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by

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What a man! What tremendous ideas!
What dreams! He's a genius, no doubt
about it ... But is he all right in
the head?

Count Narbonne

1 EXT. WATERLOO BATTLEFIELD - <1815> - DAY

FLAME - BLOOD - SHOT - SHELL - MAYHEM - PANIC... as though from the POV of some great bird of prey, we swoop in over the battle-field of Waterloo, where the French army is falling back in full retreat, pursued across the valley by the merciless British redcoats...

Our focus is one man in a grey coat and black bicorn hat, strutting up and down, exposing himself to the full fury of the English onslaught...

A soldier (Leon) calls out to his comrades - "The Emperor! Save the Emperor!" With a cry of "Vive l'Empereur!" the Old Guard rally about their fallen leader, forming a square to shield him against the general tide of retreat...

Napoleon ignores their efforts - indeed would rather die, throwing back his jacket and bearing his breast to the enemy fire. The air is thick with bullets, but none for him.

The hideous din gradually fades...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I ought to have died at Waterloo,
but the smiles of fortune were at
an end. And the misfortune is that
when a man seeks most for death, he
cannot find it...

We move in swift and TIGHT on Napoleon as he cries out in (silent) defiance - "Vive la France!"...

2 EXT. ATLANTIC SHORELINE - <1815> - DAY

WAVES POUND on a bleak, Atlantic shoreline. Napoleon, still in grey coat and bicorn hat, paces with his hands behind his back, talking to his brother Joseph - a year older, and in civilian clothes a softer, gentler version of his defeated brother. A weathered sea Captain stands by, eager to serve.

JOSEPH

Sire... the wind is already
turning. This brave Captain is
confident that his ship can out
run the British blockade.

NAPOLEON

And supposing he can't? Supposing
the British search the ship and
catch me hiding like a rat in the
hold? *I* at least have a reputation
to consider.

There is a veiled jibe at Joseph...

CAPTAIN

My ship is as swift as the wind,
your Majesty - the British have
only two in the bay. I can out run
them both with time to spare - and
have your Majesty in New York
inside two months.

JOSEPH

Take my passport, sire - we're
brothers - we look alike...

Napoleon stands back a pace, looks Joseph up and down with a
sardonic, affectionate chuckle.

NAPOLEON

You think they would mistake me
for... you??

JOSEPH

Your Majesty knows well enough I
was referring to our physical
resemblance only...

NAPOLEON

The final insult! King José!
(smiles, tweaks his ear)
Americans are just like yourself,
dear Joseph - they are interested
in two things only: property, and
money. And as I have neither, I
should be treated as a homeless
pauper. I'd prefer to take my
chances with the British. I ask
nothing more than to be allowed to
live in peaceful retirement some-
where in the English countryside,
as they allowed brother Lucien.

We now see that a number of others are standing in a huddled
group at a discreet distance, all aware that their futures
are inextricably bound to their fallen Emperor. Among them,
Count BERTRAND (43), who has fought by Napoleon's side for
the past 25 years. Former Chief Engineer to the Grand Army,
latterly Grand Marshal of the Palace, and now ready to follow
his Emperor to the grave if need be, Bertrand is the senior
figure among the Emperor's little suite.

JOSEPH

Retire, your Majesty??

NAPOLEON

I shall take to the leisurely life
you have always championed, Joseph -
a life of reading and contemplation
- perhaps I'll take up farming...

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

somewhere in Hertfordshire perhaps - brother Lucien spoke very highly of Hertfordshire. All I want is peace and quiet. I refuse to have another gun fired on my account.

One of his companions - General GOURGAUD (32) - has trapped a bird - a quail, caught in a bush.

BERTRAND

Sire, the English will throw you into the Tower of London!

NAPOLEON

Nonsense, Bertrand - I've committed no crime. Did I incarcerate the Tsar of Russia when I defeated him at Austerlitz? Or the King of Prussia... or the Emperor of Austria? Why would their English cousins treat me any less generously?

Gourgaud runs up excitedly with the bird. He's a handsome General in his early 30s, only too ready to serve.

GOURGAUD

For your Majesty's dinner!

NAPOLEON

There is enough unhappiness in the world, Gourgaud. Set it free. Let us read the omens... if it flies to the West, we shall ---

(suddenly hopeful)

-- embark for the New World with this brave Captain. Perhaps you're right and the Americans will look favourably upon me - after all, I doubled the size of their country for them, didn't I?

Joseph is delighted at Napoleon's change of heart - and is anxious that Gourgaud should release the bird before the Emperor can verify which direction it takes. Too late. Napoleon lifts Gourgaud's hands and the bird flies free...

NAPOLEON

Let fate decide, Gourgaud... I have always been a creature of circumstance - I merely go where events point the way. When destiny wills, it must be obeyed.

The bird flies Westward, out to sea and into the setting sun... Napoleon shields his eyes from the glare...

GOURGAUD

America!!

... but then the bird makes a turn and heads northward, where a British ship is visible on the horizon. His expression falls for a brief moment.

NAPOLEON

Bertrand, write a letter.

Bertrand is so used to sudden dictation that he carries a notebook and pencil at the ready.

NAPOLEON

"To His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent of Great Britain and Ireland. Having suffered defeat at Waterloo, and not wishing to provoke the horrors of civil war in my own country, I have decided to end my political career, and therefore I come to claim...

(correcting himself)

... and therefore I come, like Themistocles, to claim the hospitality of the British people.

Joseph turns away, his eyes filling with tears, though Napoleon pretends not to notice.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I place myself under the protection of Your Royal Highness, as the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies."

Napoleon addresses Joseph's weeping. He tweaks his ear.

NAPOLEON

Do not be concerned on my account, brother Joseph. Nature seems to have calculated that I should endure great reverses. She has given me a mind of marble. Thunder cannot ruffle it - the shaft merely glides on.

(embracing him)

Take care of Mamma... and if you should ever see them, kiss my wife and my son for me.

In true Corsican tradition, the two brothers kiss each other on the lips.

3 EXT. CORSICAN SHORELINE - <1778> - DAY

The grey sea is now a dazzling blue. Two boys fight on the hot, rocky shores of Corsica: NABULIO (aged 9) and GUISEPPE (10) - like cubs, they maul one another - biting, slapping, and twisting each others necks. Nabulio is enjoying himself, but Guiseppe is less happy.

Suddenly they find themselves ambushed by a rabble of other urchin boys, led by POZZO (14). Guiseppe looks terrified and is about to run when Pozzo grabs Nabulio - half his size - twists his wrist and tries to force him to kneel. Guiseppe looks on helplessly, torn between fight and flight... Pozzo exerts more pressure - Nabulio winces in pain - then spits in Pozzo's eye - breaks free, turns round, and - WHAM!

Nabulio's fist is caught mid-air by the firm hand of a fiery, pint-sized woman - LETIZIA Buonaparte (27) - "easily the most striking woman in Ajaccio". Despite her advanced pregnancy, she clearly strikes terror into Pozzo's gang, lashing them in a Corsican/Italian dialect that few will understand (though the Italian word "vendetta" is prominent). But she's in too much of a hurry to scold for long, and - gripping Nabulio and Guiseppe by the wrists - drags them off across the sandy rocks, Nabulio poking out his tongue at Pozzo.

They take a short cut through an olive grove, scattering a flock of goats...

4 EXT. CASA BUONAPARTE - AJACCIO - <1778> - DAY

... and into a dusty back-street in Ajaccio, a small sea-town on Corsica's western coastline. "It is easier to deplore than describe the actual condition of Corsica," wrote Gibbon in 1778. He was referring to the island's abject poverty compared to the riches of Italy, her closest neighbour. Certainly the houses are in a poor state of repair - "cracked and peeled and with the stained surface of decay" - and the people seem to be uniformly dressed in black, but there is a strong sense of community among them - and an unspoken hostility towards the presence of French soldiers of the King's Royal Army, lounging at street corners, regarding the local Corsicans with amused disdain.

In FAST CUTS, Letizia drags her tattered and blood-stained boys inside a large house up a narrow alley...

5 INT. CASA BUONAPARTE - LIVING ROOM - <1778> - DAY

... through the main living room and up the stairs. We briefly have time to glimpse her husband - CARLO Buonaparte (32) - playing cards with a stout French aristocrat...

6 INT. CASA BUONAPARTE - BEDROOM - <1778> - DAY

Letizia sweeps into the bedroom and quickly sets about cleaning up her boys.

The room is sparsely-furnished, but cosy, with a large number of Catholic saints on the walls, and an even larger number of books. They have been stored up here - several hundred leather-bound volumes - an unwanted inheritance judging by the number presently employed as building-blocks for a toy castle. But a few are stacked by Napoleon's bed, and at least the top book is being read by someone. Plutarch's "Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans", though we barely get time to look around, never mind read the titles.

With a strict, firm yet loving hand, Letizia works with frenetic energy, washing and scrubbing their grubby faces, dismissing their wounds as trifles, talking all the while in her strong, Corsican dialect. The words themselves don't matter, the gist being "You wicked boys - you should have been home an hour ago - the Comte de Marbeuf has been kept waiting - and how many times have I told you not to have anything to do with Pozzo and his brothers? Luciano, did you finish your school work? "Si, Mamma". In the background we vaguely notice a cheerful servant/nurse, feeding their baby brother and sister, while the other brother (Luciano, aged 3) plays amiably by himself.

Guiseppe is ready first, smartened up, his longish hair tied back in a pony tail. Nabulio is having problems combing out the knots while Letizia is on her knees beside him, pulling up his socks and buckling his shoes. She tells Guiseppe to hurry down - they'll follow in a moment.

Letizia takes the comb - "here, let me do it" - combs out the knot - Nabulio winces - then she gives his cheeks a final clean. There - let me look at you. She stares at him with a sense of proud anxiety - and with sudden deep affection, kissing him briefly on the mouth.

7 INT. CASA BUONAPARTE - LIVING ROOM - <1778> - DAY

The charming Comte de MARBEUF (60) has just won another round of vingt-et-un (Blackjack) against the somewhat foppish Carlo when Nabulio follows Letizia into the room. Like Marbeuf, Carlo is dressed as an aristocrat, albeit with lace cuffs fraying at the wrists. Guiseppe is standing nearby, relaxed in their company.

MARBEUF

Just in time to save your husband from penury. I shall have to play with you later, Signora Letizia... you're sure to win it all back.

(to Nabulio)

And you, young man - do you have luck on your side too? Or do you take after your father?

Nabulio is taken aback by Marbeuf's affable manner - particularly towards his mother. Marbeuf is clearly entranced by her, but Letizia has eyes for Carlo only.

LETIZIA

Nabulio, this is the Comte de
Marbeuf, Governor of Corsica.

Marbeuf proffers a warm hand, but Nabulio draws back.

CARLO

Come along, Nabulio - you're not
usually shy of strangers.

MARBEUF

Ah, so this is Napoléone...

NABULIO

My name is Nabulione.

Nabulio stresses the Italian inflection.

MARBEUF

If you are to be educated in
France, you'll have to get used to
Napoléone - that's how they
pronounce it in Paris.

Nabulio looks at his parents in shock...

NABULIO

I don't want to go to school in
France!

I hate the French.....

CARLO

Now, Nabulio - that's over and done
with... we are all Frenchmen these
days, and thanks to the King's
munificence, you and Guiseppe are
to be educated out of the Royal
purse.

MARBEUF

You see, Napoleone, since Corsica
is now a part of France, you are
entitled to the same privileges...
and one of those is that the sons
of impoverished noblemen may be
educated at the King's expense.
Happily your father has been able
to procure documents to prove that
the Buonapartes are indeed of noble
descent - albeit Italian - and thus
you and Joseph are entitled to the
King's bounty.

NABULIO

I won't go.

CARLO

Nabulio, be reasonable... you
always say you want to be a soldier
- here's your chance.

NABULIO

I want to be a sailor.

MARBEUF

Well either way you're going to
need a military education, and that
can't be found in Corsica - whereas
Brienne is one of the finest
military academies in Europe.

NABULIO

I won't go!

... and he turns on his heels. Carlo calls out sharply, and
is about to follow when Letizia gestures him to be still.

MARBEUF

(to Letizia)

I should say he takes after you.

8 EXT. PLYMOUTH HARBOUR - ST HELENA - <1815> - DUSK

An old British warship - the "Bellerophon" - rides at anchor
in Plymouth Harbour, besieged by a thousand little boats
crammed with sight-seers. It is the last Sunday in July - the
first summer in 20 years when Britain has not been at war.
Girls are decked out in their prettiest summer frocks, the
weather is delightful, and several boats carry small
orchestras that play French airs - anything to entice the
Ogre to show himself. Those with spyglasses are able to
inform their companions, "He's having his dinner!" On deck, a
burly British sailor is holding up a black board bearing this
helpful information. A genteel voice contradicts her, "Don't
you mean luncheon?" "Corsicans don't eat luncheon!"

A Naval Longboat is ploughing its way through the throng, the
oarsmen pushing the rowing-boats aside.

Closer to the Bellerophon's hull, a small boat bobs up and
down near the poop deck - a position jealously guarded by the
occupants: five teenage girls and two young men. The girls
giggle and fall about in the boat, trying to stand and call
up to a cockney British Tar on the quarter deck --

GIRL

Does he really have fangs?

TAR

Them and all, luv! He's sinkin' 'em
into his dinner right now. And you
know what he's eatin'?

TAR (CONT'D)

A lovely little darlin', all juicy
and tender - just like you!

The girls squeal with delight, unaware that they are being watched through one of the portholes. Then one of them spots Napoleon's face - and nearly swoons.

9 INT. CABIN - BELLEROPHON - <1815> - DUSK

Napoleon watches through the porthole, shaking his head.

NAPOLEON

What a thing is imagination! Here I am among people who don't know me, who have never seen me, but who only know of me, and yet they are moved by my presence - they would do anything for me. Such is fanaticism!

He is standing close by the Captain's table, where Captain MAITLAND and his officers are still enjoying port with stilton. One of them is jotting down his words, while the others listen with rapt attention. A few of Napoleon's suite sit with them, somewhat awkwardly under the circumstances.

NAPOLEON

In each class of people, some chord responds to me. All I need to do is touch it. Yes, imagination rules the world.

MAITLAND

I believe you are correct, sire.

NAPOLEON

The defect of our modern institutions is that they do not speak to the imagination. Now if.....

There is a sharp rap at the door. On a nod from Maitland, the Guard on duty opens it and two high-ranking Englishmen enter: Sir Henry BUNBURY (55) and the affable Lord KEITH (70).

KEITH

I trust we are not interrupting?

MAITLAND

On the contrary, my Lord, the Emper... uh, General Bonaparte - is most anxious to learn when he may go ashore.

(to Napoleon)

May I introduce the Honourable Lord Keith.

NAPOLEON

You and I have met before, sir...
 (off Keith's look)
 When I was 23 years old - and I
 drove you British out of Toulon.

KEITH

Ah yes... but I settled the score
 when I was 55 and drove you
 French out of Egypt. Sir, may I
 take this opportunity to express
 my gratitude for the kindness you
 bestowed upon my nephew at
 Waterloo. Captain Elphinstone of
 the 7th Hussars... he was brought
 to you as a wounded prisoner and
 you instructed that his wounds be
 dressed and thereby saved his
 life. If I can render you any
 civility in return, I will
 consider it my duty.

Napoleon's suite are relieved at Keith's evident amiability.

NAPOLEON

Let me speak to the Prince Regent.

KEITH

Sir, regrettably that is not within
 my province. I - we - come as
 emissaries on behalf of His
 Majesty's Government. Allow me to
 introduce Major-General Sir Henry
 Bunbury, His Majesty's Under
 Secretary of State for War.

BUNBURY

(stiffly)

Good afternoon, General. I am
 commanded to communicate the
 contents of a letter from Viscount
 Melville, First Lord of the
 Admiralty, to my Lord High Admiral,
 Lord Keith. "Sir. It would be
 inconsistent with our duty to this
 country and to his Majesty's
 Allies, if we were to leave General
 Buonaparte the means of once again
 disturbing the peace of Europe, and
 renewing all the calamities of war.
 It is unavoidable that he should be
 restrained in his personal liberty
 to whatever extent may be
 necessary, and the island of St
 Helena has therefore been selected
 for his future residence.

Napoleon remains motionless, without moving a muscle. Not so his suite, who receive the news as though it were a sentence of death. Lord Keith is embarrassed, as is Maitland and most (though not all) his Officers.

BUNBURY (O/S)

"Of the persons who have been brought to England with General Buonaparte, he will be allowed to select three officers, who will be permitted to accompany him to St Helena. Twelve servants will also be allowed, as well as the ship's surgeon, Doctor O'Meara.

Napoleon's expression is "earnest, almost melancholy, but he did not allow any trace of ill-temper or violent passion to manifest itself," wrote Bunbury later. Among Napoleon's suite, Gourgaud is outraged, Bertrand distraught, the debonair Count MONTHOLON (32) ambivalent, and the Comte de LAS CASES (50) in tears.

BUNBURY (O/S)

"It must be distinctly understood that all those individuals will be liable to restraint during their attendance upon him at St Helena, and they will not be permitted to leave the island without the written sanction of His Majesty's Government."

Their devotion briefly fades as the life-sentence sinks in. Bertrand is the first to rally, bracing his shoulders with stoic resolve, swiftly followed by the others. There is an unspoken rivalry already beginning to stir among his suite, each wanting to be first in their Emperor's affections. Napoleon wanders over to the window, looks out, hands behind his back.

NAPOLEON

Do you know what St Helena is, my Lord?

KEITH

An island, sir.

NAPOLEON

It is a dead volcano, a lump of rock in the middle of the south Atlantic, a thousand miles from land.

KEITH

Sir, although I have not visited the island personally, I believe Lord Wellington stayed there on his way back from India some years ago and found it most congenial.

NAPOLEON

I will not go to St Helena.

Bunbury and Lord Keith exchange glances. Gourgaud is thrilled, but Bertrand knows better.

KEITH

I see. Well, if you wish to...

NAPOLEON

I was raised up by the people of France to be their Emperor. I have abdicated in favour of my son, and from the moment I boarded this ship, I have been under the protection of your laws. If I stand charged with a crime, then read the charge and let me be tried in a court of English law.

KEITH

Sir, I sincerely regret that I am not permitted to.....

NAPOLEON

Why does the Prince Regent not answer me himself? I have fought and conquered kings and emperors, and not one of them did I imprison or exile. St Helena - God forbid! To be imprisoned on a rock, cut off from the world of people and all that is close to my heart - that is worse than the iron cage of Tamberlaine! Send me back to the Bourbons! Let the King of France sign my death warrant - if he dares - or at least show courage yourself and shoot me here and now!

BUNBURY

Perhaps if General Buonaparte were to.....

NAPOLEON

I am not General Bonaparte to you, sir! I am the Emperor Napoleon! General Bonaparte was last heard of in Egypt, sixteen years ago!

Napoleon storms out of the cabin...

10 EXT. DECK - BELLEROPHON - <1815> - DAY

... and up onto the quarter deck, eliciting a gasp of wonder, terror and delight from the 8,000 spectators in the harbour:

"Long live Boney!" "Good luck to you Boney!" "Show us your fangs!" "We love you Boney" "Long live the Republic" "Long live the Revolution!" "Vive l'Empereur!" Napoleon tips his hat to a pretty girl who squeals with glee, then turns on Keith and Bunbury, who have followed him up onto deck -

NAPOLEON

I came here of my own free will -
I could have gone to the United
States - I could have sought the
protection of the Russian Tsar...
or the Emperor of Austria - my own
father-in-law ...

