters in the pages of history. My own name will pale besides his.

Gloria
You never looked for glory for yourself.

Dergan
These brave men risk all they possess, even their lives. How much respect I have for this invalid, for instance. Crippled for life in action, he still comes here secretly at night, eagerly planning every detail.

Gloria
He knows no fear.

Dergan
Think of this captain offering his ship. One cannon ball, well directed, could split it apart. Did he ask me for compensation for such hazards? His message to me was brief: "Alive with "Him" - or food for fishes on the bottom of the sea." One could smell the salty air of greatness in his words.

Gloria
We will meet him soon.

Dergan
His reward must not be small. How little could I give them so far. The invalid accepted only trifles. For his expenses, as he said. To provide clothes for the emperor. Does not selfishness make your blood flow faster?

uv

Gloria

The emperor will soon be as before.

Dergan

Napoleon landed last night in New Orleans, but stayed aboard ship until this morning. He will change clothes in a shack not too far from here. When I gave the invalid the key to the big gate last night, he said the emperor would make his entrance about now. Let us keep a close eye on the garden.

(A pause, they scan the garden; suddenly Dergan points excitedly to something outside)

Gloria

(squeezing her fathers hands)

Father!

Dergan

Look at this, Gloria.

(They follow breathlessly the movements of the approaching group in the depth of the garden)

Still walking in the shadow of the trees.

Gloria

Which one is the emperor?

Dergan

I see five figures - hard to distinguish in their grey coats.

Gloria

Now they step into the sunlight.

Dergan

Now they stop and they take off their coats. They throw them into the bushes. They put on bright hats and caps.

Gloria

I can see two women..

Dergan

They curtsy gracefully before the man in the plain uniform. The emperor, dressed simple, as the world knows him. Look at the splendor of his entourage. What colors dazzling the ~~xxx~~ eyes. He quickly comes towards us now. We must not be found here at the door.

(Dergan and Gloria withdraw from the door. After a while the following enter the terrace: YOUYOU (we will call him ~~xxx~~ Napoleon for the time being), Carotte and Quatresous, wearing flashy uniforms of French Marshalls, followed by Polly and Pepa, dressed equally flamboyantly. Quatresous enters first, stopping at the door)

Quatresous

(shouting)

The ~~xxx~~ emperor!

(Napoleon-Youyou crosses the treshhold with quick, little steps, stopping a moment in front of the saluting Quatresous)

Napoleon

Too loud, Marshall, too loud! Do you want all America to know who she shelters? Close the doors. A clever spy could overhear our conversation. Do you think we could have been seen in the garden? We kept our coats on until the last minute, yet in honor of our host, I wanted to make my first entrance in this house dressed as Napoleon is known to the world.

(To Dergan)

Rise and look into my eyes.

Dergan

(rising from a kneeling position)

I am so happy...

Napoleon

Words later. I asked you to look at me.
(He extends his hands to Dergan)
Hector Dergan - I have confidence in you.

Dergan

I am completely at your disposal and ...

Napoleon

Who is the Lady?

Dergan

My daughter, Sire.

Napoleon

No doubt about this. Look alike. If one could forget sex and age - ~~she~~ could be your twin. Could lead to strange mistaken identities, Baron. "One does not seem what one is, and yet one is taken for what one is not. Could you imagine such a ~~perpetrator~~ game of false personalities? I now introduce to my retinue. Everything solid around them. You did not expect me to come alone, did you? I would violate the most ~~Dergan~~ royal of all virtues: gratitude. I have elevated these men from their low social standing up to my height.

(He looks up at the tall Quatresous)

Figuratively speaking, of course. I have honored these commoners for services rendered to me by neither kings nor counts. A blood spattered simple soldier had to come..

(he invites Quatresous to step closer)

approach Marshall Quatresous...! Do you recognize him? Your own faithful go-between? The lean hound sniffing out the winding path of the elusive fox?

Dergan

MARSHALL Quatresous?

Napoleon

A peculiar name? It was my idea. Quatresous. Four sous. How much is a man with only one arm worth? Four pennies maybe. No more.

Napoleon(cont)

We in the army always evaluate people for what their body is actually worth.

Dergan

I regret that I was not able to reward your faithful servant more generously, but the title of a Marshall of France is more than I ever...

Napoleon

Enough of that.

(With a brief gesture he invites Carotte to approach)

The captain of our ship. Carotte. After his carot red beard, see? A sailor who does honor to any sea he choses to cross. When quick action is called for he becomes as cold blooded as a whale - and yet as ~~sharpx~~ hot blooded as a shark, He manipulates sails like we use a handkerchief. The rudder becomes a toy in his hands. I tell you I would entrust my fleet to this man, if I still would possess one. Would you accept such an offer, Marshall Carotte?

Carotte

Come hell or high water...

(he spits in sailors manner, nearly hitting Pepa)

Pardon me, your highness.

Napoleon

These men have the spirit I expect in my court. Only such men I will tolerate around me. The emperor is their whole world, thus the whole world belongs to the emperor.

(Turning to Polly and Pepa)

Miladies. I want to conclude my introductions. La Marechale Polly - she belongs to Marshall Carotte. A very fine lady of many skills. La Marechale Pepa - a most experienced woman in any position. Once upon a time these noble women were plain seamstresses. They worked hard to create our uniforms and their own gowns, so that the emperor might have a proper court. They became eligible for advance# and I assure you, Baron Dergan, in a few days they will move among these columns as surefooted and stiff kneed as any real princess. Join banks with your Marshalls, ladies.

(Polly and Pepa giggle and withdraw)

(Napoleon removes his hat with a sudden theatrical gesture)

Bon Dieu! All this fades from my sight.

(He parades up and down ~~before~~ in front of the collection, a long silence)

I look upon my flags again.

Dergan

Your Majesty!

Napoleon

Explanations will only spoil this solemn moment. I can see every detail. Every piece seems to have been touched by my own hands. Parbleu! What a collection! When I heard about it the first time...

(he interrupts himself)

Where is the jacket?

Dergan

Forgive me - I did not include it here.

Napoleon

Not good enough, hm?

Dergan

I keep it in the gardners house, where we live now. I could not bear to be separated from it.

Napoleon

(surveying the premises)

You are...you are leaving this house to me?

Dergan

Unfortunately I am unable to offer larger or better accomodations.

Napoleon

It seems rather large to me, compared to the cage I was kept in like a wild animal, after the royal hunt. It was a marvellous hunt, out of every valley, from every summit in Europe the hunters horn sounded. Finally they scented my trail, chased me across the water to corner me on St. Helena. They expected me to perish in the infernal heat of the forbidding cliff. I was gasping for breath, ~~everything seemed lost~~ Europe had her victory - everything seemed lost, when a fresh wind from America cooled my brow. I was told about this very room here. The treasures of glory which now rot in Europe's gutters, but a glory respected in this hall.

Dergan

I beg you - try to forget the past...

Napoleon

That is my plan precisely. To forget. I feel secure in this..America. We outmanoeuvered Europe and make it the butt of the worlds laughter. My fate is tied to history once more.(A pause) Am I safe here? Are your negro servants reliable?

Dergan

Like being blind and deaf.

Napoleon

How do you cook around here? I dont ask for myself, you see. Marshall Quatresous cannot digest everything. I have made myself familiar with the foibles of my new staff. This way it seems easier to share in their joys. (He assumes a typical "napoleonic" position) Is joy still meant for us? Loneliness does not know happiness. Where I am loneliness reigns. More lonely than the eagle looking down from his lofty heights on the world below am I. My eagles, once winging victory from battle to battle, are asleep now. And my wings are clipped, I am tired from this stormy sea voyage. Lead me to my cot, my good Dergan. My retinue will follow.

(Dergan leads the way up the broad staircase to the door on the gallery. Only Gloria remains downstairs. After a few seconds the Baron returns, closing the door gently behind him, then joins his daughter below. He looks at the table.)

Gloria

What are you looking at?

Dergan
(pointing to the hat of Napoleon on the table)
Everything seems just like a dream. A wonderful dream. With only
this hat to prove to us that it is real - wonderfully real.

END OF ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

(SCENE ONE)

The same. Only three high-backed chairs are added. At this moment they are occupied in a leisurely manner by Napoleon, Carotte and Quatresous. Napoleon sits behind the table, resting his feet on it. Carotte and Quatresous are seated right and left of him. At their feet Polly and Pepa are squatting on two cushions, cuddling up to their respective sweethearts. The men wear no jackets. The girls have opened a few buttons of their blouses for comfort. A heavenly silence reigns.

Carotte
Pinch me.

Polly
Pinch you where?

Carotte
Just pinch me.
(Polly pinches his leg)
Once again. The other leg.
(Carotte moans with pleasure)

Pepa
(to Quatresous)
Want me to pinch you too?

Quatresous
If Carotte wants to be pinched it must feel good.

Pepa
Then I'll pinch you.

Quatresous
Can't hurt. Go ahead.

Pepa
I'll pinch you with my lips.
(She plants a kiss on his calves)

Napoleon
Animals!

Pepa
And why should we not behave like animals? Is this not paradise?

Quatresous
Precisely like paradise. No biting dogs, no police chasing us. The creator of all life finally had mercy and put a few of his poor creatures back into their original state of bliss.

Pepa
Why us of all people?

Quatresous

His decisions must not be questioned. His acts are unexplicable. One must grab the fried chickens as they land on your ~~table~~ table, and not inspect they pan they were fried in. If they birds are tough send them back to the kitchen, order something else. So far I have not discovered one unpalatable dish here. On the contrary - I wished I had ten stomachs. I could fill every one of them ten times a day with the most delicious food, and not leaving room for one single burp. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Carotte

Food is the basis of all things. Only a fool~~d~~ would deny the joy ~~xxx~~ of ample, well prepared meals. Nourishment comes above everything else. Sleep is next, after appetites are stilled. Our siestas between fiestas are most relaxing, and our beds seem softer every day and night.

say the

Napoleon

Can you/same ~~xxx~~ about what curls up to you in your bed?

Carotte

It is warm and fully packed. That is good enough for me.
(Polly cuddles up closer to him)

Quatresous

Even when we sleep well and in such pleasant company, it still can not become our ultimate purpose . Consequently doing nothing is rarely achieved by ordinary mortals. Those who fulfill their life's travail at an early age are truly the children of god. If we would not be the chosen ones we would not be here today.

Carotte

I am trying to remember: when were ever not here?

Quatresous

Why quibble? This is the garden of Eden with a roof on top.

Carotte

Ah, always to remain in paradise!

Quatresous

What could drive us out of it?

Pepa

Youyou's bare chest.

Carotte

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Nonsense. Thats the private Napoleon. Why, even an emperor must occasionally withdraw to a little enclosure where his retinue can't follow. Public figures are only judged by their public behaviour. In this respect Youyou is simply sensational. I don't know a thing about acting, but judging by Youyou's performance, it should be highly respected. I get the shivers watching Youyou strutting up and down, chin and chest thrust forward. I could really take him for what you call a historical personality, if I didn't know that it is just a

Carotte(cont)

swindle. I ask you, how can anybody cheat that well and get away with it?

Quatresous

Explain it to him, Youyou.

Carotte

Do you know his secret?

Quatresous

I don't want to know .

Napoleon

(sliding over the table top, finally sitting front center, feet dangling down) If you all think this is art, then ~~you~~ you dont know a thing about art. I play a part any second rate actor could do - because the character I portray is sort of second rate. Put together from inferior material. Such as cruelty, selfishness, treachery, skulduggery in every conceivable form. Also envy, hate, treason and mass murder. I dont have ~~to~~ to give more examples. Human nature has always been so, but these base instincts are suppressed ~~what~~ now in what is called a civilized society. The leader encourages those savage ~~these~~ inclinations in his followers. Only he is allowed to speak and lets no chance go by to lecture other nations; then he wants to rule the whole world. Only matters serving his lust for power are sacred to him. But power is an ~~eight~~ octopus, each foot a crime executed more shamelessly than the previous step. Finally his power becomes absolute - nothing seems to be able to ~~exist~~ stop him.- Are you still surprised that I play this part to perfection? It is quite simple. I am the right type. I am a scoundrel too, see?

Carotte

He is ~~too~~ modest. It is decent of the emperor ~~to~~ ^{to} not want us to feel bad ~~because~~ because we only rank as Marshalls. I for one could never - and mind you I am somewhat of a crook too - never have said with a smooth tongue- what were his words when we made our first grand entrance?

Quatresous

"Too loud, Marshall, too loud. Shall all America know whom she shelters?"
(They roar with laughter)

Carotte

And the way he introduced us. Telling the old man the whole truth. Just like that. Who we really are . A stroke of genius.

Napoleon

That was just to keep him ~~surprised~~ from being surprised when he sees how vulgar you are. Particularly our two shapely ladies.

Polly

Watch it, Youyou. What you got against us?

Napoleon

Nothing. Go ahead and screech like whores to your hearts content.

Pepa

Are you maybe listening at our bedroom walls at night? Jealous, Youyou?

Quatresous

(slaps her)
Be quiet. You know he's got no girl.

Carotte

Say - what was that about the eagles?

Napoleon

What eagles?

Quatresous

"Once winging victory of wars won victoriously - my eagles are asleep now...." Or some other nonsense.

Carotte

(roaring with laughter)
...winging victory of war victoriously...
(he gets tangled up in the words)

Napoleon

Did it sound tragic and nostalgic?

Quatresous

It sounded convincing.

Napoleon

Did it get across to the two Dergans?

Carotte

Dont you know? You are the crowned rooster in our nest here. When you begin to crow - you dont even have to raise your voice - the table is laid immediately. For all of us. This garden of Eden will last forever - unless you show
(he points at Youyou's bare chest)

Napoleon

(buttoning his shirt)
Unless I show my tattood chest, hm? Right. Napoleon would never have a lady drawn between his nipples.

Carotte

Besides these artistic details I would not know who and how...

(He trails off. All of them seem to doze, ^{the} general silence proves enjoyment of their siesta)

Quatresous

(breaking the spell)
We should have money!

Carotte

What for?

Quatresous

Just having it, thats all.

Carotte

Want to buy something?

Napoleon
Speak ~~up~~ up, Marshall, if you please.

Pepa
Maybe he wants to buy something for me.

Polly
We got everything we need, Pepa.

Quatresous
We got no money.

Carotte
You would like to bury some money?

Quatresous
Possible.

Napoleon
In our shack?

Quatresous
Somewhere.

Carotte
Instead of being grateful to god that we have no need for money anymore -
he complains not being cursed by it.

Quatresous
A man without money is not a man. He got to have it - even if he cant
use it. It is a necessity, if you dont know this - you wont understand
me.

Carotte
(after some reflection)
I understand you.

~~XXXXXXXX~~ NAPOLEON
I understand it.

Carotte
How could one ask for money on top of everything else?

Napoleon
What did you have in mind?

~~XXXXX~~ Carotte
Do you want to demand money from the baron?

Quatresous
I would if I could find a good reason for it.

Carotte
Pull the chair out from under my~~x~~ ass if you find a ~~XXXXX~~ good one.

Napoleon

~~xxxxxx~~ I should take the Marshall baton away from you for such language.
(He gets back into his chair. Quatresous, standing near the door, suddenly steps back into the room)

What is it?

Quatresous

The Baron!

Napoleon

Is he taking his constitutional in the garden?

Quatresous

He is coming here.

Napoleon

(sarcastically)

Now he is turning around, right?

Quatresous

No, he is not. He had second thoughts. He looks determined now. He is heading towards us. Put on your jackets.

Carotte

(pushing Polly aside)

Dont show your busoms this way. Its indecent.

Napoleon

What could he want?

Quatresous

Anything Napoleon wants.

Napoleon

Napoleon does not want to be disturbed in the morning. Not in the afternoon either, for that matter.

Carotte

Just ~~xx~~ tell him. Order him to stay the hell out of this garden.

Napoleon

I shall order him stay out of America.

(They put on their coats. Napoleon-Youyou takes a seat right at the table, putting his feet on a little stool. Carotte stands next to him, the marshall baton under his arm. Polly and Pepa huddle together at an appropriate distance.)

Napoleon

Can't you get ^(to Quatresous) ready?

Quatresous

I~~x~~ only got one arm, remember?

Napoleon

Have Pepa help you.

Pepa

I have to button my dress.

Napoleon

She is better at unbuttoning her dress in emergencies.

Carotte

Be quiet, all of you. Open the door, Quatresous.

(Baton under his arm, Quatresous runs to the door and opens it. Dergan enters.)

Napoleon

(indicating to Dergan to come closer)

You are seeking our presence rather early today, Baron.

Dergan

Forgive the most unusual hour, Sire.

Napoleon

Most unusual indeed!

Dergan

The occasion is unusal too!

Napoleon

(inviting the Baron to sit down next to him)

It does sound rather important. I do hope we will not be disappointed by the matter brought to our attention.

Dergan

Nothing then would be of value any longer and the sun would shine in vain.

Napoleon

This exuberance promises considerable revelations.

Dergan

Beyond your expectations, I hope. This may prove to be the greatest miracle of our time. - When I stood atk this treshold not so long ago, awaiting your arrival, a decision started to grow in me, and last night it finally unfolded in full bloom, its possibilities are blinding me.

Napoleon

You are referring to a decision you made...

Dergan

I decided to offer you more than just this refuge here.

~~XXXXX~~ Napoleon

I am quite satisfied with the arrangement.

Dergan

Do I have reason to be ^{SATISFIED} ~~happy~~? What could this life mean to ~~you~~ you? Fruits, delicacies, the garden, the flowers and the peaceful atmosphere? What kind of offerings are these for a guest such as I am privileged to have?

~~377~~

Napoleon

My marshalls tell me there is plenty of food and sufficient wine around here...

Dergan

But that is not enough, your Majesty, not enough.

Napoleon

What else are you in a position to offer?

Dergan

I offer you America.

Napoleon

(after a long pause)

The whole continent, hm?

Dergan

When did you ever count but in continents, Sire? The new world - emerging from her childhood - is eager to return the gifts bestowed on her, to assist you to reconquer Europe...

Napoleon

That is very bold thinking indeed...

Dergan

It is imperial thinking, Sire. The young America does not know her destiny, nor the historical honor in store for her. It will stand on its feet, arising in its crib. You must show her the way. "Eagles winging victoriously will wave across the water valiantly...!"

Napoleon

(rubbing his chin thoughtfully, while the others suppress their merriment)

This plan of yours is.....big! How about strategy? Battle plans?

Dergan

Everything is planned. Our actions will be prepared with the help of secret societies forming all over the country. We will cache weapons, train at night, then the storm will be unleashed. Precisely at this moment you will leave your refuge and take your place at the head of the movement. A roar from the throat of millions will welcome you. Vive l'Empereur! Three cheers for Napoleon, hail the emperor riding into battle once again, the frantic mob poised at the shore of the Atlantic ocean will shout...

Napoleon

(gloomily)

How soon do you expect all this could happen?

FUNDS Dergan

We already have enough to begin preparations immediately. I would be more than happy to surrender the rest of my fortune for this cause.