The French suite have cautiously surfaced onto the quarter deck, where they are joined by FANNY Bertrand (32, the Grand-Marshal's wife) and ALBINE Montholon (34), a more aloof woman, who treats Fanny with a measure of scorn.

NAPOLEON

Why does your Prince Regent not
answer for himself? Who are you to
determine my fate?? I will not go
to St Helena! Let the people of
England decide... they are not my
enemies - you are my real enemies -
you aristocrats...!

Fanny lets out a stifled cry at the mention of St Helena - turns to her husband Bertrand and starts weeping...

NAPOLEON

I raised myself up from nothing to
be the most powerful man in the
world! I fought fifty pitched
battles and won almost all of them!
Europe was at my feet! Called by
the voice of the nation, my maxim
has always been 'Opportunity to all
talents, without distinction of
birth or fortune'. My system of
equality for all is the reason that
you English hate me so, yet God
made all men alike ...

Las Cases hurriedly scribbles down Napoleon's outrage, Montholon jots down the gist - but Gourgaud, Bertrand and the women are too stunned to think of such things.

NAPOLEON

Who forms a nation? Not your lords, nor your fat prelates and churchmen, nor your gentleman, nor aristocrats and kings... it is the people who make a nation - and I was the people's Emperor! All my efforts were directed towards illuminating them, instead of brutalizing them as you do, by ignorance, superstition, and the lash!

(stamps foot)

No, no, no! I refuse! I will not go to St Helena!

Fanny is now verging on the hysterical... both Montholon and Bertrand try to calm her. Suddenly she runs to Napoleon:

FANNY

Your Majesty, I beg of you! Hasn't my husband sacrificed enough? Must he now sacrifice his family?? We have friends in England... we can start again here... but... St Helena ..?!

She looks up at him, tear-streaked and forlorn. Napoleon retains his composure.

NAPOLEON

I am not going to St Helena, Madame Bertrand. But even if I was, I would not force Bertrand to go with me. He is entirely free to do as he likes - as are you all.

Bertrand looks humiliated by his wife's unbridled emotions, and hurriedly escorts her away. Napoleon turns back to Lord Keith and Sir Henry Bunbury. He takes Lord Keith aside... leans over the rail and gazes out at the bay, filled with bobbing boats. His mood has changed... he suddenly seems very vulnerable.

NAPOLEON

May I call upon the favour you offered, and ask you your advice?

KEITH

Sire, you must remember that His Majesty's Government are acting on the joint wishes of the allied powers: Prussia, Russia, Austria - and France.

NAPOLEON

But England has been appointed as my jailor, and it is you who have been my most consistent enemy. Is there no court in England to which I can appeal?

KEITH

I am no lawyer, sir, but I believe none. Nevertheless I am satisfied that there is every disposition on the part of His Majesty's government to render your situation as comfortable as is consistent with prudence...

(lowering his voice)

And there is always the possibility of a change in government, either here or in France, which might take a more favourable view towards you.

Napoleon looks out at the armada of sight-seers, who raise a cheer when he turns to them. He turns back to Keith.

NAPOLEON

The French monarchy will never consent to my release. But thank you, my Lord. Please remember me to your nephew. I admire the brave men of all nations.

Napoleon turns aside, Keith whispering to Bunbury...

KEITH

God forbid that the reptile should spend time with the Prince Regent - within half an hour they'd be the best of friends ...

Suddenly there's a scream - Fanny has broken free and is trying to leap overboard. Bertrand and Montholon race after her, leaving Albine to murmur to Gourgaud -

ALBINE

Let her go... let her go...

Montholon and Bertrand grab Fanny and haul her back from the brink. Napoleon turns to the forlorn Gourgaud.

NAPOLEON

Why so glum, Gourgaud? We shall just have to make the best of it, that's all. After all, we stand as martyrs of an immortal cause. Millions of men weep with us, our country sighs, and glory has put on mourning!

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

We struggle here against the tyranny of the gods, and the hopes of humanity are with us. Misfortune itself knows heroism, and glory ... only adversity was wanting to complete my career. Had I died on the throne in the clouds of my glory, I should have remained a problem for many. As it is, thanks to my misfortunes, I can be judged naked.

(surveying the crowd)

I have worn the Imperial crown of France, and the Iron crown of Italy. But England has handed me the finest crown of all - the crown of thorns.

Napoleon raises his hat to his vast audience, eliciting a tumultuous cheer - "God bless you!" "Long live the Emperor!"

11 EXT. BRIENNE ACADEMY - <1779> - DAY

In the bleak midwinter, Napoleone (9) and Josephe (10) stand outside the austere gates of the Brienne Military Academy - a former monastery, now a training school for young army cadets, run by Franciscan monks. Napoleone is dressed as a young military cadet in a smart blue uniform and bicorn hat - a miniature version of his adult image. Joseph and their father Carlo are in civilian clothes. A coach is waiting.

Napoleone turns to his brother, his teeth tightly clenched. "Coraggio." Joseph's grip is less resolute... "Caio Nabulio"... and the tears cascade down his cheeks. The sight is more than Napoleone can bear - he turns sharply away in order to retain a grip on his emotions. They embrace, kissing on the lips. Napoleone tweaks his brother's ear with a brave grin...

... then, with a final wave, the carriage speeds away, Joseph waving from the window. Napoleone stands alone, then slowly turns to confront the hostile young faces staring at him through the iron bars of the school gates.

12 EXT. JAMESTOWN HARBOUR - ST HELENA - <1815> - DUSK

Three months later. The British warship "Northumberland" is anchored in the small harbour at Jamestown - no more than a string of houses either side of a street, tucked inside a deep chasm at the foot of the island volcano.

A small reception committee is gathered on the quayside, headed by the island's Governor, several officials, and a platoon of British redcoats holding back the crowd of curious islanders. More soldiers are being disembarked from three warships anchored in the harbour beyond.

A long-boat is rowed ashore, and the Islanders crane forward for a better view. Among them is BETSY Balcombe, a tom-boyish girl of 14, peering into the gathering dusk with a look of trepidation, clinging to her mother's arm.

The longboat reaches the quay. Admiral COCKBURN is first ashore, followed by his large Newfoundland dog and several officers. Betsy peers ahead. Then the familiar bicorn hat appears, followed by Napoleon himself as he climbs the steep stone steps up to the quay. His image is the most famous in the world, and his presence prompts an audible gasp from the islanders. Even the British snap to attention and salute, until corrected by their Sergeant. Napoleon pauses a moment, surveying the sea of awestruck faces with an ironic half-smile, well aware of the spell he exerts.

The affable Admiral Cockburn introduces Napoleon to the Island's British Governor, Colonel Mark Wilks.

GOVERNOR WILKS

Welcome to Saint Helena, General Bonaparte.

Napoleon bristles at the reference to "General Bonaparte", but manages to smile. Betsy strains for a better view... but Napoleon is already on his way, followed by Bertrand and his unhappy suite of French companions.

13 EXT. HOTEL - JAMESTOWN - ST HELENA - <1815> - DUSK

Admiral Cockburn shows Napoleon into a rather plain bedroom where his two servants - Louis MARCHAND (24) and ALI (22) - assemble an iron camp-bed beside the hotel's four-poster. Both are French, but Ali is dressed as an Egyptian Mameluke, with turban and baggy trousers.

COCKBURN

Tomorrow we shall ride up to Longwood House and inspect your permanent residence. What time do you generally arise when ashore, sir?

NAPOLEON

Same as at sea, Admiral. Five o'clock.

COCKBURN

Then... shall we say about eight?

Napoleon nods, then turns away. The camp bed is assembled, and Ali winds up a large silver alarm-clock while Marchand closes the shutters against the noisy, jostling crowd in the street below, trying to peer in.

MARCHAND

Is there anything I can do to make
Your Majesty more comfortable?

NAPOLEON

No, thank you, Marchand.

Napoleon unfastens his portmanteau, takes out seven small portraits in oval frames and arranges them on the mantelpiece. They are all of the same small boy: his son.

He gazes at them a moment, then walks over to his camp bed, lies back and stares up at the ceiling while Marchand takes up his accustomed position - on a mattress across the door.

14 INT. BRIENNE - DORMITORY - <1779> - NIGHT

A dark, eerie Chapter House at night - a dormitory with ten wooden cells, each with its own locked door. Moonlight spills in through the arched windows, and an occasional whimper disturbs the silence.

We find Bonaparte on an iron bed, gazing at a framed oval painting of his parents, Carlo and Letizia. The spartan cell has a wash-basin and jug, a small cupboard, and a chair. He has a corner of his blanket wrapped around his knuckle and stuffed in his mouth, trying not to cry. From the wisps of breath that escape, we judge the night to be bitterly cold.

BOY (O/S)

Stop that noise - I'm trying to
sleep.

Bonaparte bites his knuckle even harder - then abruptly hides his parents' faces by turning the portrait face down.

15 INT. BRIENNE - DORMITORY - <1779> - DAWN

A monk rings a bell - the young cadets scramble out of bed - two servants unlock the doors - and the boys start washing. Napoleone tries to pour his water, but finds it frozen over with a layer of ice. He turns to the others...

NAPOLEONE

Who put glass in my jug?

BOY #1

Buonaparte's never seen ice before!

More sniggering. A red-haired boy - BOURRIENNE - jeers...

BOY #2

What do you expect? Corsicans are
nothing but ignorant little
savages!

Napoleone takes a flying leap at the ill-prepared Bourrienne, hurling him to the ground.

MONK

Gentlemen – Messieurs – please!

A severe Monk – FATHER CHARLES – enters the mayhem and drags Napoleone from his victim.

BONAPARTE

He insulted my family!

FATHER

That's no excuse, Buonaparte. All your undoubted skills will be wasted if you cannot learn to control your emotions. Imagine if you were on the field of battle – someone insults you and you lose your temper – you lash out – "Charge!"... and a thousand men lose their lives, all because we failed to teach you the art of self-control.

The Father produces a cane and motions Napoleone to bend over. The boys lick their lips. He brings it down – THWACK!

16 EXT. LONGWOOD PLATEAU – ST HELENA – <1815> – DAY

A beautiful sunny morning, and Napoleon is out riding a magnificent, jet-black Arab. He is a superb rider, and the others in the party are hard-pressed to keep up. They include Admiral Cockburn, Bertrand and Ali – an incongruous figure in his exotic Egyptian headgear. Two British Soldiers of the 55th Dragoons accompany them, and the Admiral's large Newfoundland dog (Tom Pipes) completes the party.

They are high up on a windswept plateau, surrounded by jagged volcanic rocks utterly devoid of vegetation. Glimpsed between these rocks is the vast ocean beyond.

The riding party reach a rundown bungalow farmhouse, surrounded by a plantation of withered gum-trees. A platoon of British soldiers and Chinese slaves toil away under white supervision, enlarging the building. Napoleon reins in his horse. The slaves come to attention and salute, mouths agape at seeing the Emperor in person. A British Soldier acting as foreman briskly tells them to "Carry on!" Admiral Cockburn draws up alongside Napoleon.

COCKBURN

I fear it's going to be several months before Longwood is habitable. The fact is, the Governor only had two days notice of your arrival...

COCKBURN (CONT'D)

(cheerfully)

... news from Europe takes so long to reach St Helena, he thought you were still a prisoner on Elba, and as for Waterloo.....

On second thoughts, Cockburn breaks off. Napoleon has taken out his telescope and is already surveying the landscape...

NAPOLEON

I was never a prisoner on Elba, Admiral. I was the Emperor of Elba.

He's spotted something – a tiny white house in the distance, tucked amid an oasis of flowers and shrubs.

Before the Admiral can respond, Napoleon cracks his whip and is off. A look of momentary panic seizes the British party – is he escaping already? Cockburn and the others gallop after him, Tom Pipes bounding alongside.

17 EXT. BRIARS & DRIVE - ST HELENA - <1815> - DAY

Napoleon rides up a beautiful avenue of Banyan trees, flanked with pomegranate and myrtle, orange trees and giant lacos. At the end of the avenue is a circular driveway in front of a house covered in white roses. More roses fill the flower-beds either side.

Napoleon rides across to a tall rose bush, gathers a handful and takes a deep, nostalgic breath...

Cockburn and the soldiers arrive breathless just as the door opens and an attractive lady – MRS BALCOMBE – appears. She recognises Napoleon immediately, and is seized with an inner panic that her English reserve finds hard to control.

Cockburn, Bertrand and the others dismount, but Napoleon remains in his saddle. He rides slowly forward until he is standing within a few feet of Mrs Balcombe, who is now joined by her daughter, BETSY (14) – the tom-boy we saw on the quayside – and her sister JANE (16). Betsy hurriedly grasps her mother's arm on seeing Napoleon. Cockburn rides over and makes the introductions.

COCKBURN

Mrs Balcombe, permit me to introduce our new guest – General Bonaparte.

Cockburn's embarrassment at having to refer to Napoleon thus is all too apparent, but he has little choice.

COCKBURN

Mrs Balcombe's husband is agent and purveyor to the East India Company.

Napoleon looks down at Mrs Balcombe.

NAPOLEON

Your garden is very beautiful,
Madame... and I have known many
gardens. Your roses remind me of
Malmaison. Indeed you yourself put
me in mind of the Empress
Josephine.

Mrs Balcombe's restraint goes to pieces. Betsy gazes up at him, her own initial terror beginning to mellow. "He was deadly pale, yet noble and imposing, and I thought his features, though cold and immovable and somewhat stern, were exceedingly beautiful. When he began to speak, his fascinating smile removed every vestige of fear with which I had hitherto regarded him."

Napoleon dismounts, Ali promptly taking the reins, and gives a slight bow to the ladies, who both curtsy. He looks about him - sees a small pavilion on the far side of the garden.

NAPOLEON

I could be happy here.

MRS BALCOMBE

Our home is at your disposal, sire.

Napoleon turns to Admiral Cockburn.

NAPOLEON

If Mrs Balcombe would not be too inconvenienced, I could live in that pavilion...?

COCKBURN

But... what about the rest of your suite, sir? There can hardly be space enough here for all of them...

NAPOLEON

Bertrand!

BERTRAND

Yes, your Majesty?

NAPOLEON

Ride back down to the town and tell Marchand to bring up my baggage. I'll be needing Las Cases for dictation - Montholon too - Gourgaud if he insists - and Dr. O'Meara. The rest will just have to make the best of it where they are until Longwood is ready.

BERTRAND

And... I, your Majesty?

NAPOLEON

Why of course, Grand Marshal. You
and your family are most welcome.

A relieved Bertrand scurries off, leaving Napoleon with
Cockburn.

NAPOLEON

Poor Bertrand. My finest engineer
- he once built me a bridge
across the Danube in under four
hours! Imagine that, Admiral...
four hours!

Napoleon takes a pinch of snuff - watched by Betsy.

18 EXT. BRIARS & GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1815> - DAY

Feverish activity as a platoon of British Soldiers erect a large marquee in the garden adjoining the pavilion, under Bertrand's direction. Marchand and Ali supervise the unloading of the Emperor's trunks from an ox-cart, while Mrs Balcombe organizes a team of Chinese slaves in the rearrangement of furniture.

Napoleon sits alone in the distance, humming to himself out of tune while reading the "Ballads of Ossian". A black slave - TOBY - is further off, bedding geraniums. Napoleon is well aware of Toby's furtive glances, but continues reading.

Presently he hears a rustle in the bushes behind him. Betsy and her sister are creeping closer when Napoleon suddenly turns round with a terrifying expression. Jane screams and bolts, but Betsy is petrified - her legs refuse to work. Napoleon digs into his pocket... and takes out a tortoise-shell case, bearing a portrait of the boy with blonde curls. It contains finely-sliced black sticks.

NAPOLEON

Liquorice?

BETSY

T-t-thank you, sir.

NAPOLEON

Parlez-vous Français?

BETSY

Un petit peu, Monsieur.

NAPOLEON

What is the capital of France?

BETSY
Paris, sir.

Napoleon gets up, stretching his legs. Betsy backs away.

NAPOLEON
Italy?

BETSY
Rome.

NAPOLEON
Russia?

BETSY
St Petersburg nowadays... but
Moscow in former times.

NAPOLEON
Who burned Moscow?

Betsy looks apprehensive. Napoleon turns and fixes her with a penetrating gaze that leaves her trembling.

NAPOLEON
Who burned Moscow??

BETSY
I... I... I don't know sir...

NAPOLEON
Oh yes you do... you English are
taught well enough that it was I
who burned Moscow!

Even Old Toby cowers. Napoleon laughs...

NAPOLEON
Well, well - isn't that so?!

BETSY
M-m-my father says the Russians
burned down Moscow... to get rid of
you.

Napoleon looks at her in momentary surprise, then smiles.

NAPOLEON
I like your father already.
(breathes in the air)
Ah, what a garden! I have always
loved gardens. When I was at
military school, each of us was
given a small garden to look
after. The other boys thought it
effeminate to love flowers, so
they gave me their gardens and I
turned them into one...

19 EXT. BRIENNE - GARDEN - <1781> - DUSK

Bonaparte lies in his garden sanctuary, made up of six smaller allotments surrounded by a wicket fence covered in ivy. He is lying beneath a cherry tree, a pile of books by his side, reading Rousseau's "The Social Contract".

NAPOLEON (V/O)
... my own private little
empire... where I could read and
think and dream.

Faces peer over the wall - Bourrienne gives a signal - and suddenly the fence comes crashing down. Bonaparte is on his feet instantly, arming himself with a rake and flaying out at the invading horde of boys. Another section of the fence gives way, and Bonaparte runs to grab a rope hidden in the grass, yanks it taut - and a catapult unleashes a hail of pebbles at the intruders. The cadets flee in panic - to Bonaparte's satisfaction, and the ire of the monks who have witnessed the mayhem.

20 INT. DINING HALL - BRIENNE - <1781> - NIGHT

Bonaparte screams at two astonished MONKS and a room-full of cadets, about to eat their evening meal.

BONAPARTE
I won't! I won't! I won't! I'll eat
sitting down like every one else!

This provokes a gale of laughter from the Bourrienne and the other boys. Their scorn drives him livid - the monks try to grapple him -

MONK
Bonaparte - control yourself sir
and take your punishment like a
man.

BONAPARTE
I will not kneel! In my family we
kneel only before God - isn't that
so, Mamma - isn't that so?!!

A third Monk intervenes and Bonaparte is finally restrained. He glowers at the other cadets, his whole body trembling...

BONAPARTE
I'll make you aristocrats pay for
this!

21 EXT. GARDEN - BRIARS - ST HELENA - <1815> - DAY

It is early evening on St Helena, and a full moon bathes the garden in a phantom light.

Napoleon is sitting outside on the verandah, playing cards with Betsy, Montholon, Albine, and their hosts, Mr and Mrs Balcombe. Gourgaud sits nearby, reading a book, while the elderly Comte de Las Cases and his teenage son converse with Bertrand and Fanny. Marchand and Ali are on hand to serve coffee and port.

The game is Vingt-et-Un, and the idle conversation is punctuated with "twist", "buy one" etc. Albine is mildly flirtatious with Napoleon, but never enough to raise her husband's jealousy (indeed he may even be promoting it). Montholon is dealing. Napoleon declines – he's holding two cards. The others go bust – Napoleon reveals a natural 21 and wins the jackpot of coins.

BETSY

That's the fifth time you've won!

NAPOLEON

I've always had luck at cards. It runs in our family. My mother used to win so often that Paoli said she had it in her blood.

BETSY

Who's Paoli?