Napoleon

(with a glance at his entourage)

I see what you mean.

~~277~~

Napoleon(cont)

Do you expect my decision right away?

Dergan

An order from you would strike like lightning!

Napoleon

What order do you want me to give?

Dergan

When to begin and how?

Napoleon

Begin with what and how?

Dergan

Starting the conspiracy.

Napoleon

Training soldiers, you mean?

Dergan

And buying weapons.

Napoleon

Right - we need weapons, dont we? Phenty of weapons naturally. Weapons cost money, we all know ~~we~~

Dergan

Money could not be spend for a better cause.

Napoleon

(covers hiseyes with both hands, remaining motionless a few moments)

I dont see how I can refuse the task America places upon my shoulders!

Dergan

(rising)

Three cheers for the emperor!

Napoleon

(alarmed)

Pssst! I have to take counsel with my marshalls first, I have to ask for their advice in this entirely new situation. Remember, Baron, haste could ruin our purpose.

Dergan

Nothing can be ruined. A whole continent impatiently waits for your ~~reponse~~ ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ signals!

Napoleon

Your impatient Americans will have to wait at least until this afternoon. We will receive you again after lunch.

(He dismisses him with an impatient gesture. Quatresous escorts the Baron to the door, ~~when~~ Napoleon interrupts this departure) a.s

tell Napoleon(cont)

Baron! Will you kindly/the cook not to put too much hot sauce on those shrimps. Marshall Quatresous has a rather delicate stomach, you know...

(Dergan nods, exits through the garden, Quatresous closing the door carefully behind him. A stunned silence broken by the outburst of Carotte)

Carotte

(throwing his marshall baton on the floor)

For this damned....for a few shitty weeks eating gravy by the spoonful, and drinking plenty of wine, we lived many months like sardines in that stinking shack. We avoided the bistros in the harbor like churches, saving every penny to make uniforms and other junk. The girls pricked their fingers a thousand times - it had to be pure golden embroidery. Thick as sausages - no imitations for this crazy museum. What are we going to do with it now? Shove it down our royal....they would arrest us if we try to sell it to someone else. We have nothing now.

Napoleon

You thought of it all.

Carotte

And you spoiled it all. You knew everything better. We shall live in a perpetual state of bliss until our old eyes fail us. Don't demand money. Just expenses for clothes and so on. This will impress them.

Napoleon

What else should we have done?

Carotte

Making him pay for the boat across the Atlantic, have him fork out huge sums to bribe the guards on St. Helena. A thousand items. We could have charged a whole shipwreck to his account, with insurance ^{DEMNITY} payments for drowned sailors, etcetera, etcetera. A fortune was ready to be lifted, but now it is too late. Just when we are ready to wipe the dust off our heels....

Napoleon

Wipe the dust off our...

Carotte

Or do you intend to stay here? Having the baron preparing a revolution in your name? Drumming up and inciting the whole country?

Napoleon

I can forbid him to do it.

Carotte

How?

Napoleon

I simply refuse categorically to be pushed into a new war. I am not in good health -period. I caught a chronic cold in Russia. The New Orleans ~~heat~~ ^{CLIMATE} is good for my bones. So I just shall refuse to make any premature changes in my personal situation.

Carotte

Are you going to be the great Napoleon, yet run away from the chance off starting a new war?

Napoleon

Am I Napoleon??

Carotte

No, you are not. And you wont be either for the Baron. He will have us all whipped out of town, when he finds out. No siesta in paradise. Come on, girls. Let's get out of here.

Quatresous

(blocking his way)

Where are you going?

Carotte

Down to the harbor. Polly will have to hustle again.

Polly

"Pretty Polly is back, sailor...."

Pepa

(to Quatresous)

Your Pepa is also pretty and knows a few tricks...

Quatresous

Redheads always have a red, hot temper.

(He emphasizes every word)

Carotte refuses to start a new, big treasure hunt!

(They form a circle around Quatresous)

Carotte

What treasures are ~~there~~, I ask you, left for us here?

Quatresous

There war chest! The fortune the Baron is willing to spend for the movement.

(They look at him surprised)

We will be the movement! Then let us move! Marhsall Carotte! Marshall Quatresous!

(They respond to his commanding voice, delivered in napoleonic fashion)

I hereby appoint you as treasurers for the organizational committees. You will be directly responsible to me for the secret cells, the clandestine societies of the movement to prepare my return to the old world. You will be the only ones authorized to buy ~~weapons~~ arms for Napoleon Bonapartes American Army!

(The others catch on to the new scheme, grinning and shouting their approval)

We will grant the Baron the privilege to pay for this gigantic plan!

~~Carotte
(blocking with enthusiasm)
pay only into the treasury~~

Carotte

(bursting with enthusiasm)

Pay only into the treasury of your trusted Marshalls Carotte and Quatresous, right? Where is my hat? Where are your flags, emperorx?

(Waving both patriotically)

Every single penny will roll right into our pockets!

Quatresous

FINALLY

I can see myself ^{FINALLY} laying hands ~~on~~ - on all that my money my fingers

itched for ~~so~~ *so long to get hold on.*

(to Youyou)

Many happy returns!

End of Scene 2, Act 2.

(Youyou, Carotte and Quatresous sit around the table in shirtsleeves, trying to count an impressive mountain of gold coins stacked in the center of the table. They store it in three separate piles, representing equal shares. Papa is leaning over Carottes shoulders - watching him count - Polly ~~is~~ in similar position bent over Quatresous. For a while only the sound of the metal is heard.)

Napoleon
(stops counting)

One thousand.

Quatresous
Correct. One thousand.
(He stops) ~~He stops~~

Napoleon
My fingers are sore and the skin cracks like I'd done an honest days work.

Carotte
Counting so much money is an intellectual strain I never had the pleasure to experience before. I developed such blisters on my brain from all this mathematics that I will hardly be able to figure out any new schemes.

Quatresous
With all that money why bother to think at all? You could eat stupidity by the spoonful and belch like thunder and they will still praise your rumbling stomach as the voice of pure wisdom.

Polly
Are you fellows objecting to counting so much money?

Quatresous
Who ever did expect such enormous contributions?

Napoleon
Maybe we could really cross the ocean and conquer Europe with all that gold? It seems funny how easy money flows when the purpose is to start a holy war. Suddenly there is enough to go around, the greatest misers contribute the most. It seems to rain from heaven, flooding the country to buy arms to kill your neighbor. If someone would suggest to raise the same amount for charity the funds would dry ~~out~~ up over night. What goes on in the heads of those people, I ask you, to permit such a state of affairs?

Carotte
Anyway this money will be used for such peaceful purposes like eating, sleeping and -last but not least - doing not a bit of honest work for the rest of our lives.

(He roars with laughter)
Do you think out shack will be large enough to store the Barons whole fortune?

Quatresous ^{Loot}
We just keep digging. This is underground ~~money~~, is it not?

the Quatresous(cont)

This money belongs under, ground, right? It is underground money!

(He roars at his pun)

Carotte

It will stay buried until we siphoned off the barons pocket, his last ~~money~~ penny, then we will resurrect it and make a strategic retreat with our ~~nest~~ NEST EGG.

Napoleon

A just punishment for him to frighten us.

Carotte

Frightening us how?

Napoleon

By trying to evict us from our refuge. I was just ~~about to exit~~ getting used to this life, then he decides to spread the news of my royal presence across America. He and his societies and committees!

Carotte

We stopped him cold on that.

Quatresous

Dirty braggart. Your first reaction was to run.

Carotte

Sometimes even the bravest are afraid.

Quatresous

If everyone were a coward....

Carotte

~~is~~
(jumping up)

Who is a coward?

Napoleon

(trying to make peace between them)

Never fight with a man with only one arm.

Pepa

I want you all to know that Quatresous has got three arms. His one and my two healthy ones.

Polly

(pushing Carotte back into his chair)

Have mercy on them. Leave them their lives.

Napoleon

It is because of Quatresous that we must be grateful to be still here. Only a bastard would deny his cold blooded thinking. He saved what ~~we~~ we thought ~~was~~ already lost. This beautiful little home - to eat and sleep like gods.

Polly

(embracing Carotte)

And to love like gods!

~~773~~

Carotte
(pushing her away)
Dont do that in front of Youyou!

Polly
Why not?

Pepa
Because the emperor has no woman in his bed.

Polly
(with pity)
Poor little Napo! We will have to find him one.

Pepa
Maybe one of those servant girls? They are at least fourteen!

Polly
Napoleon and a chocolate tart? Impossible.

Pepa
This is very unhealthy. Maybe one of us could...

(Quatresous and Carotte give her a dirty look)

Polly
And where, pray, are you going to find a princess for him?

Napoleon
Will you stop tickling my appetite with empty plates? Fried princesses are not served on platters. Keep the cover on. I can play my part without a female companion in my royal chambers. At least for a while. Help me to think and make plans. You go ahead and amuse yourself with Polly and Pepa as much as you have the strength for. As a compensation for my forced chastity I'll just aks for a little more money.

Carotte
Dont you dare!

Quatresous
I have absolutely no sense of humor where money is involved.

Napoleon
Say that to the Baron, not to us.

Quatresous
I dare that old fool to withhold any club money from us.

Carotte
Forget him. We control everything, dont we? What little bird could tell him our secret? How could he suspect anything? This is a secret society-
~~and he sure to keep these secrets~~

Carotte(cont)

and he swore to keep this super secret headquarter of N.S.A. - Napoleons Secret Army - and address never to be divulged to anyone under any circumstances.- I feel like counting again,

Quatresous

I will double check your share later, just a formality...

Carotte

If anybody dares to touch my bag...

Napoleon

My dear Marshalls! While we are counting our treasury, I suggest that one of you stand guard at the door. Maybe Polly and Pepa could..

Pepa

I will watch.

Polly

Why you?

Pepa

Because Quatresous counts better than me, but Carotte needs your brains, sister...

(she indicates with a gesture that Carotte is dumb)

Carotte

Bitch!

Napoleon

En avant,mes amis. I start to count again.

(A long silence, punctuated only by the tingling of the coins. Pepa wiggles and patrols the glass door) She suddenly bows and throws kisses towards the garden. Polly joins her, both observing the terrace)

Polly

(turning to the others)

Hide the money. They are coming.

Quatresous, Youyou & Carotte

Wy do they come now? What do they want? You sure they are coming here?

Polly

Both of them are coming.

Carotte

You mean that girl is with him?

Polly

Yes, I mean the Baron and his virgin daughter..

Pepa

Chaste flatchested little Gloria.

Napoleon

(hiding his share)

Put all the money out of sight. We will count later.

Carotte

Damn it! We will have to start all over again. My brain ~~is~~ got tired feet.

Napoleon

Put the bags behind Austerlitz.

(They hide the money bags behind the center group display)

Why does he come here in the morning? Whats ~~gotten~~ gotten into him?

Carotte

He is welcome mornings, afternoons and nights - as long as he pays on time.

Quatresous

Thats just what I mean. Maybe he feels he pays too often!

Napoleon

(assuming his royal part, bending over the table, he crosses his arm)

Form a circle around me. We are holding important counsel.

(Carotte and Quatresous, their Marshall hats and batons under their arms, surround Napoleon. The Ladies open the garden doors. Dergan and Gloria enter. Polly discreetly indicates to Dergan to wait, then ~~she~~ she tiptoes to the circle of the generals, whispers into Carottes ear.)

Napoleon

Is this the proper time to receive a message, Marshall Carotte?

Polly

The Baron is here, your Majesty.

Napoleon

(frowning)

The Baron? Atk this hour?

Dergan

(stepping forward)

I seem to ~~disturb~~ interrupt a conference of state.

Napoleon

You would indeed interrupt the making of important decisions, were you not accompanied by the most beautiful of young ladies.

(He gallantly kisses Gloria's hands)

A chair for the young lady, if you please.

(Both Carotte and Quatresous come running with chairs)

Dergan

You are most gracious, Sire.

(Gloria sits)

Napoleon

Nature blesses all of us in allowing us to view such a perfect creature as your daughter.

Dergan

You will embarass my child.

Napoleon

No longer a child. She has blossomed like a morning in May since I last saw her.

Napoleon(cont)

Blossoming petals all over. How lucky the gardner to care for such a fresh young flower.

(He turns to Quatresous and Carotte)

we terminate our deliberations. You will submit ~~definitive~~ detailed reports about the distribution of the funds later.

(Turning to Dergan)

Or would you wish to be present when we discuss the campaign chest? Is that why you came?

Dergan

You assigned this ~~task~~ task to your marshalls. I know it in good hands.

Napoleon

They wont overlook one penny, I assure youx. Right, Marshall Quatresous?

Quatresous

I would rather have my good arm chopped off too.

Napoleon

That is the spirit, Marshall. This money is for a great ^{same} cause we are all personally interested in. Marshall Carotte thinks the ~~same~~ way. You dont even have to answer, Marshall Carotte. Act. Action. We must act as soon as we have cleaned up - I mean cleared ^{up} - everything. As soon as we have finished here~~x~~ in a big way. Then the miracle we accomplished will truly astonish you. But these are only words, my dear Baron. I hate words. The treasures helping our cause are stored away under the surface.

Dergan

You mean the ~~secret~~ societies? The underground?

Napoleon

Precisely. We are winning people to our cause. The secret cells grow like birches in the forest. This is the vanguard of violence, men one can rely on. They obey like dogs - ready for action without thinking. Who wants the people to think? What is the purpose of a head on your shoulder~~s~~? The mouth, naturally, is the center of it all. Just a hole where digestion begins. Let us leave politics alone. It is hard, cold and cruel. It is for men only, insulting to a tender female ear.

Gloria

Nothing can be too hard for me...

Napoleon

I see~~x~~, Mademoiselle....

Gloria

Your Majesty, I would ^(she hesitates)

Dergan

Would you like me to explain?

(Gloria nods, overcome by emotion)

Sire - her wish is to be the first of her sex, the first woman to represent America in the movement, not to be outdone by anyone. You said just now is for men only, this business of planning and fighting. I beg to differ. History permits me to challenge this statement. Glory always belongs to all mankind, regardless of species they refuse to yield one inch of their birth rights. Be it son or daughter, in one respect they are all alike.

48

Dergan(cont)

Like water from a stream, eagerly jumping and pressing forward towards its mouth, they hurry to lose their identity in the sea of glory. An ocean more majestic and turbulent than anything they've known before.

Gloria

You must press my petition even stronger, dear father.

Dergan

(with renewed fervor)

Gloria is just a woman, and is unsuited for many things. ~~Though~~ She could never take part in the strenuous marches, nor service a cannon or manipulate a bayonet against the enemy, she feels that there must be a place for her in your ranks.

Napoleon

My ranks?

Dergan

In the committees.

Napoleon

Why would a woman yearn for such involvements?

Gloria

Tell him everything, father.

Dergan

The women of this city ~~xxxx~~ want to find themselves, say goodbye to their sheltered life, which is a medley of merriment without worries now. There is love sometimes, nightingales filling the exstastic heart with their songs. A charmed life without purpose. Is that not how it was?

Gloria

That is how it was.

Dergan

All this has lost meaning now. A small candle extinguished - to light a flaming torch. A torch to show America the way- and my daughter the first ~~xxxx~~ woman to join the parade!

Napoleon

For whom, to be exact, is she carrying this torch?

Dergan

For you, Sire. For other women wanting to be in step with their brothers. Melting and blending into the pedestal of your new won power. Permit the women of America to be part of this foundation!

Napoleon

You mean to ~~xxxx~~ say that your daughter wants...?

Dergan

My daughter wants to serve the cause, wherever her services are needed. Each permission granted to women of this land could have enormous consequences. Wherever women are at work competition develops, everything

49

Dergan(cont)

will move faster, to the day when these doors will open wide, You will cross the country swiftly, cheered by an aroused America, and throw your might against Europe, winning battle after battle, making the continent once more tremble before you.

Gloria
(kneeling before Youyou)

I pray you for a command!

(A long silence)

Dergan

Your orders, Majesty!

Napoleon
(slowly recovering from the hazzngues)

Get up. Your knees must hurt.

Dergan
(lifting Gloria up)

Get up, my brave daughter.

Gloria

Then my petition is granted?

Dergan

Have confidence.

Napoleon

Women are.....

Dergan

The women of America are calling Napoleon!

Napoleon

I do not underestimate the strategic value of female assistance. On the contrary, I can well visualize the personal sacrifices I would ask of the ladies auxiliary. Such services would be greatly beneficial to me - under the circumstances. Baron - the offer of your daughter is a splendid idea - I accept her - I mean her services, with great anticipation. However, I must send you both away now. I am working on an entirely new strategy, as usual with the good counsel of ~~my~~ my aides here. The marshalls have already a firm grip on our action committees, and I am sure they will know how to deal with your new suggestions. Leave us alone to plan now, if you please.

(Dergan and Gloria exit. Pepa and Polly close the doors behind them)

Polly

Vive Napoleon virgins battalion!

Pepa

Long live the Ladies Rifle Club!

Carotte

We should take the money and get out. We can dig up the rest and then..

Napoleon

And then we wont get very far.

Carotte

Why not?

Napoleon

There is a thing called police.

Carotte

You dont really think the baron would admit that he had been a made a fool ~~of~~ by us?

Napoleon

What would stop him?

Carotte

Ridicule - but ridicule alone is not enough to save us. We must block him so well that he will think twice before exposing us.

Quatresous

What are we going to do?

Carotte

Stay here.

Napoleon

You mean wait until the baron starts to sing our story from all roof tops?

(The three men stand around pondering their problem. Polly nudges Pepa, pointing at the men)

Polly

Just look at them - looking for a hole to hide in. Do they have holes for mice around here? Surely not in hard marble floors. They are about to run away from an old senile ~~xxx~~ baron and an overripe virgin. God dammit! Why dont one of you teach her what a real man is like, then she will have something to be busy herself with. Little pigeon Gloria would coo and moan with delight, if she were alone in her little white bed. Well then - make her exstastic. ~~Give~~^{Grant} her patriotic duties only women can perform succesfully. We will jump right into the cammittees - and she will jump right into ~~the bed~~

Napoleon

In myx bed??

~~51~~ 51

Quatresous

Of course.

Carotte

Naturally.

(he slaps him on the shoulders)

~~He~~ Quatresous and myself have all we can handle at our age!

Napoleon

You mean to say that I should make...

Pepa!

Maybe Napoleon is not a man after all!

Napoleon

Not a man? Not a man?? I have not been a man too long already. My mind was too much concentrated on this matter of organizing the committees. I was preoccupied getting a big war chest together. Councils of State, strategy meetings, politics -etcetera, etcetxera.- My imperial body has been neglected too long. I will catch up with you now!

My faithful friends! You are all invited to the gay festivities of the imperial wedding of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Baronesse ~~BERGEN~~ Gloria DE Dergan, whom I shall make the next empress of France!

End of Scene 2/5

Scene 3, Act 2

It is evening. The table laid for a festive dinner. The hall is illuminated by candelabras. On the table silver bowls filled with tropical fruits, crystal glasses and decanters, damask napkins, etc.