NAPOLEON

(buys a card)

My childhood hero. It was Paoli who tried to free Corsica from the French, but gave up and went to live in England. Imagine, if my father had followed him into exile, I'd have been born an Englishman – what do you say to that O'Meara?

O'MEARA

I'd say more's the pity for Ireland, sir.

NAPOLEON

If I had invaded England, my first act would have been to have granted the Irish people their independence. It is ridiculous to hear the English spirit of toleration praised by so many when the English government prefers to keep an army of 60,000 soldiers in Ireland rather than allow the Irish people to enjoy their most legitimate rights.

O'MEARA

Sire, as a servant of the British government, I cannot speak on such matters... but were you not eager to see your own homeland liberated?

NAPOLEON

When I was young there was nothing I wanted more... but when I saw that Paoli and his followers preferred priests to democracy, I chose to support the new French Republic.

BETSY

Buy one or twist?

NAPOLEON

Buy one.

He takes out a large coin from his waistcoat – a solid gold 40-franc piece known as a "napoleon". Betsy examines it, comparing the Caesar-like portrait with the man.

BETSY

You look like Nero!

MRS BALCOMBE

Betsy!

Napoleon grins slyly at Betsy.

BETSY

Well I'd say it's a jolly good thing you weren't born English... otherwise you'd have cut off our king's head instead of yours!

NAPOLEON

I sent no king to the guillotine!

As Napoleon continues, Betsy notices his hand creeping onto his knee and under the table...

LAS CASES

His Majesty took no part in that dreadful conflagration, Mam'selle...

BALCOMBE

I fear Betsy's schooling on this island leaves much to be desired.

Napoleon has won again. Betsy is getting suspicious, and glances under the table...

NAPOLEON

The horrors of the French revolution must be painted with the same brush as the holy Inquisition. No man could have prevented it, and neither those who perished nor those who survived can be blamed. There was no individual strong enough to change forces or to forestall events that were born from circumstances and the nature of things.

BALCOMBE

Why not listen, Betsy... you might learn a thing or two.

NAPOLEON

I am an excellent teacher. I taught my brother Louis when we were both penniless in Paris... history, geography, mathematics...

BETSY

Did you teach him how to cheat too?

BALCOMBE

Betsy! How dare you be so rude!

The French look appalled, and Napoleon turns on Betsy with a look that turns her to jelly.

BALCOMBE (O/S)

Go to the cellar at once!

Napoleon suddenly growls, making her jump, then laughs.

NAPOLEON

That's right, Balcombe – show a firm hand. Children are no different than soldiers. But since Miss Betsy was in fact telling the truth, let her punishment be my pleasure.

BETSY

Why you.....

But she checks herself as Napoleon hands back all his winnings. He's about to give her the gold napoleon when he tosses it – the coin comes down heads – and he puts it back in his pocket with a grin, tweaking her ear.

NAPOLEON

My friends, I thank you for your kind company and bid you good night.

All rise, the French chorusing "Good night, Your Majesty" - as does Mrs Balcombe, despite a cautioning look from her husband.

Napoleon leaves the verandah and moves into the garden. He embraces the night air, filled with the scent of roses and jasmine - takes a deep breath - savours it a moment - then breathes out with a long, slow sigh...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Always alone in the midst of men, I
abandon myself to my melancholy in
all its sharpness...

22 INT. BONAPARTE'S GARRET - PARIS - <1795> - DAY

Bonaparte (now aged 24) is seated at a desk heaped with books and maps, writing a letter. He is painfully thin, hair lank, uniform threadbare, boots muddy and worn. The garret room is spartan in the extreme: two wooden beds, a second table, a tiny stove and a couple of chairs. The floor is stacked with more books, many of them opened at certain pages and stacked one on top of another. It's a chilly October evening, and the broken window is stuffed with rags to keep out the cold.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

I warn you, dear Joseph, that if
things don't look up, I shan't step
aside the next time a carriage
nearly knocks me over. I have young
Louis staying with me at present as
Mamma cannot afford to support him
as well as Fifi and our sisters.

Bonaparte's brother LOUIS (15) is seated at the smaller table, working at geometry which he clearly dislikes. He is an affectionate, soft-natured boy, good-looking with heavy eyelids. Bonaparte has drawn examples with chalk on a board. There is a cheap globe which has been carefully repaired, and a telescope by the window. Several serviceable portraits hang on the wall: his mother, father and the rest of the Bonaparte clan - as well as maps of Europe and Paris.

As Bonaparte's soulful V/O to his brother Joseph continues, he folds the letter, gets up, puts on his coat, takes a saucepan of soup from the oil stove, pours a bowl for Louis while glancing over the boy's shoulder. He spots a mistake - Louis moans "I'll never be any good at geometry!"

BONAPARTE (V/O)

I can do no more to help as I have
not received a sou in six months.
Despite my success at Toulon, the
War Office refuses to make use of
my talents and has buried me in the
map department.

Bonaparte ruffles Louis' hair affectionately, then leaves him to his labours.

23 EXT. STREET & THEATRE - PARIS - <1795> - DUSK

Pouring rain. Bonaparte shelters under the awning of a theatre, where playbills inform us that the great Talma is appearing as Julius Caesar. Other bills abound: "People of France! Restore your Church and your King - only then will you have bread!" A party of carousing National Guardsmen lurch across the road to take shelter beside him...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

My existence is a burden because I see that most of my fellow men have an outlook on life that is as far removed from mine as the moon from the sun...

24 EXT. PARK & SEINE - PARIS - <1795> - DUSK

The rain has eased, and Bonaparte walks along the banks of the River Seine. The terror has given way to decadence and poverty: despite the weather, whores lurk at every turn. Jobs are few, and many are starving.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Dear Joseph, forgive me for bearing my soul, but we have lived so many years together in such close companionship, that our two hearts have become one...

As Bonaparte crosses the street, he hears laughter - a bevy of society beauties are leaving a fashionable salon, wrapping their near-naked bodies in furs before bundling into a carriage in a heap of merriment. One of them (ROSE) catches her shoe in the door - it falls off. With a warm, infectious laugh she retrieves it from the mud. The carriage takes off at a brisk gallop, and Bonaparte has to leap back to avoid being splattered with mud.

25 EXT. RIVER & TUILERIES - <1795> - NIGHT

Bonaparte enters a side street from the park, kicking leaves and still lost in his own thoughts...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Goodbye, my dear brother. Life is a flimsy dream that soon fades...

He gradually becomes aware of shock waves - citizens reacting to news being rapidly spread by word of mouth - some in panic, others with euphoria. Shop-keepers hurriedly barricade their doorways and windows.

Now there are cries of "Long live the King!" "Long live the Bourbons!" "Long live King Louis XVIII!" answered with "Death to all kings!" "Long live the Revolution!" Suddenly the tocsin SOUNDS --

26 EXT. ANOTHER STREET - PARIS - <1795> - NIGHT

Bonaparte hurries down another street -

MURAT

Bonaparte! Where have you been?!

A strapping young cavalry officer with an incredible mop of curly dark hair comes running up: Joachim MURAT (26), dashing, brave and quick-witted, but with little brain to draw upon. Bonaparte's brother Louis is with him.

LOUIS

You said you'd be back hours ago!

MURAT

Barras is looking for you - the Royalists are marching on Paris!

A roll of distant DRUMS adds further panic to the radicals - and elation to the royalists.

27 EXT/INT. TUILERIES - STAIRS - <1795> - NIGHT

The stairs of the Tuileries Palace are clogged with alarm and panic. Outside in the Place du Carousel, infantry Guardsmen hold the crowd at bay with fixed bayonets.

Bonaparte and Murat fight their way through the throng. Seeing their military uniforms, the Guards let them through.

28 INT. TUILERIES - CHAMBER - <1795> - NIGHT

The Convention Chamber (Marie-Antoinette's former bed chamber) is in chaos. Paul BARRAS (42) - "extravagant, corpulent, a dissipated prince" - is trying to retain order.

MEMBER #1

If we don't make peace with the royalists, we'll have another revolution on our hands!

MEMBER #2

Citizen Louvet is right! We should send deputies to talk with them...

MEMBER #3

They haven't come to talk, they've
come to destroy the republic and
put the Bourbons back on the
throne!

Boos and cheering. Bonaparte is in the doorway with Murat,
unable to believe that such confusion and impotence
constitutes government. Barras yells to restore order.

BARRAS

Citizens, please! Our country is on
the verge of collapse - the whole
of Europe is against us! England
has a dozen warships off our
coasts, waiting to invade - the
Austrians are waiting - Prussia is
waiting - Russia is waiting...
waiting for the signal that Paris
has fallen to the royalists and
that the self-styled Louis XVIII
has regained his brother's throne -
a brother whom some of us sent to
the guillotine!

The assembly falls silent. As Barras continues, he spots
Bonaparte in the doorway...

BARRAS

As Commander-in-Chief of Paris, I
am taking charge of her defense -
and I hereby appoint Citizen
Bonaparte as my second-in-command!

The announcement causes some astonishment, not least in
Bonaparte, but he quickly rises to the challenge. Barras
strides over and embraces him...

BARRAS

Well, citizen - will you accept?
(half whisper)
You have three minutes to decide.

MEMBER #1

How is a mere boy going to defeat
40,000 armed royalists?!

BARRAS

He is a soldier of remarkable
ability, Citizen - as he
demonstrated against the British at
Toulon.

All eyes are on Bonaparte. His shabby uniform is in marked
contrast to the opulence of Barras and others; even Murat
cuts a dashing sight beside his impoverished friend.

BARRAS

Well, citizen. What is your answer?

BONAPARTE

Citizen General, I accept.

BARRAS

Any suggestions?

Bonaparte walks over to a large map, which clearly shows their dilemma. The Tuileries Palace lies in the centre of Paris. Red ribbons indicate the direction and deployment of the advancing Royalist mob. Blue ribbons show the pathetic defenses around the Tuileries. Bonaparte studies it.

BONAPARTE

How many troops can we depend on?

BARRAS

Four thousand. Perhaps less by now.

BONAPARTE

How many canon?

BARRAS

Two. Massena has the rest –
defending our borders against the
Austrians.

BONAPARTE

There's forty canon out at Sablons,
waiting to be shipped to the Front
– I saw them myself three days ago.

BARRAS

Sablons is twenty leagues away –
too late to fetch them now.

Bonaparte assumes immediate command – turns to Murat.

BONAPARTE

Murat! Take a squadron of cavalry,
ride over to Sablons, use sabres if
you have to but bring back those
guns!

MURAT

At once, Citizen General!

And Murat heads off.

BONAPARTE

The rest of you – go home to bed.

29 EXT. RUE ST HONORÉ - PARIS - <1795> - DAWN

The deserted Rue St Honoré runs parallel with the river on the far side of the Tuileries Palace. A haphazard assortment of infantry with muskets and citizens armed with pikes and axes are crouched at street corners, but there is no sign of any canon. All eyes are fixed on the dusty road ahead.

Bonaparte is stationed with Louis - acting as his junior ADC - in front of the gates to the Tuileries Palace, manning one of the two canons.

LOUIS

What if Murat can't bring the guns?

BONAPARTE

He will bring them.

LOUIS

Why... are you so anxious?

BONAPARTE

Because I must use them against my fellow countrymen... to defend a corrupt government in whom I have no faith whatsoever.

LOUIS

Then why are we fighting them?

BONAPARTE

If the royalists triumph, the entire nation will be plunged back into civil war... another reign of terror... more butchery, more anarchy...

Louis hears a distant murmur, and Bonaparte is on his feet. Across the river is a convoy of canons, led by Murat and each drawn by eight dragoons. Bonaparte mounts his horse and rides across the bridge to greet him. Murat's great black curls are splattered with blood, but his eyes are shining.

MURAT

Had to fight the Royalists for them
- but we drove them off!

BONAPARTE

My friend, you have covered
yourself in glory!

In a fast MONTAGE, Bonaparte takes control, deploying the canons according to his master plan, positioning each one to ensure maximum sweep of the avenues and bridges. He is aided by Louis, who is thrilled to be of use to his elder brother.

Now they wait. And wait. It starts to rain. Where is the mob? And then suddenly there they are: a huge, sullen mass, chanting royalist slogans, moving towards them. Barras rides over, dressed in glittering uniform with ostrich plumes in his hat nodding in the breeze as he orders Bonaparte --

BARRAS

Only fire blank case to begin with.

The mob is getting closer; it includes many National Guardsmen with muskets as well as civilians armed with pikes.

BONAPARTE

People are not so easily fooled, General. The moment they look around and see there's no blood, they will become twice as bold -- and I will be forced to kill ten times as many.

While Bonaparte speaks, we see the Mob advancing: slow, sullen, primed as dry tinder and distinctly menacing...

BONAPARTE

Grapeshot first, then blanks. When the mob see blood and begin to run with their backs to us -- that's the time to use blanks.

Shots are FIRED -- it's unclear where from. The Mob keep on coming. Murat rides over...

MURAT

There's another section advancing across the river!

Barras is nervous -- the Mob are getting heated -- shouts and jeers -- stones are thrown...

BONAPARTE

Do I have your permission to open fire?

(Barras prevaricates)

Well, General? Now is the moment!

BARRAS

I... I must consult with my fellow directors...

BONAPARTE

Fortune is a woman, General. Lose the moment and she is gone. The mob are almost upon us...

BARRAS

I -- I cannot give such an order...

BONAPARTE

Then let me give it... now!

Barras looks helpless - slowly nods his plumed head - and Bonaparte barks out the order - "Fire!"

The Carnage that follows is as swift as it is brutal: canons sweep the Rue St Honoré, belching grapeshot - small bits of shrapnel that mow down the first few rows. Those behind look utterly stunned. They stumble forward. Barras can scarcely watch as Bonaparte orders another volley of grapeshot. Another row falls - but the ones behind have begun to panic. In a perceptible wave, the panic spreads - the mob turns and flees... and the battle for Paris is over.

30 INT. ARTILLERY ROOM - PARIS - <1795> - DAY

Bonaparte paces up and down a crowded barrack room, where swords and other weapons are being turned in. His brother Louis helps Murat and others with the sorting and labeling of weapons. A young officer enters. It is the young Bertrand we know from St Helena.

BERTRAND

Excuse me, Citizen General, but there's a young man who wishes to speak with you.

Bonaparte turns to see a shy, fresh-faced boy of 14: EUGENE.

EUGENE

I... was told to present this to Citizen General Bonaparte.

Eugène hands him a docket. Bonaparte glances at it, then back at the boy.

BONAPARTE

How old are you, Citizen...?

EUGENE

Fourteen, sir.

BONAPARTE

All unauthorized weapons are to be turned in. Why should I make an exception of you, Citizen Beauharnais?

EUGENE

It was my father's sword, sir. It is all I have of his.

Bonaparte looks at him a moment, then hands the docket to Louis, who hurries off. Murat beckons Bonaparte to one side.

MURAT

His father was an aristocrat,
General.

Murat makes a throat-cutting gesture.

BONAPARTE

That is no reason to punish his
son. A great Republic must be open
to all talents, Murat... whether
they be the sons of fishmongers,
inn-keepers...

(to Eugene, smiling)

... even aristocrats.

Louis has returned with a magnificent court sword. Bonaparte takes the sword and examines the blade. "Made in Birmingham, England." He presents it to Eugène, who takes it, kisses it, then raises his eyes to Bonaparte.

NAPOLEON

Do not betray my trust.

EUGENE

I give you my word, sir - I swear I
shall never put my father's sword
to any shameful purpose.

Bonaparte looks at him, nods, then turns away - as always when confronted by displays of emotion.

31 EXT. TALLIEN'S HOUSE - PARIS - <1795> - NIGHT

Bonaparte steps from a private carriage, accompanied by Louis, both smartly dressed for the first time.

There is a good deal of gaiety coming from within a quaintly-thatched house on the corner.

32 INT. TALLIEN'S HOUSE - PARIS - <1795> - NIGHT

A "Victims' Ball" is under way, many of the guests wearing thin scarlet ribbons around their necks to simulate the guillotine's clean cut. The large room is done up to look like a Grecian temple, and the event is presided over by Paris's reigning beauty, Madame Thérèse TALLIEN (28). All the women wear light, revealing gowns while the men are dressed like peacocks.

Bonaparte is watching, as yet unannounced - "looking like a Talapouche Indian with jet black hair hung over both ears", his expression as stern as his uniform. Louis stands in his shadow. Barras swans over, ornately dressed as ever.

BARRAS

Strictly speaking, we shouldn't let you in at all, General - not without a death certificate to prove you had at least one member of your family sent to the guillotine... but in view of our great victory we will overlook it.

He takes Bonaparte by the arm and introduces him to Madame Tallien, who is talking to the celebrated actor TALMA (32).

BARRAS

Madame Tallien... allow me to introduce General Bonaparte...

TALLIEN

Ah-hah... the hero himself.

Madame Tallien sizes up Bonaparte. He stands awkwardly, gauche and ill-at-ease in this aristocratic gathering. His hostess gives a faintly bemused smile.

TALLIEN

Good evening, General - delighted you could spare the time.

BONAPARTE

Good evening, Citizeness. This is my brother Louis.

TALMA

Bonaparte! I left you tickets at the stage door, but you never arrived. I know you've had a lot on your hands, but to have missed my Caesar...!

BARRAS

I didn't know you knew one another?

TALMA

I make it my business to know everyone remarkable...

(to Bonaparte)

That was quite a performance you gave the other night, my friend - I found myself playing to an empty house!

Laughter, although Bonaparte remains painfully gauche.

TALMA

And how has your brother been looking after you, young Louis? Any promotion?

LOUIS
 (proudly)
 The General has made me his ADC.

TALMA
 (sotto voce)
 Keep it in the family, eh?

Later, and a magnificent dinner is in progress. Bonaparte sits between Talma's wife and the hauntingly beautiful JULIETTE Récamier (18). He eats hurriedly, his manners being more suited to an army mess than a banquet at the most sophisticated salon in Paris. Juliette smiles with a faintly disparaging air.

JULIETTE
 Hurrying off to fight another battle, General?

BONAPARTE
 (mouth full)
 Even when I have nothing to do, I always feel that time is fleeting... that I don't have a moment to lose...

Bonaparte's wine glass has been refilled. He adds water, to Juliette's veiled amusement and disdain. Beyond them, the nonchalant Charles de TALLEYRAND (41) is talking to Talma:

TALLEYRAND
 Your interpretation of Caesar was quite the finest I've ever seen. The moment you appeared, you were no longer Talma but the Emperor himself!

TALMA
 It's all in the mind, my dear Citizen. Believe you are Caesar and lo, you are Caesar. The rest is just a matter of letting the words flow, preferably in the correct order.

Laughter. Then a different laugh – the gay, abandoned laugh we heard from the woman who lost her shoe climbing into her carriage. Bonaparte turns and sees ROSE, sitting further along the table with Barras on her right. She wears her hair à la guillotine, with a thin red satin ribbon around her throat. Enthralling, slender, wayward, she has a faintly foreign air. A dashing young HUSSAR in sky-blue uniform is sitting on her left, whispering in her ear.

Bonaparte gazes at her – she catches his eye – smiles – but continues listening to the Hussar.

She laughs out loud - again catches Bonaparte's eye - then whispers in the Hussar's ear, provoking such a gale of laughter from her dashing companion that he has to clutch his hand to his mouth for fear of choking. Barras (who has been flirting with Mme Tallien on his right) leans behind Rose and smacks the Hussar on the back, kissing Rose's neck as he does so.

FOUCHE

Would you not agree, General?
 (Bonaparte glances up)
 That we should invade England
 before England invades us?