Napoleon is seated in the center, behind the table, flanked by Gloria and Dergan. Gloria wears an elaborate white bridal gown. Polly is seated next to Dergan; Pepa on the other end of the table. Across from them Quatresous is seated on one side, Carotte on the other. At this moment all eyes are focused on Quatresous - the only one still finishing the dinner.

Napoleon

(after watching Quatresous for a while)

I shall recall this wedding feast for many years to come. A marshall of France gobbling down his food while the candles burn to a stump. He can hardly find his mouth in the dark.

(General laughter)

Pepa

(nudging Quatresous gently)

They are talking about you.

Quatresous

(not stopping munching)

Me?

Pepa

You dont seem to get enough.

Quatresous

There is no trumpet calling for retreat, is there? To swallow all those delicacies with only one arm - I think I deserve a special medal from the emperor. Two arms would not be enough either. In fact I could use four hands, two pairs of knives and forks, to do real justice to each dish.

Pepa

(laughing hysterically)

Four hands, two pairs of knives and forks!

(Carotte and Polly join in the laughter)

Quatresous

Or eight hands with four pairs of knives and forks.....

(Another explosion of merriment)

SIXTEEN hands for eight pair of knives and forks...

Pepa

(almost choking)

Sixteen hands.....

Carotte

Stop it, Quatresous. Stop throwing around those figures.

Polly

Mathematics makes you dizzy, sweetheart, right?
(pats Carotte on the shoulders)

Napoleon

(after the laughter has died down)

You must remember, Baron, these are men with stout hearts ~~and~~ who like rough jokes - offered with considerably more noise than wit. The consequence of a soldiers life, with its clumsy barrack pranks. During the day off battle the enemy is mowed down most skilfully by these same men.

(To Quatresous)

Tell us how you lost your arm in the battle.

Quatresous

I'll recount this tale with great pride, commander.

Napoleon

We must expect the usual lengthy introduction - be prepared for just anything.

Dergan

Perhaps the story of a ~~big~~ battle, Sir, is worthy of attention any time.

Napoleon

I dont seem to remember this particular battle, Marshall. How did it go?

Quatresous

It was a bloody mess, if you will forgive me. The sun rose like a yellow flower. One hardly could believe that this was the dawn of a battle. On such a morning one would expect lambs peacefully grazing the gentle valleys, larks singing, and little white clouds to sail across the sky. A symphony of peace to praise all creation. I dont recall ever having seen a more beautiful morning. ~~Such~~ Such gaiety, such brightness shining on life itself. At that moment everything seemed destined to live forever. Death seemed a friend off life, not a threat to anybody. - Then all of a sudden our war drums started to roll. To your rifles, Men! We assembled and stood like a human wall. We were read the order of the ~~next~~ day: march in silence towards your objective. Unaware of the danger the enemy still prepares breakfast down in the valley. We must outflank and surround him. A master-stroke of strategy, if I may be so bold to say so. We felt like thanking god that we should be selected for such an elegant manouever, but there had to be no noise whatsoever. Even the drums fell silent. We kept forward like Indians, and descended upon them. Need any knives for your breakfast, comrade enemy? We will gladly help you out. Just fix the bayonet to the end of our rifles - nothing will stop us then. We will slice the body of their army in half, that is the kind of breakfast loaf we like best. With a just a little bit of juicy blood on top, like coming from the skin of overripe cherries. These are the meal we warriors thrive on. Later in the day I found I had only one arm left. How did I lose this one? Someone on the ~~like~~ other side must have been hungry.

(he laughs)

I just dont remember anything. I only know that I continued to hit them with my one arm as hard as I had given them hell with both.

(to Gloria)

Pardon me, your Majesty. - I could not have fought harder with four arms!

(He bites furiously into a piece of juicy fruit)

Napoleon

He speaks of Austerlitz no doubt. I developed the ^Nmanouever of encirclement

54
~~54~~

Napoleon (cont)

to the highest perfection. The opposing army left anchored and immobilized in the center of operations. We danced around it for a while, then we suddenly struck, to ~~it~~ it between our fangs and bite it off at the roots. Historians are kind to call this the miraculous planning of a genius. Perfect calculation, ~~miraculous~~.

Dergan

This is how you conquered Europe.

Napoleon

And lost it again.

Dergan

Now you will recapture it again.

Napoleon

Marshall Carottes glowing beard will help to show us our return journey.

Carotte

I do not see anything illuminating about me.

Napoleon

Your beard, captain, will be a shining beacon - a tower of light - a symbol leading us to navigable straits.

*(to Dergan)

We must offer these people an opportunity to loosen their tongues. This way tales come to the surface - real and imagined ones. I prefer these little white lies to the truth, which is often a bastard too feeble minded to think of a real phantastic lie.

Polly

(whispers to Carotte)

Dont forget - your are a ~~xxx~~ sailor.

Carotte

(with grandeur)

I am a sailor - naturally. When the winds blow and the sails are hoisted on the mast.....

Quatresous

Are you sure that sails are hoisted?

Carotte

(defiantly)

I was a sailor once - a captain.

Napoleon

You must understand this old sea lion here - I am thinking of making him First Admiral of my navy - this old crust knows a boat better than his own pocket, better than his beard on his face.- I am just making conversation. An interlude before my wife and I...

(Carotte coughs; the other try to suppress giggling about Youyou's remark referring to the imminent wedding night. One by one they leave the table, retire into the dark corners of the terrace, where they still can be heard choking with laughter. Only Napoleon, his bride and father in law remain seated)

~~55~~

Napoleon

(turning to Gloria)

Does all this not make you afraid?

Gloria

What should I be afraid of?

Napoleon

This sudden marriage.

Gloria

You ordered it.

Napoleon

It was ^{NOT} meant to be an order. I should have controlled my impatience, but I could not wait when I saw you kneeling before me - your hands uplifted and ~~knawling~~ pleading.

(He takes her hands, caresses them)

Your eyes opened wide, your bosom heaving with excitement. Look at me once more that way - please!

(She obliges, Napoleon draws her closer to him)

You are admirable.

Gloria

You are - great.

Napoleon

(kisses her on the cheek)

Sweet flattery. I can flatter too. Like a kitty cat with velvet paws. Meeeccouw!

(The giggling from the terrace increases in volume)

Napoleon lets go of Gloria)

Later, mon amour. I must first teach certain people, apparently made marshalls of France too soon, certain rules of etiquette.

(He throws some fruit in ~~the~~ the direction of the merrymakers, to quiet them, then he turns to Gloria once more)

What was I saying before I interrupted myself?

Gloria

You called flattery what I feel from the bottom of my heart.

Napoleon

The hasty marriage may have been a strategical error. I have reproached myself severely for it.

Gloria

Reproached yourself for what?

Napoleon

For not having enough will power to wait.

Gloria

Wait for what?

Napoleon

Everything should have been planned in a more royal manner. We had no

56
~~17/12~~

no organ music, no choir, no sermons and the blessing of a priest; no crowds on the church steps, to burst into cheers when the bride emerged from the altar, with the face of an innocent cherub. No gilded carriage advancing slowly through a sea of flowers. No state dinner with distinguished potentates grouped around the banquet tables, each of them a crowned head of Europe. No orchestras playing until dawn for never tiring dancers. Is this secret ceremony not disappointing to you? Not at all like the dreams of a young girl looking forward to marriage?

(Gloria turns flustered to her father, as Youyou squeezes her hands again)

Dergan

I will try to answer these question for my daughter, Sire.

(he rises)

It was most kind of you to recall how my child prostrated herself before you. At this moment she did not suspect that one day she was destined to be raised to such heights as these. Her petition then was to be allowed to serve your cause. ~~What~~ What is this cause? It aims to plough new fields for new glories, to forge new tools for new teams. All over this country secret forces are silently at work, giving no warning to outsiders of their preparations, before the time is ripe. We must have patient and not let Europe know that the emperor shall return, you who will sow the ground for new victories beyond description. The day has not come yet. Nobody awaits this dawn more impatiently than you, as inactivity surrounds you here. The leisure of heroes without swords. Now is the time to permit private emotions to enter ones life. Your eyes fell upon the maiden kneeling before you. Her marriage was her own mission, assigned to her alone, filling her with pride and contentment. She hopes that her example will inspire women all over the world. Even if you could only provide her with a tent for ~~her~~ a home, she would still joyfully open her arms and yield to every wish you pronounce. This, your majesty, is what my daughter and your wife asked me to explain to you.

(Gloria rises and plants a kiss on her fathers cheek)

Napoleon

(content and animated)

We want to present something special for the occasion.

(He claps his hands)

We will terminate the evening with a dance. Where are you hiding, merry dancers?

(From the terrace the two couples appear)

How about a graceful gavotte once around the floor and back again?

Polly

Without music?

Napoleon

Music ? I shall supply the music myself.

(He pushes Dergan and Gloria back into their seats. Placing himself center behind the table, he lines up every single glass within his reach in one neat row in front of him. With a knife in each hand he begins to beat out a rhythm and melody on the glasses, similar to a xylophone. The two couples bow towards the table, then towards each other. They perform a rather charming dance, somewhat resembling a square dance. Napoleon accelerates his beat on the glasses, they dance faster and faster, wilder and wilder. Maybe one could detect some of the famous New Orleans syncopation of later years in it..

Napoleon(cont)

Youyou picks up two large servings plates of silver, makes Dergan and Gloria hold them for him like "gongs."- He alternately strikes the glasses and the plates in a frenzied ~~XXXX~~ rhythm, accompanied by the exstastic movements of his companions. This tableau reaches a climax, similar to the dance in the hut during the first scene. Napoleon-Youyou finally stops the music in the middle of a tune. The two couples - out of breath by now - also halt suddenly.