BONAPARTE

Our navy is no match for hers. The best way to cripple England is to seize Egypt, thereby cutting off her trade route with India. England is a nation of shopkeepers - *Sono mercanti*, as Paoli used to say...

Bonaparte glances back to see that Rose - has gone! He quickly abandons his seat and hurries off.

BARRAS

I hear you are giving lessons in etiquette, Talma. Perhaps you might like to coach our young friend?

Talma smiles, as if to say "He needs no lessons from me."

33 INT. TALLIEN'S COTTAGE - HALL - <1795> - DAY

Bonaparte enters the hall just as Rose closes the door on the Hussar. He would perhaps duck out of sight were it not that Rose is now looking at him. A beat, then she laughs -

ROSE

The stories Captain Charles was telling me - thank goodness General Barras didn't hear... or do you suppose he did?

Her voice is both silky and husky, with a slight trace of Creole - just as Bonaparte retains a trace of Corsican. She takes him by the hand...

ROSE

I've been wanting to speak to you all evening, General Bonaparte.

BONAPARTE

So have I...

Rose laughs at his misunderstanding.

ROSE

I mean to thank you for the kindness you showed to my son... Eugène. You allowed him to keep his father's sword. I am his mother - Rose Beauharnais. You needn't look so surprised... I have a daughter too. Hortense. She attends the same school as your sister Caroline. So you see, I already know a good deal about you.

Leading him by the hand, they walk slowly through the hall toward the garden verandah.

BONAPARTE

What else do you know?

ROSE

Well... I know you're from Corsica, which gives us something in common - we are both foreigners.

BONAPARTE

You are from Martinique...

ROSE

So you too have your spies?

BONAPARTE

Your place of birth was written on your son's application...

ROSE

You have a remarkable memory.

BONAPARTE

Yes I do. Your husband...

ROSE

... my late husband...

BONAPARTE

... was General Alexandre de Beauharnais?

Rose moves through into the garden...

34 EXT. TALLIEN'S GARDEN - PARIS - <1795> - NIGHT

... followed by her young and adoring admirer.

ROSE

It was not the done thing to show fear on the way to the scaffold. My husband was a fool, but at least he was brave.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I only had to feel my nail against my neck to start weeping. I was to be executed the very next day... and then suddenly - pfff! - Robespierre was gone, the Terror was over and I was free. But you have faced death many times, General. Barras tells me you were so fearless at Toulon that he was bet a thousand francs you wouldn't see Paris again.

BONAPARTE

Does Barras tell you everything?

ROSE

Only what he knows I'll repeat. He says you are a soldier of rare promise and ability...

BONAPARTE

Then why will he not give me command of the Army? If the Austrians are not driven out of Italy, they will invade France... and I am the only one who can stop them.

ROSE

You seem... rather young for such high command...

BONAPARTE

Was I too young to save Paris?

ROSE

Forgive me, General... I know nothing about warfare... but is there not a difference between quelling a riot and defeating the largest empire in Europe?

BONAPARTE

No. As with a riot, as with war - the principles do not change. Fire must be concentrated at one point, and as soon as the breach is made, the equilibrium is broken and the rest is nothing. I have planned every last detail... There's nothing in the military I cannot do for myself. If there's no one to make gunpowder, I know how to make it. Gun carriages - I know how to construct them, canons - I know how to fire them....

Rose turns to him, interrupting suddenly -

ROSE

Would you take Eugène with you? I mean if Barras were to give you command? As one of your ADCs? He has so much of his father's courage – and so little of his mother's cowardice...

(eyes fill with tears)

I'm sorry, General – I do apologize. My children's future is my one great concern. I only wanted to thank you for your kindness... and look at me – what can you think of me?

Bonaparte holds her by the shoulders – stares into her eyes.

BONAPARTE

I think you should marry me.

She looks at him, stunned. Then laughs...

ROSE

Why you barely know my name!

BONAPARTE

Your name is Josephine.

ROSE

(laughs)

You see? My name is Rose...

BONAPARTE

You are as quick to tears as my brother Joseph... and so I shall call you Josephine...

He takes her in his arms, pressing himself a little too gallantly against Josephine's breasts.

ROSE

But...

BONAPARTE

When I have made up my mind about something, it is useless to resist. Marry me... and I will become a father to Eugene and Hortense – you need never fear for their future again.

He kisses her hand, her arm... finally her lips. Josephine pulls back, looks deep into his eyes.

JOSEPHINE

I admire your – courage – General...

JOSEPHINE (CONT'D)
 but your energy overwhelms me. I
 need time to think...

He pulls her to him, showering her with kisses...

BONAPARTE (V/O)
 Ah, Josephine... I awake full of
 you! The memory of our intoxicating
 evening gives my senses no rest!
 Sweet and incomparable Josephine –
 what strange effect have you had on
 my heart?

35 INT. JOSEPH'S HOUSE – PARIS – <1796> – DAY

Bonaparte bursts into Joseph's modest rooms, followed by
 Louis...

BONAPARTE
 Joseph! I can't find my birth
 certificate – lend me yours!

JOSEPH is sitting at his desk, writing. His wife JULIE is
 feeding their baby daughter in the background. The room is
 full of books, not scattered as in Bonaparte's garret, but
 neatly arranged on shelves.

JOSEPH
 Whatever for?

BONAPARTE
 I can't be married without a birth
 certificate – mine's back home in
 Corsica – give me yours – quick!

JOSEPH
 Married?! To whom??

Bonaparte pulls out a little oval portrait – –

BONAPARTE
 Lately the widow of Alexandre de
 Beauharnais... and about to become
 Josephine Bonaparte...
 (kisses it rapturously)
 Quick – I'm already two hours late!

Joseph looks appalled... he's found the birth certificate but
 withholds it...

JOSEPH
 The widow Beauharnais? But she's
 Barras's mistress – everyone knows
 that!

BONAPARTE

Not any more. From tonight she is my wife... and woe to anyone who tries to come between us.

JOSEPH

Have you written to Mamma about this?

BONAPARTE

Of course not - she'd only disapprove.

JOSEPH

Don't do this, brother...

BONAPARTE

I love her, Joseph. I love her!

JOSEPH

But her reputation is notorious - you must have heard the gossip...?

BONAPARTE

I have never listened to gossip - I listen to my heart - but the heart I have sought so hard to master is no longer mine... I cannot live without her.

JOSEPH

But why the hurry...

BONAPARTE

Barras has given me command of the Army of Italy...

JOSEPH

(in Italian)

Nabulio! This is wonderful news!

Joseph impulsively embraces his brother... whereupon Bonaparte snatches the certificate from his hand, kisses him and races off, blowing Julie a kiss on the way.

36 EXT. REGISTRAR'S HOUSE - PARIS - <1796> - DAY

Bonaparte leaps from a carriage, followed by Louis -

BONAPARTE (V/O)

By what magic art did you learn to so captivate all of me? To absorb all of me into your self? You are a cannibal!

37 INT. REGISTRAR'S OFFICE - <1796> - DAY

... and into the Registrar's office, where Josephine and her two children, Eugène and his pretty young sister HORTENSE (13) have been waiting two hours, as has Barras, acting as a witness in a triple-plumed velvet hat. The Registrar is hurriedly awoken and the brief ceremony is under way...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Ah, Josephine - wife that I adore!
 "He lived for Josephine!" - There
 is my epitaph!

Despite being hours late, Bonaparte is impatient, harrying the one-legged Registrar to get on with it - "Marry us quickly!" Without distracting from the pace, we may briefly register that Louis is attracted to Hortense, though the compliment is not returned. Eugène is smartly dressed in his new uniform, proudly wearing his father's sword.

Josephine seems both amused, yet mildly apprehensive at Bonaparte's passionate gaze as the wedding vows are exchanged - "Do you, Citizen General Bonaparte, consent to take Madame Beauharnais here present as your lawful wedded wife?" The VOICE of Barras superimposes, in his official capacity of high political office.

BARRAS (V/O)

By the power invested in me by the Directory of France, I hereby appoint you, Citizen Bonaparte, as General of the Army of Italy. Your orders are to cross the Alps, drive the Austrians and their allies out of Italy, and not to conclude peace until you have occupied Milan.

Now man and wife, Bonaparte slips a simple gold necklace around Josephine's neck. It is engraved with the words "To Destiny". She laughs...

38 EXT. RUE CHANTEREINE - PARIS - <1796> - NIGHT

A carriage pulls up outside a house covered in creepers and wild roses. Josephine and Bonaparte pile out. It is one of the rare occasions when he has had too much to drink...

BARRAS (V/O)

The General-in-Chief must bear in mind at all times that the Army cannot be funded by the Directory. It must be entirely self-sufficient, and live off the lands of the enemy to the full extent of the available resources.

39 INT. HALL/BEDROOM - CHEZ JOSEPHINE - <1796> - NIGHT

Josephine leads Bonaparte by the hand into a bedroom filled with flowers. Bonaparte looks about him in astonishment. The garden effect is enhanced by the fact that the walls and ceiling are completely hung with mirrors. Josephine loosens her dress and flops onto a large bed, lying like a sacrificial virgin. Bonaparte takes off his jacket - his shoes - the passionate young lover advances -

- and is about to fling himself into action when a vicious little pug-dog leaps out from nowhere and nearly takes his hand off. Josephine's laughter is such that she is in need of her smelling salts.

JOSEPHINE

There's nothing for it but to make peace with Fortuné. He would rather die than leave my side...

BONAPARTE

So would I...

JOSEPHINE

Ah, but you did not share my bed in prison. You did not carry messages to my children hidden under your collar!

BONAPARTE

But I leave for the South in the morning!

JOSEPHINE

I know, it's tragic, but there it is. A promise is a promise, and I promised Fortuné that if ever I found freedom, he should have the privilege of sleeping on my bed for the rest of his life. The only solution is to make him your ally.

Bonaparte tries the softly-softly approach - and the dog tries to take a lump out of his leg. Josephine convulses with laughter. Bonaparte stares at her - then turns on the dog with one word of harsh command - "Out!"... whereupon Fortuné retires sheepishly to a corner of the bed. Now Josephine is all his.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Away from you, my one and only Josephine, there is no pleasure in life - away from you, the world is a desert in which I'm all alone...

40 EXT. CARRIAGE & COUNTRYSIDE - <1796> - DAY

Two carriages tear along a narrow country road, heading south and flanked by Chasseurs from the National Guard (who at all times form Bonaparte's personal body-guard).

BONAPARTE (V/O)

You are a thief my darling
Josephine - you've robbed me of my
heart, no - not only my heart but
all my thoughts and dreams - for
now I can think only, only of you.

41 INT. CARRIAGE - TRAVELLING - <1796> - DAY

Bonaparte is huddled in the corner, writing a letter - with some difficulty as his hand is bandaged, and the carriage is rocking to and fro. Sitting opposite are Louis, Murat and Eugène, proudly wearing his new uniform. Next to him sits his Chief-of-Staff, BERTHIER (43). He has a big, ungainly head, frizzy hair and a mind like a filing-cabinet.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

I strive to be near you, yet every
moment carries me further away. The
day when I lose your heart, Nature
will lose all her warmth... but I
cannot go on! My soul is so deeply
sad, and I experience all the
feelings of a drowning man...

42 EXT. CARRIAGE - TRAVELLING - <1796> - DAY

Bonaparte hands the letter out of the carriage window to a waiting Dispatch Rider galloping alongside...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

My darling, I'm raving - forgive
me! Remember me to Barras, and my
love to Hortense. Eugène looks very
smart and handsome... almost as
handsome as his mother. I kiss your
heart, and then a little lower
down, and then lower...

The Rider wheels about and gallops off in the opposite direction as Bonaparte and his escort ride on south.

43 EXT. ARMY CAMP - NICE - <1796> - NIGHT

It's pissing rain and mud when Bonaparte arrives with his entourage. By brief flashes of lightning does he first glimpse his army: a collection of half-clothed, half-starved soldiers, most without shelter, sleeping on filthy straw.

The tents are patched and torn, and were it not for a few battered muskets, these soldiers might be prisoners-of-war. Like Eugène, many are 14.

Bonaparte is escorted by his aides – Berthier, Murat, Louis, Eugène – hurrying to get out of the torrential rain. Bonaparte spots a soldier with a wounded leg, lying in the mud. He walks over, rain pouring off his hat.

BONAPARTE

When was that leg last dressed,
comrade?

WOUNDED SOLDIER

About the time you was learning how
to walk.

He laughs with the others – a scornful, jeering laugh.

MURAT

Watch your tongue, citizen. You are
speaking to your new Commander-in-
Chief.

Our wounded friend is much amused at this intelligence. With the help of a comrade (LEON) he raises himself up to his full height – several inches taller than Bonaparte.

BONAPARTE

Major Larrey!

A young officer – Jean-Dominique LARREY (27)– comes forward.

BONAPARTE

Major Larrey is a qualified
surgeon.

SOLDIER

No, sir – please sir – don't let
him take off my leg sir!

BONAPARTE

Major Larrey, I want you to carry
out a full inspection of this
entire army. Draw up a list of the
medical supplies you need, and by
tomorrow night you will have them.

(to the soldiers)

You will also have food – all of
you – and decent boots – and then –
and only then – will I lead you to
victory!

The patriotic call to arms does not go down too well. A few muttered cheers, but most are too cynical to believe him. He also looks rather comical, with the rain pouring off his hat as though from gargoyle spouts. Murat, whose long black curls are drenched, tugs at Bonaparte's arm...

MURAT

Later, General – let's get inside
before we have to swim for it...

They head for the only adequate tent in sight, guarded by
National Guardsmen.

44 INT. GENERAL'S TENT – NICE – <1796> – DAY

Bonaparte points at a wall map, showing that the French
(blue) occupy the foothills to the snowy Alps. Beyond lie the
green plains of Italy to the east, where the Austrians (red)
are poised to strike westwards into France.

BONAPARTE

... We will then strike north east,
break up the centre of the enemy at
Montenotte, split the allies, and
throw the Austrians back on Milan.

Bonaparte's audience: three Generals in their early 40s –
among them AUGEREAU – a huge, gutter-snipe adventurer, and
MASSENA – a thin, wiry ex-smuggler. Their indignance at being
briefed by this young whippersnapper is palpable.

AUGEREAU

Now why didn't we think of that?!
(to Bonaparte)
And how are my men to cross the
Alps without boots? Or did you
remember to bring elephants?

BONAPARTE

We are not going to cross the Alps,
General Augereau. We are going to
walk round them.

This takes Augereau by surprise – no one thought of that.

BONAPARTE

We will have eighteen thousand
pairs of boots within the week, and
enough corn and oats to last three
months.

Other senior officers enter the tent, curious to see their
new Commander-in-Chief. Among them, Jean LANNES – the same
age as Bonaparte, blond, brave and handsome before he is
ultimately disfigured by wounds. Like Augereau, his vast
repertoire of swear words is legendary. But for now he says
nothing, merely sizing up the new arrivals.

MASSENA

Barras is suddenly in credit?

BONAPARTE

I raised a loan with the Genoese.

AUGEREAU

You'd have to raise a loan with the Pope to pay me what I'm owed!

A cheery laugh from Nicholas OUDINOT (28), a pug-faced, roistering cavalryman whose face bears several scars.

BONAPARTE

You will all be paid...

AUGEREAU

With worthless bits of paper?

BONAPARTE

In gold.

MASSENA

The only gold left in Paris is in Barras's private bank...

BONAPARTE

When the Austrians has tasted what I have in store for them, they will meet me in Milan, and – on behalf of France – I will exact payment from them, in gold, for all the trouble they have caused. If they refuse, I will march to Vienna and take it from the Emperor Francis himself. From this gold you will all be paid what you are owed.

The Generals chew on this – as do the young officers who have joined them. They are all of Bonaparte's age and generation, and are more in tune with his spirit.

AUGEREAU

The men are going to need more than promises...

BONAPARTE

I will give them more. I may be young, but when it comes to knowing a soldier's heart, I am an old man. A soldier does not fight for a few sous a day, or some petty distinction. He is not a machine to be put in motion. You must speak to a man's soul in order to galvanize him into action – and that can only be done by illuminating his imagination...

45 EXT. ROCKS & CLIFF – <1796> – DAY

Bonaparte stands on a cliff, addressing his army of ragged, hollow-eyed soldiers. Now, at last, he is in his element.

BONAPARTE

Soldiers, you are naked and starving! The Government owes you everything and gives you nothing! For six months you have been waiting, and your patience has been admirable, but now I have come, charged with the sacred command of saving our Republic from her enemies! Follow me, and I will lead you into the most fertile lands in the world! Great cities will be in our power with unimagined riches...

The promise of riches draws a cheer of enthusiasm, particularly from Léon and his comrades. As Bonaparte continues, the soldiers gradually fall beneath his spell, his speech CROSS-FADING with his letters to Josephine...

BONAPARTE

But greater than riches, there is the sacred fire of glory to be won! We will liberate the Italian people from their Austrian bondage...

(cross-fading to
Josephine, V/O)

Since leaving you I have been constantly sad. Your kisses and tears haunt my mind. Think of me, and write to me – often! The happiness of my life is to be with my gentle Josephine – away from you I cease to exist!

46 EXT. GULF OF GENOA – <1796> – DAY/NIGHT

The visuals seem to indicate the precise opposite, for Bonaparte is now "the poet in action" – leading his ragged army with lightning speed. They skirt the Alps along the rocky coastline of the Gulf of Genoa, then split into three: two divisions continuing along the coast while the third – led by Bonaparte with Murat and Lannes – head inland...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

I implore you, show me your faults!

Be less beautiful, less tender, less kind, less good – above all, never be jealous and never weep – your tears blind my reason and scorch my blood!

47 EXT. ALPINE PASS - <1796> - DAY/NIGHT

Bonaparte, Murat and Lannes lead their men up a snowy alpine pass - canon barrels are mounted on tree-trunks sawn in two while teams of men haul gun carriages up the steep mountain goat tracks, mules hauling baggage wagons, children dragging bayonets on sledges... and everywhere at once is Bonaparte - exhorting, encouraging, threatening, inspiring...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

No word from you yet, my adorable Josephine. I can live without food and sleep, but all my efforts would be meaningless if I thought you did not love me...

48 EXT. ITALIAN FOOTHILLS - <1796> - DAY/NIGHT

The army scale a snowy ridge and catch their first sight of "the most fertile plains in the world" on the far side.

Bonaparte is up a tree, squinting through his spy-glass. In the far distance: the rear of the Austrian army, marching away in stiff formation.

Bonaparte swings down from the tree and onto his horse, takes out his oval portrait of Josephine, kisses it, then gives the signal to Lannes - and down they sweep, wild as Cossacks - bandits from the mountains, sliding down on cuirassiers' breastplates and descending on the antique armies of Austria. Their rout is as bloody as it is swift.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Soldiers! In fifteen days you have won six victories, seized 21 flags, and conquered the richest part of Italy!

The enemy take flight, pursued by Bonaparte, Lannes, and Murat's cavalry, leaving Surgeon Larrey and a handful of volunteers with stretchers to tend to the wounded, irrespective of nationality. For most they arrive too late.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

You have won battles without canon, crossed rivers without bridges, made forced marches without boots, bivouacked without brandy and slept without bread! But glory can only be won where there is hardship and danger, and you, my soldiers, are covered in glory!

49 EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - ITALY - <1796> - NIGHT

Bonaparte sits alone by a camp fire, staring into the flames and humming out of tune while Murat and Lannes shoot out candles with pistols.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Three days without a letter from you. Today, alone with the thoughts, the work, the writing, the planning, the men and their tedious cackling, and I don't even have a note from you to place on my hungry heart...