Napoleon

9 (to Dergan and Gloria, putting his musical "instruments" back on the table)

Surprised?

Dergan

I'd never have suspected...

Napoleon

You've never suspected many things. It is not always possible to hold strategy meetings all day long. Sometimes we must enjoy the simple pleasures in life. Then it becomes most beautiful.

(The couples are about to take their places at the table again) Please remain standing. This dance was just your dessert. We still must preserve strict etiquette. Remember - where I am is the court. We are retiring now. Baron! Pick up a torch and light us to our chambers!

(The following procession moves around the table. Baron Dergan leading the way, a silver candelabra in his hand, up the stairway. Napoleon and Gloria, holding hands, following behind him. Polly and Pepa curtsy before them at the bottom of the staircase. Quatresous and Carotte salute. Dergan plants a tender fatherly kiss on Glorias cheeks, once he arrives at the center door of the gallery, then bows deeply before Napoleon. Youyou ~~at this moment~~ cordially taps him on the shoulders. Dergan himself closes the door behind the bridal couple. The Baron joining the others downstairis, puts the candelabra ~~back~~ on the table.)

Dergan

(after a short silence)

It is late and everyone is tired, I suppose. I dont want to deprive you of your rest.

(He bows and exits over the terrace into the dark of the night. The two couples are alone now. They can hardly suppress their laughter anymore. ~~XXXXXX~~ They run to the table and blow out all the candles. The men embrace their sweethearts and start to neck. Little screams and giggling are heard in the darkened room.

Polly

Watch your clumsy royal fingers, Marshall. Remember - I am a patriotic and innocent young Lady at the court of Youyou the First, also known to his people as Napoleon Bonaparte, the sexy emperor..!

(As the lights go out there is roaring laughter all around)
A naughty French ditty is heard when the curtain falls)

58

Act Three
(Scene Seven)

The same. Quatresous and Carotte are playing dice at the table. Polly and Pepa kibitz. For a while everybody - silently - concentrates on the game.

Polly

What stakes are you playing for? Your honor?

Carotte

Honor has no place in our game.

Quatresous

One can play just for fun.
(Another silence, while they continue to roll the dice)

Pepa

I say it must just be for honor alone.

Polly

Why?

Pepa

They dont cheat. If they would be playing for money Quatresous would have used faked dice by now.

Carotte

Quatresous cheats without faked dice.

Quatresous

It is extremely difficult for me to catch up with Carottes gambling. He has got two arms to play with. I on the other hand... I declare myself the loser.

Carotte

If we could only lose time. Time stands still around here. We don't get any breakfast. I think we should snatch the bedsheets from under our glorious monarchs behind.

Polly

As if the bedsheets were the only thing lying under him!

Quatresous

We would have to remove the virgin human mattress he rests on during his hectic nights.

Pepa

Did you say night? It is usually high noon before he emerges from his private chambers with those shadows under his eyes.

Carotte

Lets go on with the game. When you keep your fingers busy, it is easier to forget that taste for pheasant and stewed artichokes your stomach is craving for.

Quatresous

There is another example of the advantage you have over me. You distract

59
~~57/2~~

your cravings with two hands, while I have only one to hold down the barking dogs in my bowels.

Carotte

It seems you can transform your long winded speeches into solid food. If they don't feed us soon we ~~are~~ just wind up as philosophers, each one of us, all brains and bones - but not an ounce of fat.

(They continue to play in silence. Dergan appears behind the glass doors. He knocks at the door, as no one hears him he enters. Polly is the first one to see him; she jumps ~~up~~ from the table, grabs the dice.)
down

Carotte

What the hell...

Polly

(curtsying)
What will be your pleasure, Baron?

Quatresous

(leaving the table)
Who?

(Everybody is up now and scrambles for positions)

Dergan

(bowing) ~~towards Xanyou~~
I have no right to disturb the emperors burdens, yet I can see the royal guest is not present yet.

Carotte

Right you are. Present he is not yet.
(to Quatresous)
Do you know where he might be?

Quatresous

We are all waiting for a ~~breakfast~~ council of state. He is generally a very early riser.
morning

Polly

Would you like me to make discreet inquiries? It is less embarrassing for a Lady. I could pull the sheet from under his...

Polly

(interrupting)
For two discreet young Ladies it would not be too difficult at all.

Dergan

I beg you to stay, Miladys. These matters are not for the ears of the emperor himself. We must not burden his patience ~~with~~ such trifles. I ask for a conference with his marshalls. You can take this report up with him during your daily cabinet sessions. Are you willing to lend me an ear?

Carotte

You got our ears. Just open your ~~mouth~~ mouth.

Quatresous

Are these girls - I mean Ladies - making you feel ill at ease?

Carotte

We can tell them to pick flowers in the garden, if you prefer..

Dergan

It is my opinion that the presence of women is important in this case.

Quatresous

You hear that? You are important.

Carotte

Shut your big ~~mouth~~ mouth anyway.

(Pepa and Polly sit down, Dergan, Quatresous and Carotte follow)

Carotte

Be very still when the Baron speaks.

Dergan

I just returned from my bank in downtown New Orleans. I went to make a large withdrawal from my accounts. They refused to honor it. I was ~~infrs~~ informed that a small balance only remains on the ledger. Enough to assure a modest living for my daughter and myself. Nothing more. I returned empty handed. I have to admit that I am not ~~any longer~~ in a position to contribute to our cause any longer. The source has run dry and is dead.

Carotte

Are your sure those bankers are not cheating?

Dergan

Quite sure.

Quatresous

Could you borrow money from them?

Dergan

I would have to mortgage this house.

Carotte

Well??

Dergan

Such a loan I could not spend freely.

Carotte

When the house burned it would not be your money ~~going~~ going up in flames.

Dergan

It still would not be sufficient to maintain the standards of living that you and the emperor are accustomed to.

Carotte

(scratching his beard)

That is bad news to give to the emperor. so early in the morning. I dont know how he is going to take it. What do youx think, Marshall ?

61
~~577/0~~

Quatresous

He must never hear of it. It will take away all his belief in the mission. No more funds! Nothing shakes the self confidence of a leader more than an empty treasury. The sound of gold produces the sound of arms. Without it the cannons remain silent. When we establish a new order in this part of the world, the bank will be the first one to suffer. Then we will be at the source. We will have the power. Turning us down this way!

Carotte

(pounding with his fists on the table)

Bravo, Marshall! We are going to launch a mighty counter attack.

(Upstairs the big golden door opens.

Napoleon-Youyou, dressed in a richly embroidered white dressing gown, steps to the railing, looking down at the group in the hall)

Napoleon

Such noise? Do you realize that you could have disturbed my sleep? Fortunately I am already rested.

(Claps his hands)

Ladies! Madame wishes to take her bath.

(Polly and Pepa run upstairs; Youyou steps them as they are about to exit)

Just one moment, if you please. The water in the tub was much too hot yesterday. I almost burnt my toes.

(Pepa & Polly nod, exit)

Napoleon walks down the staircase, lazily stretching himself)

He slap Dergan playfully on the shoulders)

I said before I feel rested "already." A joke. It is "already" noon. Ha,ha. It feels glorious to sleep that long after so many dawns before a battle. The name of my glory these days is Gloria. I must say that I am very satisfied with your daughter, Baron Dergan. What seems to be wrong? Did you have an argument with my father in law? Among all the battles the battle of the words seems the most evil one to me. Why this embarrassed silence? ~~This~~ This seems to be serious. I order you to give me every little detail. Or do you want to deny this gown the respect reserved for my uniform on more ~~many~~ occasions?

OFFICIAL

Dergan

I have upset these gentlemen this morning, as I am upset myself.

Napoleon

Upset about what?

Dergan

About some news I must give to you.

Napoleon

What is the news?

Dergan

I have given every sous I possessed for your cause, your Majesty. I have nothing left anymore.

Napoleon

That IS news...Do you really mean that....?

(he looks questioningly at at Carotte)

Carotte

(nodding)
It means precisely...

Quatresous

...what it means.

Napoleon

(pacing up and down, with swift, short steps)
What is our next move now?

Dergan

(very strong)
You must make the decision today, your Majesty.

Napoleon

Make it today, you say. Right you are. What decision?

Dergan

(enthusiastically)
The signal to go, go, go. The trumpet blast calling the start of the grand campaign. An arsenal of weapons has been collected and stored in secret places. Our cellars are filled to the brim with rifles. Give us the order to open the doors. Permit the faithful who swore allegiance to your flag to lift their swords with pride. Allow them to come out into the open. Relieve them of their pledge of secrecy. Distribute the arms before they rust. The time is ripe and you must not hesitate any longer. Raise your arm high to welcome the people of America. Make the whole nation aware that Napoleon is here, Napoleon is in New Orleans, ready for new conquests, while an unknown heroic soldier bravely sacrifices himself for you on St. Helena. The moment has come when the new world must make sacrifices for your glory. Fight this battle, sons of Columbus! His victory will be your glory too. The ~~ripe~~ blades of the bayonets are sharpened and rattle impatiently. Give us the word now. Our women will throw ~~flowers~~ flowers ^{IN YOUR PATH} ~~at your feet~~, wind garlands around your arms. A forest of laurels is in sight. I open the doors of my garden....

(He flings the door wide open, wildly shouting)
to let the people know that the master is on the move again, ready to march, ready to conquer Europe, ready to rule the old and the new world.