He takes out her portrait and kisses it. Lannes spots him, nudges Murat. They both grin at their General's love-lorn state. Bonaparte gazes up at the night sky...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Ah, Josephine - what is the future? What is the past? What are we? What is this magic fluid that envelops us and hides from us what we most need to know? We are born, we live, we die, surrounded by wonder and astonishment! How I pity the man who has never been moved by the hidden forces of nature!

Murat shoots out two candles simultaneously.

50 EXT. ARCOLA BRIDGE - ITALY - <1796> - DUSK/NIGHT/DAWN

They're on the march again - a forced march in which files of soldiers tramp eight abreast, their arms linked, allowing some to sleep while carried by the others. They reach a bluff overlooking a swampy river spanned by a wooden bridge. The lights of the enemy camp lie on the far side.

Bonaparte formulates a plan, but Murat and Lannes think him mad. We do not hear the words distinctly, but it's clear they want him to blow up the bridge, for which Bertrand is on hand. Bonaparte spurns their advice, scribbles out an order and hands it to Eugène, who rides off into the night.

Day breaks, and the enemy is now massing at the bridgehead, threatening to cross. Bonaparte scans the far bank further down stream. Where the hell is Augereau??

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Have you forgotten me already? Ah, my adorable Josephine - I live only for you! Your kisses and tears haunt my mind - your charms set a bright and burning flame blazing in my heart and in my senses!

The Austrians have almost reached the eastern bridgehead. Bonaparte is impatient. He wants to storm the bridge.

Then suddenly there's Augereau on the far side of the river, advancing at speed to draw off the enemy. But only half the Austrian divisions are fooled – the others are now swarming onto the bridge...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Think of me, live for me adorable
Josephine, as I live for you! One
of these nights your door will
crash open, and there'll I'll be!
Ah, Josephine – never has a woman
been loved with more devotion,
fire, and tenderness!

The French are starting to fall back – Bonaparte sees their growing panic – and the tricolour flag of the Republic, held aloft by the standard bearer. He takes out his portrait of Josephine, kisses it, then suddenly seizes the flag, and before Lannes can stop him, he is on his horse and riding towards the bridge, the tricolour billowing behind...

BONAPARTE

He who loves me will follow me!

The army gape in astonishment – then, with a cry from Lannes, they pour down behind him. Bonaparte reaches the western bridgehead, but as he starts to cross, a canon ball kills his horse beneath him and he is flung into the black swamp. Louis and Eugène race to his rescue, dragging him to safety as the Austrians are driven back from the bridge by Lannes and his men – into the jaws of Augereau and Massena.

The battle over, Bonaparte is lifted in triumph by his soldiers – even Augereau and Massena are in awe.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

To the Directory of the French
Republic. Milan is ours! My men
have moved as swiftly as my
thoughts – the Austrian army has
vanished like a dream, and Italy is
at peace...

Well, not exactly. While many welcome the French as liberators, many more regard them as a threat to their Catholic faith, particularly villagers and peasants.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

I intend to grant an armistice in
return for 25 million in gold, five
million in food, as well as 350
paintings, statues and other works
of art for our new Museum in
Paris...

(to Josephine)

BONAPARTE (V/O) (CONT'D)

I don't know why, but since this morning I have been happier. I have a presentiment that you have left Paris to come here and that idea fills me with such joy that I am quite out of my senses! I am dying to see how you carry children - it should give you a majestic air. You must not fall ill, that's the main thing. No, sweet love, you will come here - you will give birth to a little child as pretty as his mother, who will love you like his father, and, when you are old, when you're a hundred, he will be your consolation and your joy. But between now and then watch out that you don't love him more than you do me. I begin already to be jealous. Adio, mio dolce amor, adieu!

51 EXT. MILAN CATHEDRAL - ITALY - <1796> - DAY

Bonaparte stands before the great cathedral of Milan, proclaiming to an enthusiastic crowd of Italian students...

BONAPARTE

People of Italy, we have come as your liberators! We have broken your chains of bondage! All men are equal in the eyes of the Republic - Catholics, Protestants, Muslims - you are all Frenchmen!

52 EXT. MILAN STREETS - ITALY - <1796> - DAY

Bonaparte and his entourage tour the streets at dusk. He notices an old man in a long coat scuttling along, a yellow star of David pinned to his lapel.

BONAPARTE

Stop that man!

The old man is immediately grabbed by willing hands. Bonaparte walks up to him, points at the yellow star.

BONAPARTE

What's that mean?

LANNES

Means he's a Jew -

ITALIAN

- and has to be back in the ghetto by sundown - or else!

BONAPARTE

Oh really?

Bonaparte leans forward - suddenly rips off the star from the man's coat and holds it up.

BONAPARTE

From this moment on, every Jew is a Frenchman!

The entourage look astonished. Lannes whispers to him -

MASSENA

Is that wise, sire?

BONAPARTE

Why ever not? They have talent - they have money -- what more could France want?

53 EXT. MILAN GHETTO - ITALY - <1796> - DAY

Jews suddenly find themselves freed from their ghettos, their Stars of David - and frequently their belongings to boot.

With Bonaparte out of sight, Augereau and Massena supervise the loading of their booty wagons - gold plate, gemstones and furs...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

Despite repeated orders, looting still persists. Pillage annihilates everything, even the army that practices it.

54 EXT. VILLAGE CHURCH - ITALY - <1796> - DAY

BONAPARTE (V/O)

I have therefore ordered that any soldier of whatsoever rank who is caught in the act will be shot.

Two soldiers, caught stealing a chalice from a church, are dragged outside and shot.

55 INT. GALLERY - ITALY - <1796> - DAY

Less brutal is the removal of paintings from the mansion of a wealthy cardinal, supervised by DENON (48, future curator of the Louvre). Titian, Raphael, Rembrandt, Michelangelo - Bonaparte makes his personal selection, which are then noted down before being crated for shipment to Paris.

BONAPARTE (V/O)

To the Directory of the Republic: I am sending you 20 paintings by the greatest masters, Titian, Raphael and Michelangelo. I owe you special thanks for your attentions to my wife. I love her madly. I am also sending you a complete collection of snakes which Monge found, to be added to our natural history specimens.

56 EXT. VILLAGE & CHURCH - <1796> - DAY

Although pillage remains a problem, rape is less frequent since French charm is normally all that is required. But while his officers and soldiers indulge themselves in the fruits of victory, Bonaparte remains alone. He takes out Josephine's portrait - and sees to his deep consternation that the glass has cracked across her face.

BONAPARTE

(V/O, to Josephine)

I told Joseph to bring you four weeks ago - I even sent Murat to escort you, but still you do not come! Have you a lover? Have you taken up with some stripling of nineteen?

(proclamation)

A misguided mob with no means of defense has committed acts of violence against the soldiers who have liberated you. Those who do not lay down their arms within 24 hours will be treated as rebels and shot, and their villages burned...

(to Josephine)

I went to Tortona to await your arrival. I waited every day, in vain.

In a small village square, Italian men and boys are lined up against the church wall and mowed down with grapeshot. Louis and Eugène flinch in horror as the village is set ablaze.

57 INT. MILAN PALACE - ITALY - <1796> - DAY

A magnificent ball is in progress. Bonaparte's officers are dressed in fine new uniforms, mingling with Italian aristocrats and visiting diplomats from various courts of Europe, including several cardinals from the Vatican. Lannes is as glamorous on the dance-floor as he is in battle, but in general the French are regarded with veiled disdain by Milan's old regime.

Among familiar faces are Berthier, Louis, Bertrand, Augereau – who dances like a wild pirate – and Eugène, anxiously awaiting his mother.

Bonaparte is wearing a magnificent deep blue coat, trimmed with embroidered gold, with a high red collar and the flag of the Republic tied in a sash around his waist. He is standing with the tall, debonair TALLEYRAND, talking to a Cardinal Emissary in red robes.

BONAPARTE

Please convey my respects to His Holiness. Assure him that we pose no threat to his Papal States – providing he withdraws his support from Austria.

The Papal Emissary bows graciously and backs away.

BONAPARTE

What a wily old fox the Pope is.

TALLEYRAND

Indeed so, General – but he must be treated with caution. France may have rid herself of the church and her calendar, but to the faithful, the Pope is still their spiritual leader – and uses his influence accordingly.

BONAPARTE

I only wish I had him on our side.

Bonaparte's mother LETIZIA approaches: now in her late 40s, she is still strikingly beautiful, but has acquired a certain matriarchal status. She has dressed in black since her husband's death, and will continue to do so for the rest of her life. Her fingers frequently clasp a gold cross – her only jewellery – and the starkness of her dress is in arresting contrast to the ostentation about her.

Her brood are never very far away, her favourite being LUCIEN (formerly Luciano, now 21) – Bonaparte's younger brother. Being short-sighted, Lucien wears glasses and looks like the young Trotsky. Judging from his aloofness from the present proceedings, we may judge that his political opinion is not dissimilar. The youngest Bonaparte – JEROME ("Fifi", 11) is pestering him for a piggy-back...

Hovering nearby are Bonaparte's three sisters: ELISA (18), hard, calculating, the most like their brother, which may explain why he likes her the least. His favourite is the ravishing, mad-cap PAULINE (16), who reminds us a little of Betsy, while his younger sister CAROLINE (15) combines Pauline's beauty with Elisa's shrewd ambition. Bonaparte treats his mother with a respect accorded few.

LETIZIA

I go to my bed, Nabulio... we leave for Corsica at dawn – and Fifi should have been asleep an hour ago.

FIFI

I'm not tired! Don't let Mamma send me to bed, Nabulio!

BONAPARTE

Mamma – be patient...

LUCIEN

We have been patient all week.

BONAPARTE

Berthier says she'll be here within the hour. Please, Mamma – I so want you to meet her...

PAULINE

Well I want to dance. Nabulio?

BONAPARTE

Paulette... you know I don't dance.

She cuddles up to him, whispering in her soft Corsican accent. Letizia pretends not to hear, Lucien is too short-sighted to notice, but Elisa is shocked – reproving her in Corsican. Pauline pouts... until Lannes presents himself.

LANNES

May I have the pleasure, Mam'selle Pauline? That is – with the General's permission...?

PAULINE

We don't need his permission. Lombardy is free country now – Nabulio said so.

Bonaparte nods to Lannes – "be my guest" – and off they go. He turns to Lucien, escorting him away from the clan.

BONAPARTE

If you are planning to stay in Corsica with Mamma, I could ask Barras to find you a post with the army there...

LUCIEN

Thank you, but I have my own plans. I want no favours from men like Barras – besides, I prefer the debating chamber to battlefields.

BONAPARTE

You use too many words and not enough ideas, Lucien. You indulge in too much rhetoric. If you start voicing your radical Jacobin views in Paris, Barras will have you behind bars – or worse.

LUCIEN

You are no safer than I am, brother. Barras is afraid of you. The whole rotten government is afraid of you, and if you were to expose the corruption that....

BONAPARTE

Not here, Lucien – not now...

LUCIEN

What happened to all the gold you sent back to Paris? The treasury is as empty as the day you left...

BONAPARTE

Patience, my brother... the pear is not yet ripe.

A sudden disturbance – the orchestra stops playing – a familiar laugh – and in swans Josephine, looking utterly radiant in a long, low-cut muslin dress that shows off her breasts to maximum advantage and causes shock waves among the guests. She is followed by her travelling companions – Joseph, Murat, and the young Hussar in the blue uniform – Captain Charles. The stunned silence is followed by a loud round of applause from the French as Bonaparte runs to her.

BONAPARTE

Josephine...!

He is about to embrace her when Fortuné growls from under her cloak. Josephine laughs, handing her pugster to Captain Charles – whereupon Bonaparte showers her with kisses, to her embarrassment, to French amusement, and to Letizia's shocked disdain. Letizia is about to walk out when Bonaparte hurries up to her, gripping her hand...

BONAPARTE

Mamma... my wife... Josephine...

Josephine extends a gloved hand to Letizia.

JOSEPHINE

How pleasant to meet you... Madame Bonaparte. You must be so proud of your son.

Letizia touches her cross. Compared to her widow's weeds, Josephine's dress is the epitome of decadence, and Letizia treats her with icy politeness.

LETIZIA

I am proud of all my children,
Madame. Nabulio tells me that you
too are a widow? I offer you my
condolences.

She smiles, then turns and leaves, escorted by Lucien and Elisa. The awkward moment is broken as Eugène comes running up, kissing his mother in greeting.

MURAT

General, may I have the honour of
dancing with your sister Caroline?

CAROLINE

Oh yes please!

Bonaparte nods, preoccupied, and Murat sweeps Caroline onto the ballroom floor. It is love at first sight. Bonaparte turns to Joseph.

BONAPARTE

What kept you in Paris so long?

JOSEPH

Well... we had to wait for our
passports – and Barras wouldn't let
your wife leave until you'd taken
Milan...

(quickly changing subject)

Barras has appointed me to our
Embassy in Genoa... thanks to you
of course. Julie and I were.....

BONAPARTE

Has my wife been faithful to me?

JOSEPH

(beat)

Why would you doubt it?

Bonaparte takes out the miniature portrait of Josephine.

BONAPARTE

One day the glass cracked. I told
myself then, "Either my wife is
ill, or she has been unfaithful."

Bonaparte looks at Joseph, awaiting an honest answer.

JOSEPHINE (O/S)

You were right...

Josephine takes his hand and steers him away from Joseph.

JOSEPHINE

I really was very ill for a time.

BONAPARTE

Why didn't you write and tell me?!

JOSEPHINE

Barras insisted that on no account was I to alarm you... and besides, I'm quite recovered now. May I introduce my friend Citizen Gros, who would much like to paint your portrait --

Josephine indicates the young and handsome GROS, who steps forward. Bonaparte regards his fine looks with suspicion.

BONAPARTE

I have no time to sit for portraits. We march south very soon...

JOSEPHINE

To hang in my bedroom... so I may gaze into your eyes as I fall asleep?

She runs her hand round the back of his neck, inviting him to join her in a little alcove.

JOSEPHINE

Let him sketch... while you tell me all about your adventures.

Bonaparte is still agitated.

BONAPARTE

I won 16 battles - and wrote you 46 letters. You wrote me 3 - 3 letters that were as cold as friendship...

While Gros starts sketching, Josephine kisses him lightly.

JOSEPHINE

You know how wretched I am with words. It is not through words I express myself...

BONAPARTE

Is it true that you tell all your society friends that my passion for you borders on madness?

JOSEPHINE

(laughing)

Well it does, doesn't it? Or has my horrid journey been all for nothing?

JOSEPHINE (CONT'D)

(kisses him again)

Did you know that all Paris is talking about you? When I went to see Talma at the Opera, the whole audience rose to their feet and applauded - me! They call me Our Lady of Victories... why they've even renamed my street after you! Can you imagine how proud I feel to be your wife... your adored one?

Bonaparte's resolve is melting fast...

BONAPARTE

You said you were ill...?

JOSEPHINE

Well... not exactly ill... I had a... I couldn't... I tried...
(eyes filling)
... I lost our baby...

At the sight of her tears, Bonaparte showers her with sympathy and kisses... much to the shock of his family - though Caroline is too busy with Murat to notice.

BONAPARTE

Oh my poor Josephine - I had no idea! If only you had sent me word I....

JOSEPHINE

I didn't want to trouble you... You had so much more important things to think about...

BONAPARTE

Nothing in this world is more vital to me than my Josephine! We shall make another...

JOSEPHINE

How long do we have?

BONAPARTE

Two days. I just have to persuade the Pope to remain neutral and then I'll be back. Ah, Josephine - I demand a love from you equal to mine, but I'm wrong. Why should lace be as heavy as gold?

Oblivious to all, Bonaparte kisses her more passionately, encouraged by Josephine. We circle around them, TIGHTENING with a dizzying effect and MIXING INTO -

58 EXT. BRIARS GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1815> - DAY

... a blind-folded, plump Napoleon being spun round and round, laughter intruding as we find Betsy and the two Bertrand children playing Blind Man's Buff in the garden.

BETSY

Catch me if you can, Boney!

OTHERS

No, me! me!

Napoleon lurches about, heading for one child, then another. Betsy lures him towards the flower bed, where Toby the slave is digging in shirt-sleeves. She signals Toby to play along with her, then creeps up behind Napoleon...

BETSY

Over here, Boney!

Toby is less fearful than before, yet still trembles as Napoleon advances on him. Only now do we see that there is a tiny hole in the blindfold - and Napoleon's eye peeping out behind it. He suddenly swings round and catches Betsy as she tries to tiptoe away. She struggles - then snatches the blindfold from Napoleon's head and spots the hole -

BETSY

Boney's been cheating again!

NAPOLEON

You lie, Miss Betsee - I'm not bony at all - look at me!

Napoleon pats his paunch, laughing - then hears a distant BOOM from somewhere out at sea. It is answered with another. He takes out his spy-glass and scans the ocean.

BETSY

A ship! Perhaps your brother Joseph is coming to rescue you?

NAPOLEON

In an English ship, Miss Betsee?

BETSY

English? Hooray! Grandmama promised to send me a birthday present...

... and she goes running back to the house with the others, leaving Napoleon alone. Toby approaches timidly, offering him a basket of cherries. "For you, Boney sir..."

NAPOLEON

Thank you, Toby.

59 INT. PAVILION – BRIARS – ST HELENA – <1815> – DAY

The Pavilion room is stacked with freshly-arrived crates, which Ali and Marchand are busily opening. Most contain books and old newspapers. Napoleon is on his knees, rifling through them with the excitement of a child opening Christmas presents. Bertrand is nearby, as is Las Cases, who jots down everything Napoleon says in his little notebook.

NAPOLEON

(tossing them aside)

Read it... read it... read it...

(examines one)

The Memoirs of Josephine?? Some tittle-tattle chambermaid – what would she know??

(tosses it aside)

Ah... this is more like it...

He has spotted the contents of another open crate, and lifts out a large, leather volume bearing the Imperial "N" crest.

NAPOLEON

My gift to civilization...

He opens the title page: *"DESCRIPTION OF EGYPT, Published by Order of His Majesty the Emperor, NAPOLEON THE GREAT"*.

NAPOLEON

Europe knew almost nothing about Egypt until I went there. All that we saw and found, we gave to the world in these pages. The real conquests – those that leave no regrets behind – are the ones we make over ignorance.

Each volume is filled with thousands of minute engravings of bees, butterflies, insects, beetles – as well as pyramids, hieroglyphics and other ancient Egyptian artifacts...

BETSY (O/S)

Boney! Look what grandmama sent me from England!

Betsy comes running up with a tin toy...

BETSY

You wind it up, and then...

... she lets it go. A tin Napoleon mounts the rungs of a ladder – reaches the top – then a tin Wellington kicks him in the arse and he somersaults back down the far side...

BETSY

See? Each rung of the ladder is a country you invaded – and there you are at the top and then along comes the Duke of Wellington and down you fall – all the way to St Helena!

Bertrand can stand no more – he slaps Betsy's face.

NAPOLEON

Bertrand – control yourself!

BERTRAND

I apologize, sire... but it hurts me too much to see your Majesty subjected to such insults...

Betsy's cry has alerted Mrs Balcombe –

MRS BALCOMBE

Betsy! What did I tell you? And after all the kindness the Emperor has shown you!

(to Napoleon)

I'm so very sorry, sire – please do accept my most humble apologies...

(to Betsy)

Your father shall hear of this!

As Mrs Balcombe drags Betsy away, Napoleon gives her a wink.

NAPOLEON

Cheer up, Grand Marshal. The greater the humiliations they heap on me, the greater my immortality.