Napoleon

(closing the doors, frowning)
he returns to center stage, catching the frantic gestures of Quatresous and Carotte - behind the Barons back - indicating they should make a quick getaway right away. Napoleons sang-froid, however, is not shaken; he turns to Dergan)

I was almost guilty of cruelty. Almost forgetting the man who took my place on St. Helena. You reminded me of his fate, Baron, and I am ~~most~~ grateful to you for warning me before the bell strikes a fateful twelve. I now feel worthy of the hour.

Dergan

You are leaving, Sire?

Napoleon

I am staying. Staying for the sake of my saviour who fries in the furnace of St. Helena.

(Dergan looks surprised)

63
~~17/10~~

Napoleon(cont)

This game of false identities has gone far enough, Baron!

(The others exchange surprised looks)

There is a human being voluntarily imprisoned in a cage; ^{my cage -} the heavy steps of his guards hammering at his ears day and night. His lungs inhale dampness in the silence - the terrible silence. Flies buzzing around that you want to scream. They sting you. They suck your blood and thousands of them destroy the sleep. A christian tortured on a bed of nails. For whom does this humble man carry the cross. For me. For me alone. Baron - do you want to multiply these tortures a million times?

(The Baron shakes his head in horror)

Do you want to tell me now that nothing will happen to this man? Is that what you mean? That the guards will not act when they find out that a substitute was planted for their priceless prisoner? I am telling you now that they would revenge themselves most savagely, that even the hangman would shiver in fright at his assignment. Still there would be hundreds of others to take his place at the scaffold. An army of hangmen egging each other on.

(Dergan cover his eyes)

Do you want ME TO be the cause of such atrocities - just because I could not wait? Just because I could not resist the siren call for action? Even if I would be offered to conquer the moon I would not fail this man! I would not abandon this man. The man who gave ~~up~~ his life for me on St. Helena!

Dergan

Many have gladly perished for you in the past, Sire.

Napoleon

These I never knew as individuals. It was an unnumbered mass of faces. All alike, they were soldiers. I could not have won one single battle with a measuring glass in my hand, commanding them: Stop! Enough blood has been spilled. There was no reason for such mercy. It was not my blood after all. I am fearless for myself. There is always a final solution for the leader at the bitter end: moving his headquarters to the rear of the front, leaving the others to die.

(He clears his throat)

I was lucky. I am still here. Never would I have found such a safe corner of the earth, if this unknown soldier had not taken my place. Do you expect me to betray this man now? Shall I now start marching noisily and deliver him into the hands of his cruel captors? Is this your advise, Baron Dergan??

Dergan

Your humane considerations are almost inhuman.

Napoleon

I must force myself to be human. It is a somewhat gratifying feeling.

(Dergans feeling of guilt makes Youyou stretch lazily once more, his dressing gown opens at the top, revealing his tattooed chest. Carotte notices this and immediately runs to close the gap.)

Carotte

(adjusting Youyous gown)

You will catch a cold, Sire.

Napoleon

These problems make me feel warm. Thanks for your concern, Marshall Carotte.

(turning to Dergan once again)

Napoleon(cont)

You see that I am not the monster, they are shouting about, after all. I just am forced to kill people in battle professionally, so to speak, although I could not kill a rabbit deliberately. This is the distinction between a general and a murderer. I reject unnecessary violence. The knife in the back, and so on..- My decision is made. I will stay here until my replacement on St. Helena dies a natural death. Not one day longer. Once his blessed end has come - I shall raise my flag, and lift the banner of Arcole high up and carry it forward into battle. For the moment, However, I dont want to hear the rattling of one single saber. Do you understand?

Dergan

You give the orders.

Napoleon

~~Good~~ Good. Just one more detail. You are still in a position to supply the necessities for our personal needs? My staff will not be deprived of anything?

Dergan

Irvouch for this.

Napoleon

(triumphantly ~~turning~~ to the others)

Then our future seems secured. This seems to me a classic example of solving problems on the spot, clouding our heads like dirt in a puddle. We must always come up with clear water.

(Changing subjects all of a sudden)

My bath is drawn and will be cold if I dont hurry up. I forgot all about it conducting affairs of state. You will excuse me now.

Dergan

I ask permission to withdraw, Sire.

(Napoleon nods and runs upstairs, exiting into his private chambers. Dergan leaves through the garden. As soon as Youyou and Dergan are out of sight, Polly and Pepa enter from stage right, upstairs, addressing Quatresous and Carotte below.)

Pepa

Is he taking his bath now?

Quatresous

Maybe he needs it.

Polly

What about us?

Carotte

We are going to hang on here. Stuffing our bellies as long as there are turkeys trotting about in these yards and artichokes growing in the garden.

Quatresous

Let us prepare ourselves for a long siege of plenty. Ah, what a wonderful exile!

End of Scene 7

Scene 8(Act 3)

(The same. Gloria enters from upstairs. Dergan comes running through the garden, ~~at the same moment~~. When they meet in the center of the hall they embrace.

Gloria

My father.

Dergan

My daughter.

Gloria

This is the most beautiful day of my life. More beautiful even than the morning after my wedding.

Dergan

Then you know?

Gloria

I came running to find you and throw myself into your arms. Thank god I did not have to run far with my heart bursting with joy. How very proud I am for us all.

Dergan

Has the news reached the mansion? I thought I'll be the first one to...

Gloria

You are the first one to know. You will love it as much as I love it already. The unborn one.

Dergan

(understands finally, embracing her)

I understand now. My heart beats even faster than before. Have confidence. You will bear him a son.

Gloria

I am almost frightened by the thought that I should become the mother of his son.

Dergan

Dont be afraid of such a great destiny. Fill yourself to the brim with happiness, a cascade of joy so bright it makes the sun glitter with this wonderful news. What a day this is.

Gloria

Your enthusiasm seems even stronger than mine. What is the news which makes you look so exuberant?

Dergan

The time has come. The obstacle exists no longer. The way is open. We shall arouse the world with the beating of the war drums.

Gloria

What is the occasion?

Dergan

Honoring a dead man. The man who just passed away on the island of St. Helena. The first minute will be dedicated to his memory.

Gloria

Did you receive such news officially?

Dergan

Officially and travelling from mouth to mouth in New Orleans. I had to hide a smile when I heard that the emperor died on St. Helena. I had to hold on to myself, so as not to cry out: The emperor is alive and among you, citizens of this town. The one who has gone is not the emperor. He acted and died for him. I had to bite my lips to suppress the inclination.

Gloria

Those poor lips have been sealed to silence for much too long.

Dergan

They open up now upon receiving happy news from you. My satisfaction flows from a doubly cheerful heart.

Gloria

News of a birth and of a death. So far apart and yet so close to each other.

Dergan

The supreme hour has struck, The emperor will start marching now. Nothing will stop him. He will keep his royal promise. The corpse on St. Helena needs no protection and the emperor is freed from the chains he imposed on himself.

Gloria

How long do you intend to keep this ~~secret~~ news to yourself?

Dergan

Can I reach him now?

Gloria

Everyone is still asleep.

Dergan

Then the ringing of the bells shall arouse them of that day of awakening. Swinging back and forth - calling: rub the sleep out of your eyes. The day has come. The day to end nights without action. The emperor is calling. The emperor is calling. Take up your weapons. The emperor will lead you forward. - Gloria, do you still feel strong enough to ring the bell on our roof?

Gloria

On such a day I feel full of vigor.

Dergan

Then run upstairs and begin ringing. Do not stop ever. Listen to the war drums echo your call from every corner of the country.

(Gloria exits upstairs. Dergan looks around, then with a quick decision grabs one of the Napoleonic flags on display. Like a patriotic monument he plants himself in the center of the room. A pathetic ~~patriotic~~ symbol. A few moments later the piercing sound of the bell, manipulated by the pregnant Gloria, fills the room and the whole house. The Baron looks triumphantly and expectantly towards the gallery leading to the private chambers. In a few seconds from all doors emerge

67
~~87/3~~

(the members of the "royal household," almost falling over each other, pushing and shouting in panic. The women wear only skirts, scarves thrown over their bare shoulders. This unkempt appearance makes them look as at the beginning of the play. The men wear pants and night shirts.

Napoleon
(leaning over the railing)
Where is the fire?

Carotte
(speaking at the same time as above)
Was this the fire bell?

Quatresous
(shouting the others down)
We are asking you, Baron. Is your house on fire?

Polly
Why are you holding that flag?

Pepa
What are you doing down there, Baron?

Dergan
(after a silence)
This bell rings in the dawn of your new glory, Sire.

Napoleon
(running down the staircase, motioning the others to follow him)
What glories are they ringing about at this early hour?

Dergan
There is no more a prisoner confined on St. Helena.

Napoleon
You mean to say that Napoleon is dead...I mean this man has...?

Dergan
The black guard waiting for all us removed the bolt of his cell. Death is his protector now.

(A silence)
Sire! The mourning period must be brief. The man who stopped breathing would not have wanted it otherwise. We must light our torches in his memory for immediate action. The first roll of the drums will be dedicated to him. Then we can forget his sacrifice, a service you had the right to ask from any of us. We know only that he is gone forever. Tomorrow thousands will be ready to wrestle the palm of victory from this death. We must think of the many - and forget this individual. Do not waver in your determination. You took an oath upon this flag. Lift high the flag of Arcole.

(He extends the flag "Napoleon," Youyou reluctantly takes it. The silence following is taken by the Baron as an invitation to continue his harangue)
I provided shelter for this flag, when its glories rotted in the gutters off Europe. America is now the eagles nest looking down on his prey. This whole collection here, the glorious relics of a glorious past, is a living testimony for a victorious future.