Napoleon winds up the toy, then watches it perform while taking a pinch of snuff from an enamelled box bearing the another portrait of the small boy. Heigh-ho.

60 EXT. GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1815> - NIGHT

It is a cloudless, moonlit night. Napoleon walks alone, breathing in the night air.

BETSY

Psst... Boney... I'm down here!

Napoleon looks about, then sees Betsy's tear-stained face peering up at him through the bars of a cellar window, level with the garden.

BETSY

My father locked me in the cellar for the night – all because I showed you that stupid toy.

NAPOLEON

So now we're both in prison, eh?
Only you're crying and I'm not.

BETSY

You've cried too - you must have
done.

NAPOLEON

Yes, I have, but the prison
remains, so one might as well be
cheerful.

He takes out his liquorice, hands her a stick through the
iron bars...

BETSY

When I was a little girl in
England, I used to imagine you as a
huge ogre, with a flaming red eye
in the middle of your forehead, and
long black teeth, and my teacher
used to say that if I wasn't good,
you'd come over from France and
tear me to pieces and gobble me up
for breakfast!

Napoleon contorts his face to look like an ogre...

NAPOLEON

I might well have done - if I'd had
Nelson on my side.

BETSY

Why did you want to invade us
anyway?

NAPOLEON

It was England who swore to wage a
"war of extermination" against
France, not the other way around.
They seem to think that by exiling
me to this rock, they've won.

BETSY

Well they have, haven't they?

Napoleon gives a sly grin.

NAPOLEON

My war with England is far from
over.

Betsy is thrilled. She clasps the bars excitedly...

BETSY

You mean you're going to escape? Oh
go on...

BETSY (CONT'D)

I'll help you - if you help me to escape first. There's a key to the door under the sill.

Betsy gives Napoleon her sweetest smile.

61 EXT. BRIARS - GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1815> - NIGHT

The cellar door swings open and Betsy is free. She is about to give him an impulsive hug, then thinks better of it.

BETSY

Come on, I'll show you my secret place. It's called Geranium Valley. I can't think why, there's not a geranium in sight... but there's a beautiful fountain...

The two fugitives make their way stealthily across the garden, evading the two British Soldiers on patrol. But someone has seen them escape and is stalking them.

62 EXT. PATHWAY - ST HELENA - <1815> - MOONLIGHT

By the light of the moon, Betsy leads Napoleon down a steep pathway in the side of the volcanic rock.

BETSY

You could go to South America... China - Japan - you could start all over again - and I'll come with you. Now where shall we go? Where's the most beautiful place you know of?

NAPOLEON

I left one place, I went to another. But the most beautiful time I ever spent was in Egypt.

They are still being stalked...

63 EXT. GERANIUM VALLEY - ST HELENA - <1815> - MOONLIGHT

The path leads down to a small valley of weeping willows, overlooking the moonlit bay. Far out at sea, two English warships are on patrol.

NAPOLEON

After I'd driven the Austrians from Italy, Barras urged me to invade England, but as we had no navy to rival yours, I proposed blockading your trade with India by seizing Egypt.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

Napoléone means "lion of the desert" – and all my life I had wanted to see the great Sahara. Ah, Miss Betsee, I was full of dreams in those days. I saw myself as a new Alexander the Great – founding a new religion – marching into Asia – riding an elephant with a turban on my head and a pair of baggy trousers... I could have made myself Emperor of the Orient... you find that amusing?

BETSY

I was just trying to imagine you with a turban on, riding an elephant...

Napoleon looks out across the moonlit bay...

64 EXT. EGYPT – LANDING – <1798> – MOONLIGHT

The moonlit ocean MIXES to another moonlit sea – a desert shoreline west of Alexandria. Hundreds of ships are moored out in the bay as Bonaparte's army silently wade ashore. Among them we spot Eugene and Louis, again serving as ADCs.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I mounted the biggest expedition since the Spanish Armada – 400 ships and 80,000 men – not only soldiers, mark you, but scientists – zoologists – geologists – artists – actors – poets – astronomers – I wanted to teach as well as to learn – to absorb, to project, to form new combinations – c'est la vie... but first I had to deal with the Mameluke princes who were in the pay of the English and the Turks...

65 EXT. PYRAMIDS – EGYPT – <1798> – DAY

In a breathtaking vista, we gaze down with Bonaparte at his army of 20,000 French soldiers in colours of red, white and blue. They are formed into three squares six deep, facing an army of Turkish and Mameluke warriors in the shadow of the great pyramids at Giza.

BONAPARTE

Soldiers! From the heights of these ancient pyramids, forty centuries gaze down upon you!

Bonaparte is mounted on a white Arab horse, standing on a ridge overlooking the desert that separates the two armies.

BONAPARTE

We come in the name of liberty,
equality and fraternity, to free
the Egyptian peoples from their
chains!

A great wave of cheering, whereupon the Mameluke warriors
launch a spectacular cavalry charge, scimitars glinting...

BONAPARTE

Stand firm!

The French hold their positions, infantry poised, muskets
aimed at the onrushing Mamelukes. As they close upon the
French, the terrifying Mamelukes leap from their horses and
rush forward - Bonaparte signals Murat, who sweeps round with
his cavalry and encircles them from the rear - then ten
thousand muskets blast into their ranks, decimating them -
literally, killing one in ten. The rest are felled by the
corner canons in a volley of flame and blood...

66 EXT. MAMELUKE PALACE - CAIRO - <1798> - DAY

... and a dozen Mameluke Princes grovel in the dust before
Bonaparte, his arms folded, flanked by his inner circle of
dazzling officers (ultimately to become his Marshals). His
audience also includes the civilian members of the expedition
- Denon (on behalf of the Louvre), the mathematician Gaspard
MONGE (Bonaparte's examiner at Brienne, now 58) - and his
young secretaries, Meneval and Bourrienne - his old school
rival. Bonaparte's proclamation is translated into Arabic by
Roustam - a young Mameluke prisoner - and jotted down at a
furious pace by his two secretaries.

BONAPARTE

Tell the Mamelukes that in the eyes
of God, all men are equal. Tell
them that I respect God and His
Prophet Mahomet, and have read the
Holy Koran. Tell them that I have
found twenty two passages that
foretell my coming...

This is news to the Mamelukes, but since few seem to have
read it, they merely bow in further submission. The scene is
being sketched by several artists, including Gros.

BONAPARTE

Is there a man so blind as not to
see that destiny itself guides all
my operations? But the day will
come when men shall see that I am
guided by orders from above and all
human efforts fail against me!

Murat whispers to Lannes - "Steady on!"...

NAPOLEON

Blessed are they who choose my side
- but woe unto those who oppose me,
for they shall find no refuge in
either this world or the next!

Roustam is several paragraphs behind, for Bonaparte speaks as fast as his imagination. He looks at his generals - Lannes, Oudinot and Murat are all masking grins. He looks momentarily insulted - but there's humour in the voice from St Helena...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

It was charlatanism I admit, but of
the highest sort...

67 EXT. PYRAMIDS - TOP - EGYPT - <1798> - DAY

Bonaparte is scrambling to the top of the giant pyramid in a race with his fellow officers...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I had found myself suddenly freed
from a decadent civilization. I
felt my soul was in communion with
eternity and that I could abandon
myself to the most brilliant
visions. I felt the earth spinning
beneath me, as though I were being
lifted up into the sky...

Bonaparte reaches the top, flinging out his arms in the exhilaration of the moment. An incredible vista lies before him - the great Sphinx, half buried beneath the sand - the pyramids - the sparkling Nile - and the vast Sahara...

The moment of solitude is brief, for Murat and Lannes are fast behind, followed by Bertrand, Eugène, and Berthier.

BONAPARTE

What immensity! No limits - no
beginning - no end... just a great
motionless ocean - but look how it
has engulfed the Sphinx over the
centuries. Bertrand - we must dig
her out before she disappears
completely!

MURAT

But it would take forever!

Lannes has spotted something - he alerts Bonaparte, who takes out his spyglass. A small plume of dust on the horizon is getting larger...

68 EXT. PYRAMIDS - BOTTOM - EGYPT - <1798> - DAY

Bonaparte and his adventurers reach the base of the pyramid, where a team of archaeologists and engineers are taking measurements. Several artists are also at work, making drawings of the hieroglyphs carved above the entrance.

Gros is among them, using the back of an obliging soldier as his easel while copying the feet and hieroglyphs on a broken statue. The rest of the statue's body lies half-buried beneath the sand nearby.

Bonaparte peers at the hieroglyphs -

BONAPARTE

What do they mean, those symbols?

MONGE

We have no idea as yet, sire - but they're the same on every statue of Ramses we've found thus far.

BONAPARTE

Bertrand, I want to know what Ramses wanted to tell us - and I'm making it your task to find out.

BERTRAND

Yes, sire!

The plume of dust is now much closer - a Mameluke Messenger (Roustam), riding a camel across the desert as fast as he can. Impatient as ever, Bonaparte leaps on his own horse and rides the short distance to meet him.

Lannes, Berthier and the others watch in consternation.

Bonaparte's sudden laughter lends them reassurance. Roustam rides off, and Bonaparte trots back to his officers. He looks down at them a moment, scanning their anxious faces.

BONAPARTE

Well, my friends, I'm glad to see you are all enjoying yourselves as it seems we won't be returning to France for quite a while. Nelson has just sunk our fleet.

Bonaparte smiles at their looks of panic and dismay.

MURAT

I knew it! How did I ever allow myself to be talked into coming to this damned country in the first place?!

BONAPARTE

We shall just have to make the best of it, Murat, that's all...

(to Monge)

At least now we'll have plenty of time to excavate the Sphinx...

(to Bertrand)

... and solve the mystery of those hieroglyphics. We might even reopen the ancient waterway at Suez - dig a canal from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean...

LANNES

Forgive me, General, but frankly I have not the slightest interest in saving the Sphinx, or what all that picture-writing means, or how many unknown species of water-lilies Savigny has discovered. Let me win glory or let me go home!

BONAPARTE

You shall do both, my friend - for we are now obliged to accomplish great things - and we shall accomplish them! The English have may have destroyed our ships but not our courage! We shall march up into Syria, liberate her from the Turks, create a homeland for the Jews, then march on into Asia!

Lannes is so fed up that he pulls out the tricolour from his hat and stomps it on the ground.

LANNES

If only he'd just liberate us!

HIGH ANGLE, from the Sphinx's POV: Bonaparte and his party ride away from the pyramids...

69 EXT. SINAI DESERT - EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN - <1799> - DAY

A swirling sandstorm. At first we see little - then a few figures emerge, bowed against the blizzard, their faces wrapped in rags, their uniforms in tatters. These are the battered remnants of Bonaparte's expeditionary force, ravaged by plague, thirst and wounds...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

But wherever we went, wherever there was a stretch of water, there we were sure to find Nelson and his navy. How my Generals hated me!

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)

I led them across the great Sinai desert as Moses once did, then north into Syria with the promise of riches... but all I gave them were flies, and plague, and the murky, barbarous Turk...

Bonaparte leads, on foot, alone. Behind him trudge Eugène (his head bandaged), Louis looking near death, Bertrand, Murat, Lannes and the others - including many civilians (Monge, Bourrienne, Meneval, Roustam).

The wounded are supervised by Larrey, carried in dilapidated carriages or slumped across camels, including Oudinot and Léon. The desert behind them is strewn with the dead and dying who can walk no further. Gros is one of the few artists still able to sketch the scene...

70 INT. BATH - MAMELUKE PALACE - EGYPT - <1799> - DAY

Bonaparte sinks below a surface of steaming water... then resurfaces. He is relaxing in an ornate, arabic bath while Bourrienne reads aloud from the London "Times". Roustam stands by with a towel.

BOURRIENNE

"France has now lost all her gains in Italy, and is moving rapidly towards chaos. The government in Paris is beset with imbecility and corruption, and with the rest of Europe allied against her, it can only be a matter of time before King Louis XVIII returns to France and assumes his rightful place upon the throne..."

BONAPARTE

If ever I have the luck to set foot in France again, the reign of chatter will be over. Carry on.

BOURRIENNE

"Dispatches from Constantinople suggest that the Corsican tyrant has lately abandoned his Syrian adventure, and is returning to Egypt with the remnants of his expeditionary force, decimated by the plague, to rejoin his stranded army languishing in Cairo. Sources in Paris relate that Buonaparte's wife has become the....."

Bourrienne breaks off. Bonaparte splashes.

BONAPARTE

Did I tell you to stop, Bourrienne?

BOURRIENNE

... that Bonaparte's wife has become the object of open speculation concerning her liaison with a certain Captain Charles. They are frequently to be seen together in public, sharing the same box at the theatre...

Bourrienne pauses. Bonaparte stares ahead of him – then sinks slowly beneath the steaming water. As he resurfaces –

71 INT. TENT – EGYPT – <1799> – DAY

Bonaparte rounds on his officers – Lannes, Murat, Oudinot and others – waving the newspaper...

BONAPARTE

Did you know about this? Did you, Jean? Did you, Murat?? Answer me!!

Murat and Oudinot find it hard to answer, their jaws being tightly bandaged. The rest look sheepish and embarrassed.

MURAT

It is not for us to give credence to gossip and rumour, General...

BONAPARTE

You'd rather I read about my wife's infidelity in an English newspaper?

MURAT

(mumbling)

Who believes English newspapers?

BONAPARTE

That's why I'm asking you!

An awkward silence. Lannes – badly wounded in the head and leg – tries to lighten the situation.

LANNES

If it's any consolation, General, I've just heard that my wife has at last given birth to a baby boy. I haven't seen my wife for twelve months.

BONAPARTE

(not listening)

I'll divorce her, I swear it!

BONAPARTE (CONT'D)

If these allegations are true, I shall divorce her – publicly – scandalously!

Eugene is standing in the background, looking desperate. Bonaparte looks at him a beat, then is gone.

72 EXT. DESERT – EGYPT – <1799> – NIGHT

Bonaparte stands alone in the desert, gazing out at the moonlit pyramids and the Sphinx, now partially resurrected from its sandy grave. A long pause... then he takes out his little portrait of Josephine – holds it in his open palm – gazes at it – and suddenly flings it to the ground, crushing it under his foot with the desolate cry –

BONAPARTE

Josephine...!!

73 EXT. GERANIUM VALLEY – ST HELENA – <1815> – DAY

With her name still echoing, Napoleon the exile gazes out to sea. Betsy has fallen asleep under the willow tree long ago. Napoleon signals to Toby who steps out of the shadows.

NAPOLEON

Will you carry her home, Toby?

TOBY

Yes, Boney-sir.

Toby lifts Betsy into his arms and carries her away, leaving Napoleon alone. As he stares out at the ocean, cheering voices gradually OVERLAP... louder and louder –

CROWD (O/S)

Long live Bonaparte! Long live the saviour of France!

74 EXT. PARIS STREETS – TRAVELLING – <1799> – DAWN

Bonaparte rides through Paris in a closed carriage, mobbed by an adoring crowd. He is with Eugène, Berthier and Murat on their last stage home from Egypt. The crowd crush round the carriage, clamouring hands trying to reach inside the window with cries of "Long live Bonaparte!", "Long live the God of Victory!", "Long live the God of Fortune!"

75 EXT. BONAPARTE'S HOUSE – PARIS – <1799> – DAWN

Bonaparte's carriage clatters across a small courtyard and pulls up outside his house. Bonaparte hurries out, followed by Eugène, Murat and Berthier...

76 INT. BONAPARTE'S HOUSE - PARIS - <1799> - DAY

... and enters to find - his brothers Joseph and Lucien awaiting him. Joseph greets him warmly, Lucien less so.

BONAPARTE
Where is Josephine??

JOSEPH
She's been... staying in the country, but was notified of your return the moment I received your letter.

Bonaparte searches their faces...

BONAPARTE
Well? Is it true? About my wife and this... fop?!

JOSEPH
Your enemies have put out so many lies about you since you left...

LUCIEN
He wants the truth, Joseph.

Bonaparte turns to Lucien.

BONAPARTE
Well, brother Lucien?

LUCIEN
Your wife has been unfaithful to you ever since the day you married her. And not just with Captain Charles - ask her son if you don't believe me!

Lucien points an accusing finger at Eugène in the doorway.

BONAPARTE
Eugène is not to be held responsible for the faults of his mother. He is a brave and loyal soldier.

LUCIEN
I tried to warn you before you left for Egypt, but you wouldn't listen.

BONAPARTE
Why didn't you bring me proof?

LUCIEN

I am now a senator in the government – or what passes for one – and I have better things to do than to go snooping about peering through bedroom key-holes. And so do you, brother. The pear is finally ripe...

BONAPARTE

And the veil torn away! I will never see my Josephine again. Are you happy now, Lucien? Joseph?? If she were the Virgin Mary herself, my family would have still found a way to poison me against her. You've always hated her – all of you!

(suddenly quiet)

Well... I shall divorce her. Now leave me.

LUCIEN

We have urgent matters to discuss... the government is in chaos...

BONAPARTE

Go!!

Bonaparte turns aside, waving him away. Lucien looks at Joseph, who indicates that it might be a wise idea, whereupon Lucien marches out, pushing past Eugène. Bonaparte turns to Joseph.

BONAPARTE

From now on, I shall have only one lover, and that is France. I cannot obey any longer. I have tasted the pleasure of command and cannot renounce it. France shall be my mistress and I shall sleep with her. She at least has never failed me.

77 INT. BONAPARTE'S BEDROOM – PARIS – <1799> – NIGHT

Bonaparte pores over his maps, spread out on the floor. Presently we hear a carriage pull up. He carries on working. Then voices in the hallway –

JOSEPHINE (O/S)

I must see him – he's my husband –
I have the right to see him!

Other voices try to calm her down.

GUARD (O/S)
The General has given orders that
you are not to be admitted...

JOSEPHINE (O/S)
(calling)
Bonaparte... let me in... I can
explain everything!

Bonaparte gets up and proceeds slowly to the door.

EUGENE (O/S)
He refuses to see you, Mamma...

JOSEPHINE (O/S)
Bonaparte, let me in!

Josephine bursts into loud sobs. Bonaparte quietly closes the
second, inner door, muffling them, then returns to work.

78 INT. BONAPARTE'S BEDROOM - PARIS - <1799> - DAY

Dawn light seeps in through the shutters. Bonaparte is
sprawled on his bed, fully clothed, asleep, his arm lying
across a map. Then a gentle knock at the door.

BONAPARTE
Who is it?

ROUSTAM (O/S)
Captain Beauharnais, Citizen
General.

Bonaparte hesitates, then goes to the door and opens it.
Roustam stands guard. Behind him is Eugène, overwrought, but
doing his best to conceal his emotions.

BONAPARTE
If you've come to plead for your
mother, please don't.

EUGENE
I have come to say goodbye, sir,
and to thank you for the many
kindnesses that you have shown me.

BONAPARTE
You don't have to leave me, Eugène
- I in no way hold you to blame...

EUGENE
I know sir, but my mother has been
weeping all night on the stairs,
and I must take her home...

Eugène opens the door wider, revealing Josephine lying in a heap at the top of stairs, with the tear-stained Hortense kneeling beside her. Bonaparte avoids even the merest glance by turning back into the room...

BONAPARTE

Very well. But then we have urgent work to do.

EUGENE

I can never come back, sir. If you divorce my mother, she will have no one to take care of her.

BONAPARTE

She has Hortense...

EUGENE

You have always taught me by your own example that the first duty of a son is to his family. My mother needs me, sir... whereas you need no one. Good bye, sir.

Eugène is on the verge of breaking down. Bonaparte remains standing by the window, hands behind his back, trying to enforce his iron will upon himself – trembling – every muscle in his face endeavouring to conquer his emotions. He turns to Eugène, who is now at the open door. Hortense is with him, her face streaked with tears. Bonaparte turns sharply away.

BONAPARTE

I was not given a heart for nothing. It is constant warfare. Just when my head claims a victory, there comes a reversal – my heart strikes back and takes the flag. Thus every victory is a loss – and every loss a victory.

Bonaparte turns back, holds out his arms – and Hortense runs to him, sobbing. Eugène follows... and behind him, Josephine – exhausted, ashen, pleading.

79 EXT. BONAPARTE'S HOUSE – PARIS – <1799> – DAY

Two Soldiers stand guard outside Bonaparte's house, where the crowd mills about in the street beyond, sporadically calling out "Long live Bonaparte!" A carriage pulls up and Lucien jumps out, followed by Joseph, Talleyrand, and the sinister-looking police chief, FOUCHÉ (36)...

80 INT. BONAPARTE'S HOUSE – HALLWAY – <1799> – DAY

More Guardsmen snap to attention as they enter. There's an air of mounting tension... a coup d'état is in the offing.

Fouché and Talleyrand join others waiting in the drawing room – Bertrand, Lannes and Murat among them – while Joseph and Lucien follow Louis up the stairs – along the corridor –

81 INT. BONAPARTE'S BEDROOM – PARIS – <1799> – DAY

A loud knock... "Enter!" Roustam opens the double doors -- Joseph and Lucien enter – and immediately stop short in astonishment to see:

Bonaparte in bed with Josephine, blissful as two newly-weds, eating breakfast and sipping coffee. Josephine smiles at the two brothers, triumphant.

82 EXT. ST CLOUD PALACE – PARIS – <1799> – DAWN

A thin morning mist shrouds the great Palace of St Cloud. Bonaparte, Lannes and Murat are deploying soldiers from the National Guard about the ornate gardens.

Joseph and Lucien hurry over, Lucien wearing the scarlet toga of a junior minister while Joseph is dressed as a civilian. They quickly confer with Bonaparte, then go to their stations. Among the Guard we notice Léon and his comrades, positioning canons at strategic points...

83 INT. ORANGERIE – ST CLOUD – <1799> – DAY

The French senate is in session in the Orangerie – a long ground-floor gallery with large windows overlooking the gardens. The benches are crowded with senators in Roman togas, presided over by Barras and his fellow Directors.

Lucien enters the "forum" –

LUCIEN

My fellow senators, the hero of Italy and Egypt wishes to speak!

BARRAS

No military officer is allowed within this chamber, you know that Senator.

Barras' objection is supported by some, booed by others.

SENATOR

Bonaparte is the only one who can save the Republic – let him speak!

Barras quickly confers with his four fellow Directors, who appear hesitant and divided...

84 INT. CORRIDOR – ST CLOUD – <1799> – DAY

Bonaparte and Joseph hurry along a corridor, National Guardsmen snapping to attention as the celebrated hero strides past.

85 INT. ORANGERIE – ST CLOUD – <1799> – DAY

Barras and his Directors are still conferring when a great cheer arises – Bonaparte strides into the forum, every inch the conquering hero. His initial welcome is favourable, though mild compared to the enthusiasm of his troops.

BONAPARTE

Citizen Representatives, I have returned to France to find her sitting on a volcano! The Republic no longer has a government!

To his surprise, Bonaparte's statement causes more boos than cheers. He glances anxiously at Joseph, who has remained in the doorway, then turns back.

BONAPARTE

When I left France, she was at peace with all the world save England. Now I return to find her beset by enemies – Austria, Russia, Prussia, Naples, Turkey, Portugal..

Many of the senators are openly hostile – one or two feel for their ceremonial stilettos...

BONAPARTE

What have you done to the France I left in your hands? I left you in peace, I find you at war! I left you victories, I find defeats! I left you with millions, and you are destitute! Such reversals have been brought about by greed, ineptitude and treason!

Howls of protest. Bonaparte turns on the Directors –

BONAPARTE

Some of you have even tried to bribe me to join your plots and intrigues and overthrow the government!

Uproar, with cries of "Names!" "Give us the names!" Bonaparte points at Barras –

BONAPARTE (O/S)

You, Citizen Barras, for one!

Further roars of protest...

86 EXT. ST CLOUD PALACE & GARDENS - <1799> - DAY

Murat moves his cavalry into position as Bonaparte's voice wafts from the windows...

BONAPARTE (O/S)

All parties have come to me and begged my support... Royalists wanting to bring back the Bourbons - Jacobins wanting a return to the days of the Terror and the guillotine... but I will not be a party to such traitors! To talk of subverting a representative form of government is a criminal proposal in this new century of liberty and enlightenment!

VOICE (O/S)

What about the Constitution??!

... more soldiers move into position - there is a state of growing tension - violence is moments away -

87 INT. ORANGERIE - ST CLOUD - <1799> - DAY

Lucien is looking extremely anxious, as much at his brother's words as the increasingly hostile reception...

BONAPARTE (O/S)

There is no Constitution because you have torn it up! No one respects it any longer! You have become a government of chatterers!

LUCIEN

You don't know what you are saying!

CRIES

Get him out!... No Caesars in here!

BARRAS

I propose that Bonaparte be stripped of his rank and placed outside the protection of the law!

CRIES

Yes! Outlaw the dictator!

Bonaparte scrawls a note to Joseph, who then hurries off -

BONAPARTE

I shall defend our great Republic!
The sovereignty of the people,
liberty and equality, these sacred
foundations of the Constitution
must be saved, and I am here to
save them! Citizens, remember that
I march with the God of Victory and
the God of Fortune!

This is too much for the senators, who rush at Bonaparte, punching him and trying to grab at his collar - some have drawn their stilettos, and Bonaparte suddenly looks like little Nabulio, flaying his enemies with his fists. Lucien leaps onto a bench, loudly proclaiming -

LUCIEN

Senators... listen to me!

He dramatically draws his own stiletto and points it at Bonaparte's breast as though about to stab him.

LUCIEN

I swear I will run my brother
through with this knife if he ever
betrays the French people!

SENATOR

He's a Bonaparte too - outlaw the
whole family!

88 EXT. ST CLOUD PALACE - PARIS - <1799> - DAWN

Murat snatches the note from Joseph - turns to his cavalry:

MURAT

Grenadiers, forward - and let us
send those chatterers packing!

89 INT. ORANGERIE - ST CLOUD - <1799> - DAWN

Scuffling has broken out - a stiletto scratches Bonaparte's face - then a volley of CANON... followed by a hush.

Suddenly the double doors burst open and Murat rides in at the head of the cavalry, brandishing his sword. Barras and his supporters need no further prompting. Taking to their heels, they leap out through the open windows...

90 EXT. ST CLOUD PALACE - PARIS - <1799> - DAY

... tearing off their togas to lighten their load as they scuttle off across the gardens, jeered by the soldiers. As the last senator flees, Bonaparte appears at the window -

BONAPARTE

Soldiers! The Directory is at an end! Now we can create a new Republic, founded on real liberty – civil liberty – representation for all!

SOLDIERS

Long live the Republic! Long live the Constitution!

LEON

Long live Bonaparte!!

Léon throws his cockade in the air, provoking a wave of cheering from Eugene, Bertrand, Lannes, Murat...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I am a fragment of rock thrown into space, driven towards an end that I cannot see. As soon as I have reached it – as soon as I shall become unnecessary – a single atom will be enough to shatter me...

Léon and the soldiers lift Bonaparte high on their shoulders while the army chants his name in rhythmic unison.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

... but until then, all the forces of mankind will be unable to harm me in any way!

CUT TO BLACK

91 EXT. TUILERIES COURTYARD - <1800> - NIGHT

It is Christmas Eve and bitterly cold. Two carriages stand waiting in the courtyard. Horses paw the cobble-stones, breath rising in the chill night air. The driver of the first carriage – CÉSAR – cheerfully downs a bottle of wine.

92 INT. COURTYARD - <1800> - NIGHT

TIGHT SHOTS: A large barrel is filled with black powder, placed in a wheelbarrow, then loaded aboard a wagon...

93 INT. BONAPARTE'S BATHROOM - TUILERIES - <1800> - NIGHT

Bonaparte is lying in a magnificent bath, his head submerged. He surfaces, blows out some water, hums a few bars – then dictates out loud...

BONAPARTE

To my brother Lucien. As Minister of the Interior, I charge you with the task of drawing up a list of all those who deserve public recognition in the arts and sciences...

He submerges again. Bourrienne and Meneval (his senior secretaries) are sitting near the bath, writing furiously. When Bonaparte resurfaces, he continues dictating at rapid speed as though the recipient were standing in the room.

BONAPARTE

Bourrienne - a letter to Fouché. The French Gazette calls me a "royal maggot" without any respect to logic. Write and tell them that if they cannot write truth, then let them not write at all.

Bonaparte steps out of the bath, not remotely self-conscious at being naked. The Mameluke Roustam is standing by, holding a razor and a mirror. Bonaparte starts shaving...

BONAPARTE

I intend to create a Legion of Honor, to be awarded to all those who bring glory upon the Republic, whether in the arts, the sciences, or merely by their example...

(to Bourrienne)

If the French people find in me certain advantages, they will have to put up with my failings, and one of them is that I cannot abide insults.

94 EXT. STREET - PARIS - <1800> - NIGHT

An aged horse hauls the heavy cart through the streets, bearing the barrel and three shady-looking men.

95 INT. BONAPARTE'S SUITE - TUILERIES - <1800> - NIGHT

Bonaparte stands in his opulent suite, formerly that of Louis XVI, but now reflecting a strong Egyptian influence in the new furnishings. He is being dressed by Roustam and a second valet (Constant, 22) and wears civilian clothes and a long red velvet coat - a gift from the city of Lyons. Bourrienne and Meneval are still busily in attendance...

BONAPARTE

To Citizen Courot. I hereby appoint you as our new Ambassador to the United States.

BONAPARTE (CONT'D)

Before leaving, you will consult with my brother Joseph on the best method of forging an alliance against Great Britain...

(to Bourrienne)

To Francis, Emperor of Austria. I have received the letter which Your Majesty has sent me, and the preliminaries it contains will soon, I trust, be followed by a lasting peace agreement between Austria and France...

JOSEPHINE (O/S)

Which do you prefer, First Consul?

Josephine has entered from an adjoining room, flanked by two ladies-in-waiting, one wearing a fur-trimmed dress in emerald green, the other more daring, in filmy blue muslin.

BONAPARTE

The green one, the green one! I don't want half Paris staring at my wife's bosom...

Their relationship has mellowed, and Bonaparte's comment is more in jest than critical. Josephine gives a little shrug - she knew as much - and leaves, Bonaparte continuing...

BONAPARTE

Your Majesty may be gratified to know that tonight I shall be attending the first performance of The Creation, by your celebrated composer Joseph Haydn.

(to Meneval)

And whatever you do, don't go telling them in Washington how much better we do things in Paris...!

Bonaparte is now dressed. Roustam hands him an enamel snuff box and a tortoise-shell case of finely sliced liquorice.

96 EXT. RUE ST NICAISE - PARIS - <1800> - NIGHT

The cart pulls up in a small street, and is cautiously reversed into a dark and dingy alleyway.

97 INT. JOSEPHINE'S APARTMENT - <1800> - NIGHT

Bonaparte opens the doors into Josephine's adjoining dressing room, to find her deliberating over a choice of shawls. Her daughter Hortense and Bonaparte's sister Caroline are among her female companions for the evening.

He gives her a kiss on the neck - "Don't be late" - then hurries out. Haydn's trembling "Creation" begins to stir, a hushed choir singing "And God moved upon the face of the waters..."

98 EXT. RUE ST NICAISE - PARIS - <1800> - NIGHT

One of the shady men pays a street girl a few sous to hold the horse's reins while the others make adjustments to the barrel loaded on the cart.

99 EXT. TUILERIES COURTYARD - <1800> - NIGHT

Bonaparte crosses the courtyard, flanked by Murat and Lannes in uniform, and Joseph in civilian dress. Haydn's "Creation" stealthily builds, weaving order out of chaos. Murat opens the door, indicating César...

MURAT

The man's drunk!

LANNES

Christmas Eve - can you blame him?

JOSEPH

We should find another driver...

BONAPARTE

Nonsense, Joseph - César will just get there faster, that's all...

Bonaparte slaps César's knee - hops in - slams the door - César cracks his whip and is off, clattering across the cobbled courtyard, preceded the Consular Cavalry...

100 EXT. RUE ST NICAISE - PARIS - <1800> - NIGHT

The rumour that the First Consul might be passing draws spectators onto the street, despite the bitter cold.

The Girl continues to hold the reins, unaware that one of the men is covertly inserting a tinder fuse into the barrel.

101 EXT. RUE ST HONORÉ - PARIS - <1800> - DAY

The Carriage of the First Consul thunders out of the Tuileries Palace and into the Rue St Honoré, passing the spot where Bonaparte ordered the canons to fire against the Royalist Mob.

The street is lined with Grenadiers of the Consular Guard, stationed every 30 metres, who briskly salute as César careers by, driving his team of horses as though charging into battle...

102 EXT. RUE ST NICAISE - PARIS - <1800> - NIGHT

One of the men stations himself at a street corner, peering into the gloom ahead, listening...

103 EXT. TUILERIES COURTYARD - <1800> - NIGHT

Wrapped in furs, Josephine, Caroline and Hortense climb aboard the second carriage...

104 INT. BONAPARTE'S CARRIAGE - TRAVELLING - <1800> - NIGHT

Bonaparte catches forty winks in the corner of the carriage while the others slide about. We TIGHTEN on him - he seems to be dreaming. Haydn's crescendo builds - "And God said "Let there be light'"...

105 EXT. RUE ST NICAISE - PARIS - <1800> - NIGHT

At the distant SOUND of thundering hoofs, the man on the street corner signals to his accomplices, who direct the Girl to move slowly forward into the street...

106 EXT. RUE ST HONORE - PARIS - <1800> - DAY

Josephine's carriage hurtles out of the Tuileries...

107 EXT. RUE ST SUPLICE - PARIS - <1800> - DAY

César drives Bonaparte's carriage like a tearaway bandit, preceded by the Consular Cavalry Guard...

108 EXT. RUE ST NICAISE - PARIS - <1800> - NIGHT

As the THUNDER of hooves gets closer, the man on the corner gives a signal - a flint is struck, the fuse lit --

And suddenly the Consular Guard hove into view, followed by Bonaparte's carriage. The three men race off, leaving the shivering girl none the wiser. The spectators cheer as the carriage approaches, waving and cheering.

The horse and cart are partially blocking the street, but instead of slowing, César cracks his whip - the carriage mounts the pavement, swerving round the startled girl, still clutching the reins...

109 INT. BONAPARTE'S CARRIAGE - TRAVELLING - <1800> - NIGHT

Bonaparte is thrown into Murat's lap - they laugh...

MURAT

My cavalry charge at Aboukir!

Haydn peaks - "And there was LIGHT!" - a blast of music - a blinding FLASH - a terrific explosion - Bonaparte is flung to the floor...

110 EXT. RUE ST NICAISE - PARIS - <1800> - NIGHT

... and the entire carriage rises into the air before crashing back down, miraculously still in one piece.

Further back along the street, the second carriage is brought to a skidding halt... Josephine is suffering hysterics, her face cut from the flying glass...

Bonaparte steps out from his own carriage and looks back at the devastation, shrouded in dust and lit by the eerie glow of the carriage lamp. The section of street between the two carriages is littered with fallen masonry, broken glass, splintered wood, 26 maimed spectators... and nine corpses. Of the horse, the cart and the girl, there is not a trace. Bonaparte suddenly screams out...

BONAPARTE

Cowards!! Am I a dog to be killed
in the streets?!

Josephine runs to him as Murat, Joseph and Lannes stagger from the carriage...

BONAPARTE

To attack me is to attack the
republic!

Josephine reaches him, hysterical with terror and relief -

BONAPARTE

I will have vengeance like a
thunderbolt! They want to destroy
the revolution by destroying me!
Well I will defend her because...

He takes her in his arms, screaming --

BONAPARTE

... I AM THE REVOLUTION!

111 EXT. MALMAISON - ROSE GARDEN - <1801> - DAY

It is now summer, and the gardens at Malmaison are in full bloom. This is Josephine's home - a small chateau on the outskirts of Paris, enclosed by woodlands and ornamental lakes. Bonaparte is walking with Talleyrand. Now aged 50, this former bishop and lifelong hedonist can never quite manage to mask his faint disdain at Bonaparte's origins.

BONAPARTE

I was here last Sunday, walking alone within the silence of nature, when I became aware of the distant sound of church-bells from the village... and it sent such a shiver up my spine from recollections of early childhood that I thought to myself, if these bells can produce such an effect on me, imagine what they must do to simple people. Let the philosophers and rationalists say what they like... people need a religion.

Josephine appears from among the bushes, carrying a basket of freshly-cut roses...

BONAPARTE

So you may tell the Pope that nothing would please me more than to abolish the revolutionary calendar, give back the people their Sundays, and allow the churches to be reopened in France... but I will not allow the Catholic church to assume special status...

As he talks, Josephine runs her hand around Bonaparte's waist, kisses him – and hands a rose to Talleyrand...

JOSEPHINE

Good morning, Monsieur Talleyrand. May I present you with my own small contribution towards peace? A wild French briar, crossed with an English rose...

TALLEYRAND

A charming metaphor, Madame.

JOSEPHINE

(holding out rose)
It may be smaller, but it lives so much longer...

BONAPARTE

Which is more than can be said for any peace treaty with England. Albion *perfide!*

Bertrand appears from a large, Roman-style tent adjoining the chateau...

BERTRAND

Citizen Fouché is here to see you, First Consul.

Bonaparte glances at Talleyrand, dismissing Josephine with a gesture. She passes the sinister police chief in the doorway. Six years older than Bonaparte, Fouché has the face of an Egyptian mummy; no one seems pleased to see him.

BONAPARTE

Well, Fouché? What brings your unwelcome face to Malmaison?

FOUCHE

It gives me some satisfaction to be able to inform the First Consul that the perpetrators of the Christmas Eve outrage have finally been apprehended.

BONAPARTE

It's taken you long enough. Well... the work of the Jacobins - am I right?

FOUCHE

No, First Consul. The instructions for your assassination came from London.

BONAPARTE

The British government?!

FOUCHE

Not exactly, First Consul. The orders were given by their guest - the man who styles himself King Louis XVIII - but the expenses were met by his cousin, King George III.

BONAPARTE

Not only a madman but a criminal! How these kings hate me - and you know why? They see a France that is prosperous again, a republic that is happy, and united - and that terrifies them, because their own downtrodden people are beginning to clamour for the same rights as Frenchmen! How can Louis pretend to care for the French when he blows up his own citizens to get at me? The man's a barbarian!

TALLEYRAND

I assure you First Consul, Louis is the mildest of men... but he does rather want his throne back...

BONAPARTE

France has no throne - we burnt it!

TALLEYRAND

Ah, but you cannot burn an idea,
First Consul. The French have had a
king for over thirteen hundred
years, and they long to see the
throne restored. It makes them feel
safe – like giving them back their
Sundays. So long as France is
without a king the Bourbons will
seize every chance to fulfil that
longing.

BONAPARTE

Bah! A throne is nothing more than
a lump of wood covered in velvet.
It is the people, not God, who make
kings.

TALLEYRAND

Precisely my point, First Consul,
and it is the people who want to
see you crowned as their Emperor.