68
~~17/74~~

Dergan(cont)

Did all greatness disappear from earth when the eagle was locked up behind bars? Still the cage was not strong enough to restrain him. The eagle spread his mighty wings and flew high above the waters to the shores of America, the young land destined to harbor his greatness. I see this room widen and embrace within its walls a whole continent. The sounds of weapons flash more dangerously than thunderstorms. America is flexing its muscles to fight. No more secrecy. The piled up arms await the leader, yearning to follow him wherever he goes. Remove the pledge of silence from our lips, and lift this flag as a sign that our petition is granted ~~finally~~

(A silence)

This is your shining hour. History calls. Listen to this bell. It is being rung by a woman. A woman joyfully announcing the news of a royal heir! Death and life have joined hands on this momentous day across the water. Death mercifully extinguishing a life on the isle of St. Helena. Life growing in my daughters womb.

(Slowly a grin spreads on the faces of the previously apprehensive bandits)

Napoleon

(emphasizing each syllable)

She is with child?

(Dergan nods solemnly)

A child? You mean to say that Napoleon has an American off spring?

(He embraces his companions deliriously)

Dergan

You seem very happy, Sire.

Youyou

Crazily happy - you patriotic old goat. That means we can say goodbye now without having the police at our tails.

Carotte, Quatresous, Polly and Pepa

(chanting)

...without having the police at our tails!

(they indicate playfully the geographical location of the last word, slapping each other on the behind)

Youyou

(coming very close to Dergans face)

Surprised again, hm? Like you were when we gave the concert on the glasses? That was only one of our many talents. We have other hidden talents. Pretending, faking, cheating and acting, all tailored for the right opportunity. We lurk everywhere, waiting for our chance, knocking at every door. When you open your door just half an inch we put our foot in - and a moment later we are inside the house.

Carotte, Quatresous, Polly and Pepa

(chanting)

....inside the house.

Youyou

(coming even closer to Dergan)

An invalid bows and delivers his spiel. The Baron likes his wares. Likes them very much indeed. He hands a purse full of money to the false invalid.

The Quartet

....to the false invalid!

69
~~67/75~~

Youyou

Our fine noses started to smell more money. It did not take too long to dig it up. We stole everything we could carry, rusty arsenals not ~~worth~~ worth a watchman to guard them. We repaired the junk, polishing rust off weapons which never saw a battle field. Putting two and two together.

The Quartet

...two and two together....

Youyou

We made the whole collection ourselves. Sewing the jackets and pants, burning gunholes in the flags, making those tags look aged. Everything was filched, pinched and faked.

The Quartet

(chanting)

...filched, pinched and faked....

Youyou

An old jacket of a New Orleans ~~farm~~ farmer, picked up in an abandoned field, became the emperors jacket. It was the crowning masterpiece of ~~we~~ ^{US} rrgues. It was the inspiration for your idea of exchanging prisoners on St. Helena. My name is really Youyou.

(screaming)

Youyou!!!! Youyou Bonaparte, the actor. Just another scoundrel among scoundrels, born right here in New Orleans. My part was easy to play. I stepped into the emperors clothes - but nowhere else was he replaced.

The Quartet

....nowhere else was he replaced....

Youyou

Do you still doubt the deception?

(He rips his shirt open, showing him the tattooed chest)

Would your idol have his skin decorated with lewd pictures? Not our emperor. I am Youyou, you understand, Youyou the actor.

(Turning to the others)

Introduce yourself.

Quatresous

(stepping forward)

I-like Youyou-am a scoundrel. I lost one arm in a bar room fight, just in back of a whorehouse.

Carotte

(stepping opposite Dergan)

No sea captain me. Just a shady character covering ugly scars with a red beard. My specialty is highway robbery.

Polly

We are the seamstresses, working hard...

Pepa

Ready to do anything for a little money. We are very experienced.

Polly

Sho uld the old gentleman feel spring in his bones again, just let us know..

(The girls giggle and step back)

Youyou

(crowding Dergan)

We helped to dispose of your fortune. Dont cry if it seems that your money is gone with the wind. Because we kept it together. It is hidden in a safe place, all of it. Want to know where? Why still have secrets? This is the day. This bell rings in the truth,
(Whispering into Dergans ear)

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

We buried the money under the ground of the shack which was our workshop for Napoleonic antiques. Just before the last turn of the highway ~~before~~ upon entering the city. There our treasures are buried with a pile of junk. When you get rid of all the garbage first, of course.- Well? Why dont you run? Why dont you put the pelice at our heels? Could it be that your expectant daughter prevents you from doing so? Maybe you would be ashamed to admit that she was made pregnant by Youyou, the tramp, with the tattooed chest? Our sweet little Gloria believed they were holy marks of the one who was chosen. I had to keep explaining to her until my tongue almost fell out.

(With an air of confidence)

We went talk about this to anybody! Word of honor. It would be too embarassing for you and your daughter. We are gentlemen after all. One must not reveal intimacies which should better remain a secret. Is this not precisely the way you feel?

(with a threatening tone)

Or maybe we have different views of the situation?

(No response)

I believe a last dance for the Baren would be more than appropriate.

(He gives a signal, claps his hands.)

The dance of the bell and the belles.

(The five join hands forming a single ~~circle~~ file, putting arms on each others shoulders, dancing out on the terrace, disappearing into the vastness of the garden in somewhat like a conga line. They thus stamp and shout their way out of the house, leaving through the same door through which they entered some time ago). Baren Dergan stands petrified, flag in his hands, not moving a muscle. The bell continues to toll loudly and victoriously...

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
End of Scene 8

77
~~177~~

Scene 9

The same. Gloria and Dergan stand in the center, holding each other. They remain quiet for a long time.

Gloria

Still silent, father? Please speak to me. Would you like to have a look at the garden? It was on a day like this that you took my hands and lead me to the terrace doors. Remember? You showed me the trees, the sun, the birds and bushes. Bright sunlight mixed with the shadows of the greenery. Light seemed to turn into sound. We looked upon the world as if in a dream, then the bushes started to move and formed a symphony of dark and light of their own. You discovered the beloved silhouette first. A fleeting moment only. Then the spooky game was over.

Dergan

It was a mirage. Noble dreams evaporated into the clouds.

Gloria

Your voice seems so strange. Your eyes don't seem to know what they see. Do you recognize me?

Dergan

I see only my mistakes in the mirror. You are the mirror. I must confess my guilt. I permitted them to destroy your soul and body.

Gloria

What was it that they destroyed?

Dergan

My imagination made you believe in the unbelievable. In my dreams.
~~XXXX~~

Gloria

Your dreams?

Dergan

Yes, a dream acted out by a cast of weird characters.

Gloria

Father - is what we feel most sincerely not reality? Does anything else matter?

Dergan

The wedding. Giving you away to the man who was not the man I gave you to.

Gloria

I was married to the emperor of France, father.

Dergan

That was the most awful of all deceptions. Everything seems small besides it. What I acquired was not what I ~~thought~~ set out to buy. Everything was faked. I worshipped a jacket picked up in a garbage dump. I gave them all the money I possessed. More so. They swarmed like grasshoppers all over my house, eating everything in sight. The hoax was so gigantic that my blindness could be explained. Yet who errs so completely arrives at the bottom of all errors. Falling so low that mercy should not be denied him. Because of my guilt towards you it should be denied to me.

Gloria

I am your daughter.

Dergan

The child in you will not forgive my errors. It will accuse me, accuse you.

Gloria

What can we do?

Dergan

I wanted to start a great crusade, blazing across the ocean and carrying torches to light up the sky of Europe once again. I desired to give America the opportunity to be the spark of it. Only his name was supposed to ~~shine~~ shine in this inferno. The new worlds destination seemed to open up this path. I thought America was ripe for this. My punishment for this error of judgment is just. The flaming torch lies on the ground, thrown from my hands by cynical men. Is this punishment just? You said before, my eyes seemed not to behold what should have been clear from the outset. I can see very, very far. I see America. Do you remember the tower of bable? The tribes attempting to erect it could not understand each other, could not speak the same language. They failed because of that. I believe a people will emerge who will remove all obstacles through the power of a new spiritx of understanding. This will be stronger than any weapons conceived by men. Yet beware of those who try to hinder this. They will perish under the axes of these pioneers, destroying them forever. Should we not be grateful to witness such evolution? A new world fed by the bloodstream of ~~the~~ all the peoples of the world. America.

Gloria

You suddenly seem happy again.

Dergan

Are you afraid?

Gloria

Afraid of what?

Dergan

Of the fire which will envelop us who believed in the glories of the past.

Gloria

Are we Dergans disappearing in this holocaust?

Dergan

Disappearing in the flames together with all the outmoded relics of this house. Hollow, faked and untrue, even if they had been real. This is the moment of truth. Only faith remains.

(At this moment THE DUVAL FAMILY- the parents, Jaques and Marie Louise enter through the garden. We have seen them at the very beginning of the play.)

Monsieur Duval

Good morning, Baron. Please excuse the intrusion. My children here insisted to hear more about this man Napoleon, and his faithful soldiers. They insisted to come back here. They heard so much about him in school and from other families in New Orleans.

Madame Duval

Still they said only here in this room can they find out what Napoleon

Madame Duval (cont)

was really like. Would you mind very much to tell us once more about him? They love him so much! And they heard about his death in school today.

Dergan

(exchanging glances with Gloria)

With the greatest of pleasure, Madame.

(Gloria takes the children by their hands; Dergan moves to the extreme right of the room, starting his lecture.)

Napoleon will always be remembered through the ages as one of the great men of history.. In this room we have assembled ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ everything connected with his glorious past, which made us believe in the greatness of this man. We believe that above all patriotism is an act of faith, an act of love, blind love, to a cause and to a leader.. We believe that one day....

(During the above speech the curtain falls, while the voice of the Baron continues)

The End.