FOUCHE

Emperor!? But that would make a
nonsense of our Republican ideals –
Monsieur Talleyrand...

Clearly there is no love lost between Talleyrand and Fouché.
Bonaparte considers a moment.

BONAPARTE

The people are the Republic...
Citizen Fouché.
(to Talleyrand)
Very well. Hold a plebiscite. Let
the people decide.

112 EXT. GARDEN - BRIARS - ST HELENA - <1815> - DAY

Napoleon is lying on a bench in the walled garden, a red
Madras handkerchief shielding his head and eyes from the sun.
He is dictating to Las Cases, Bertrand and General Montholon,
who sit at a table under the Marquee...

NAPOLEON

Historians of the future may chop
and change, but they'll find it
pretty difficult to make me
disappear altogether, and if they
have a heart, they will give me
back something of my own.

The scribes are so busy writing down his words that they fail
to spot Betsy entering the garden, followed by Admiral
Cockburn's huge Newfoundland dog, Tom Pipes.

While Napoleon continues, Betsy throws a ball into the goldfish pond: Tom Pipes swims in to retrieve it...

NAPOLEON (O/S)

As First Consul, I sealed the gulf
of anarchy, and I unravelled chaos.
I purified the revolution, raised
the people, stimulated every
ambition, rewarded every merit, and
pushed back the bounds of glory...

Betsy lures Tom Pipes to the bench where Napoleon is lying -

NAPOLEON

My civil code alone, because of its
simplicity, has done more good for
France than the sum total of every
law that preceded it. My schools
are preparing unknown generations
for...

... Tom Pipes shakes himself vigorously, soaking Napoleon with a deluge of water. He is on his feet in a moment, salvaging his papers...

NAPOLEON

Get off me! Get down! Look at what
he's done to my maps!

BETSY

What good are maps to you anyway?

Betsy laughs, but Napoleon's three companions are outraged.

BETSY

Tom Pipes has come to say goodbye.
He's sailing back to England.

NAPOLEON

Then the Admiral is leaving?

BETSY

He's brought the new Governor to
meet you.

NAPOLEON

Have you seen him? What's he like?

Betsy pulls a grim face, beckoning Napoleon to follow her.

NAPOLEON

General Gourgaud, summon the Grand
Marshal...!

Napoleon follows Betsy to a gap in the hedge. She parts a bush to reveal a British General, Sir Hudson LOWE, pacing the front drive and talking to Admiral Cockburn. Napoleon pulls out his spyglass -

NAPOLEON

He looks like a Corsican policeman.

BETSY

He's brought hundreds of extra soldiers to make sure you don't escape, so you'd better be agreeable to him... and don't lose your temper!

113 EXT. BRIARS DRIVE - ST HELENA - <1815> - DAY

The new governor, Sir Hudson LOWE, is the same age as his prisoner - 46 - but of an altogether different nature. He is freckled, red-haired, and has a military stiffness that makes him as remote as Cockburn is affable. Napoleon, now dressed in full uniform, is accompanied by Bertrand.

COCKBURN

May I present Sir Hudson Lowe, who is replacing Colonel Wilks as Governor.

LOWE

Good afternoon, General Buonaparte. I trust you are well?

NAPOLEON

Admiral Cockburn has been most courteous. Allow me to present Count Bertrand, master of my household.

While Napoleon presents Bertrand, Betsy peers through the bushes a short distance away...

COCKBURN

I'm happy to say that Sir Hudson managed to procure the tin bath you requested before he left London.

LOWE

His Majesty's government wish you to enjoy every comfort that is compatible with your confinement and security. The bath is being installed at Longwood, which is now ready for your occupation. You and your suite will be escorted there on Monday.

Betsy's dismay...

NAPOLEON

I understand from Count Bertrand that we shall not be alone?

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

That soldiers are to be billeted around the house, and that we are to be further entertained by a colony of rats?

LOWE

I am assured that the rats have been poisoned. As to the measures for your surveillance, you are correct, sir. My government has issued me with new regulations regarding your detention. All contact between yourself and the islanders must cease forthwith, and in future, all sealed letters will be opened and examined by me. The same restrictions apply to your suite.

Lowe seems unable to look Napoleon in the eye. He hands a lengthy document to Bertrand in a manner that provokes Napoleon's wrath. He turns to Cockburn, indicating Lowe...

NAPOLEON

Grand Marshal Bertrand is a man who has commanded entire armies - yet he treats him like a corporal. Governments have jobs for two kinds of people, Admiral - those they admire and those they despise. If the British Government had any respect for that man's abilities, they would not have sent him here to further my misery! Kindly tell your Prince Regent that I demand either freedom or death.

A tense moment - Betsy watching anxiously through the hedge.

LOWE

General Buonaparte is further required to present himself once a day to assure the governor of his continued presence on the island. General Buonaparte is also.....

NAPOLEON

I am not General Bonaparte to you, sir - I am the Emperor Napoleon!

Betsy hears him shout... and closes her eyes.

LOWE

You make me laugh, sir.

NAPOLEON

I make you laugh?

LOWE

I can only pity the crudeness of
your manners. I wish you good day.

Lowe stalks off and remounts his horse, leaving an
embarrassed Cockburn with Napoleon.

NAPOLEON

Mark my words, Admiral. One of
these fine mornings in England, you
will open your newspaper and read
that I have been poisoned.

COCKBURN

Come come, sir, I....
(Lowe calls to him
sharply)
Good-bye, sir – and may I say what
an honour it has been to know you..

NAPOLEON

England and France have held in
their hands the fate of the world.
How we have injured one another.
Goodbye Admiral... and if someday
you should meet my wife and my son,
embrace them for me...

Betsy sees the Admiral bid him a courteous goodbye before
rejoining Lowe, leaving Napoleon with Bertrand. She struggles
from the bushes and runs up to him...

BETSY

You lost your temper – you let him
win!

NAPOLEON

The rules of war dictate that the
loser is the one who leaves the
field of battle. I am still here.

BETSY

I wish you didn't have to move up
to Longwood – I won't have anyone
to fight with any more...

... and she bursts into tears. Napoleon gives her his
handkerchief – then Toby calls from the garden...

TOBY

Miss Legg is here, Miss Betsy.

BETSY

I don't want to see anyone!
(suddenly brightens)
Unless... Boney – will you do me
one last kindness?

BETSY (CONT'D)

My friend Angela has come to tea
and she's simply terrified of you.
I told her what fun you were, but
she doesn't believe me...

Betsy whispers something in Napoleon's ear. He smiles and she goes running off to the garden, leaving Napoleon with Bertrand. Then, quite cheerfully...

NAPOLEON

They will kill me here, my dear
fellow. That much is quite certain.

BETSY

Come on, Boney – come and meet my
friend Angela!

Napoleon's mood changes – he brushes up his hair with his hands. Betsy comes running back with her young friend Angela – Napoleon turns, his face contorted, and lets out a hideous howl. To Betsy's delight, the terrified Angela runs off screaming. Betsy gives him an impulsive hug, then runs to console her friend. Napoleon turns to Bertrand, gently laying his hand on his shoulder.

NAPOLEON

My dear friend... you and I... in
this place... we are already in the
next world...

(adding defiantly)

But still no surrender in this
one!

114 EXT. GARDEN – MALMAISON – <1802> – DAY

Lunch on the lawn at Malmaison amid the autumn trees – a very informal affair, set out on a long trestle table by the edge of a lake graced with swans. Bonaparte presides at one end, eating rapidly, while his siblings and their spouses have barely begun. Various young nephews and nieces picnic nearby, supervised by Eugène and Hortense.

Bonaparte's three sisters – the beautiful mad-cap Pauline (23), the haughty Elisa (26) and the ambitious Caroline (21) – now married to Murat – are also present, as is Joseph (35), his gentle wife Julie (31) and their two little daughters. Louis and Hortense are also now married – a seemingly unhappy arrangement for them.

Bonaparte glances at his pocket watch and finishes abruptly.

JOSEPHINE

Oh, Bonaparte... you can't be
rushing back to your work just yet.

BONAPARTE

I have an important engagement...
 (calling to the children)
 Achille! Louis! Prisoner's Base...!
 Come on, Murat – you too! You keep
 grumbling about the boredom of
 peace – well now's your chance.
 Murat and I will be one team,
 Lannes and Eugène on the other...

Bonaparte throws himself into the game as though on the battlefield, deploying his troops and barking out orders. Josephine watches, smiling as Bonaparte chases young ACHILLE Murat (4), but inwardly pining, while Bonaparte's sisters talk pointedly among themselves...

CAROLINE

Nabulio will certainly make a
 wonderful father – one day...

PAULINE

He used to play games with me when
 I was little...

CAROLINE

According to the English
 newspapers, he still does, dear
 sister...

PAULINE

Caroline!

ELISA

One can hardly be surprised at such
 rumours when one poses so
 unashamedly in the nude. How could
 you, Paulette?!

PAULINE

Why ever not? Canova had a
 perfectly good fire in his studio.
 I'm sure Madame Bonaparte would
 have done the same...?
 (Josephine looks up)
 ... when you were my age...?

JOSEPHINE

Was I ever your age, Pauline? I
 don't seem to remember such a time.

PAULINE

You mean it was so long ago?

JOSEPHINE

I mean I never remember being quite
 so – generous – with my favours as
 you.

Josephine looks back at Bonaparte – and Pauline pokes out her tongue at her. Achille chases Bonaparte, who slips and is caught. Achille jumps on him, wrestling furiously. Then a GONG sounds...

BONAPARTE

Time's up!

ACHILLE

But I caught you!

BONAPARTE

Only because you cheated.

MURAT

(laughing)

And who was it who taught my son to cheat in the first place?

Josephine watches in private agony as Bonaparte picks up Achille and whirls him around, then dumps him down, digs in his pocket and hands him a piece of liquorice.

ACHILLE

Thank you, firzcunzil!

While Achille goes running to Caroline, Bonaparte walks with Murat back to the tent...

BONAPARTE

You lucky dog! I don't know what I wouldn't give to have a son of my own.

Josephine hears the remark – and bleeds.

115 INT. BEDROOM SUITE – MALMAISON – <1803> – DAY

Bonaparte is undressing, discarding his clothes in all directions as usual, and as usual humming out of tune. Josephine is in her boudoir beyond...

BONAPARTE

What did that fortune-teller once tell you? That one day you would become something more than a queen?

Josephine is at her dressing table, removing her make-up. She stops still. This is the moment she's been dreading. Bonaparte moves up behind her.

BONAPARTE

Well, my sweet Josephine – she was right. You are about to become an Empress...

He encircles her head with his hands to form a crown. She takes his wrist, talking to him in the mirror...

JOSEPHINE

Don't do this, Bonaparte. No one will understand why...

BONAPARTE

The people understand well enough - it is they who have chosen me - 99% of the electorate - what other leader can boast such a mandate?

JOSEPHINE

But your enemies will say it's your pride... your ambition -

BONAPARTE

I have no ambition...

JOSEPHINE

I know that - and you know that - but does Fouché? Talleyrand? Murat? They will say you're in love with power...

BONAPARTE

Let them say what they like! Very well, yes - I admit it - I love power - but as a musician loves his violin... I love it in order to extract sounds, chords, harmonies - I love it as an artist.

JOSEPHINE

As First Consul you are unique among the powers of Europe... make yourself Emperor and you'll be just another monarch. And look at the company you'll be in - the mad King of England, the mad King of Spain.

BONAPARTE

But you forget that as Emperor they will have to negotiate with me as an equal - as a crowned monarch, not some Corsican upstart.

JOSEPHINE

They will hate you the more for it!

BONAPARTE

Monarchs do not go around trying to assassinate one another...

JOSEPHINE

But you are no monarch by blood,
Bonaparte - by birth you're one of
the rabble, just like me.

BONAPARTE

Then we shall create our own
aristocracy. Let the sons of
fishmongers become Earls and
Princes and Marshals of France...

JOSEPHINE

We'd be the laughing stock of
Europe!

BONAPARTE

I've made my decision, and that's
that.

(shifting mood)

I was thinking of having a bee as
my personal emblem - what do you
think, my little Creole?

Josephine stares at him for a moment, her eyes filling.

JOSEPHINE

Your family hate me enough as it
is, Bonaparte. If you become
Emperor, they will do all in their
power to persuade you to divorce
me. They will say that I am past
child-bearing - that I'm barren -
that France needs an heir to the
throne - a royal heir... and that
you must find a royal wife - a
young Princess, not a barren old
Creole...!

Josephine begins to sob. Bonaparte takes her in his arms.

BONAPARTE

How could I possibly put aside this
excellent woman, just because I am
become great? If I create you
Empress, it is only bare justice.
And what an Empress you shall be! I
win only battles, but Josephine by
her sweetness wins every heart...

He kisses her, wiping away her tears.

116 INT. LONG GALLERY - TUILERIES - <1804> - DAY

The Bonaparte clan are foregathered in the long mirrored
gallery, where a large plaster model of the interior of Notre
Dame cathedral is mounted on a table.

Caroline and Pauline are taking elocution lessons from Talma, walking to and fro with books balanced on their heads.

The family also includes Joseph, his wife Julie (getting plump), the morose Louis and his unhappy Hortense, Eugène, Murat and various lords and ladies-in-waiting. Gros and other artists are also present, making sketches. Sibling rivalry is paramount as each Bonaparte clamours for their brother's attention.

CAROLINE

Why should I have to walk beside Hortense – I'm your sister, I should take precedence over her!

ELISA

And why should I have to carry your wife's train? I'm a princess now, and I think it most seemly...

LOUIS

And I don't see why I should have to walk alongside Eugène – with respect, I should be in front of him...

EUGENE

I don't mind where I am as long as...

BONAPARTE

Well I mind! Eugène is my adopted son, and more than a son – he is kind, he is loyal, he is brave. Hortense is my daughter and I love her too. They will walk beside you, and if any of the rest of my family are unhappy with my arrangements, you can leave your imperial titles at the door and go home to Corsica!

ROUSTAM

Monsieur Lucien Bonaparte has arrived, your Majesty.

Pauline pokes out her tongue as Bonaparte walks to where Lucien has entered at the other end of the gallery. Several needle women are kneeling on the floor nearby, carefully sewing gold bees to cover up the royal lilies on the carpet.

BONAPARTE

Where is Mamma?

LUCIEN

She thanks you for your invitation, but wishes to decline.

LUCIEN (CONT'D)

She feels that it is insulting to the Pope to have forced him into such a humiliating position...

BONAPARTE

The Pope is coming to crown me of his own free will!

LUCIEN

It is Mamma who declines to attend on the Pope's account. I have my own reasons. I once took an oath to destroy you if ever you betrayed the French people. I don't say that you have... but I don't want to be here when you do. I am going to live in Italy with Mamma.

BONAPARTE

Be assured that by next spring, I shall be King of Italy... and my son shall be the King of Rome.

LUCIEN

(raising an eyebrow)

Then I shall go to the United States - or do you plan to conquer her too?

BONAPARTE

I have been called upon to change the face of the world, so be satisfied with being among the first of my subjects. To live without glory, without being useful to your country, without leaving a trace of your existence - that is not to have lived at all!

LUCIEN

To have lived in your shadow... that is not to have lived at all.

BONAPARTE

If you refuse to attend my coronation, you may consider yourself my enemy.

Bonaparte turns on the whole family -

BONAPARTE

I have given you not only riches and honours, but the chance to leave some imprint of yourselves on the sands of time... and how do you repay me?

(screaming)

BONAPARTE (CONT'D)

By giving me more headaches than
all my enemies put together!

LUCIEN

Good bye, Nabulio.

BONAPARTE

And don't call me by that stupid
name! I am Napoleon – Emperor of
the French!

Lucien marches out. Everyone has fallen silent. Bonaparte
walks back to them. Pauline giggles...

BONAPARTE

There are thousands of men in
France who have rendered far
greater services to the Republic
than any of you – yet I reward you
with titles and perhaps one day
with crowns. Why? Because you are
my family – because we have a
kinship tighter than any monarchy –
but be warned, power is my
mistress. I have worked too hard in
conquering her to allow anyone to
take her from me... or to even
covet her! Remember that, Joseph...
Pauline, Caroline – Murat – Louis –
all of you! I have no ambition...

Louis can't resist a cynical smirk.

BONAPARTE

No personal ambition. I want
nothing for myself – I could live
very happily on 20 sou a day...
But my ambition for the world is
as vast as my vision. No personal
feelings can outweigh the needs
of that vision, and I will only
accept as relatives those who
serve it. He who does not soar
with me ceases to belong to my
family. Work for me, and I will
reward you well – so long as you
always place your duty to the
Empire above your own personal
ambitions. Take your obligations
seriously, not your crowns. And
never forget that if it wasn't
for me, you'd all be milking
goats back in Corsica!

Bonaparte weeds out the figures of Lucien and Letizia from
the order of procession – then reinstates Letizia, but
tramples Lucien on the floor.

He takes a large pinch of snuff while surveying the cowed expressions of his family. As he continues, Le Sueur's sumptuous GRAND MARCH builds -

BONAPARTE

If we succeed, we shall go down in history as the greatest family that has ever lived. And if we fail, our name shall be damned to eternity!

117 INT. ALTAR - NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL - <1804> - DAY

Marshal Murat enters the great cathedral of Notre Dame, resplendent in gold and ermine, bearing the Imperial Crown on a velvet cushion. Behind him is Josephine, her hair in ringlets, radiant in a robe of white satin scattered with golden bees. Her train is borne by Bonaparte's reluctant sisters, followed by Napoleon and Joseph. As they enter the cathedral, Bonaparte whispers to Joseph behind his hand -

BONAPARTE

If only our father could see us now!

... the MUSIC SOARS, and Bonaparte and Joseph move forward, followed by Louis and Eugène, proudly wearing his father's ceremonial sword. Behind them are many old faces from Italy and Egypt - the newly-created Marshals of the Empire: Ney, Lannes, Berthier, Massena, Augereau, Davout, Oudinot - each resplendent in magnificent court dress. The congregation is filled with familiar faces - Talleyrand, Fouché, Larrey, Bertrand and Talma among them. Bonaparte takes the oath...

BONAPARTE

I ascend the throne to which the unanimous votes of the People, the Senate and the Army have called me. I swear that I shall govern with the sole purpose of securing the glory and the happiness of the people!

At the altar, the Pope takes a crown from a velvet cushion, blesses it and hands it to Bonaparte. Josephine is kneeling before him, gazing up, eyes brimming. As he places the crown gently upon her head, we hear his inner voice...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I have no ambition, but doubtless historians of the future will contradict me. Very well then -- let's say that I have ambition. Ah, but what an ambition...

The supreme moment has arrived. The Pope blesses the gold crown of laurels while the voices of a hundred choristers rise in unison... "Vivat, vivat, vivat, Imperator in Aeternum!"

NAPOLEON (V/O)

... to bring about, at last, a kingdom of reason on this earth, consecrated to the full exercise and complete enjoyment of all human capabilities!

— and then, to the amazement of many, Bonaparte takes the crown from the Pope, turns to the huge congregation, a lone figure amid the soaring columns — and crowns himself Napoleon I, Emperor of the French.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

If this can only be achieved by means of world dictatorship, can you blame me if I try?

118 EXT. LONGWOOD HOUSE — ST HELENA — <1816> — DAY

Rain and mist shroud the bleak bungalow of Longwood, surrounded by sentry posts at discreet distances. Several British redcoats are sitting round a brazier, trying to keep warm. A carriage approaches through the gloom, and the soldiers snap to order.

119 INT. DRAWING ROOM — LONGWOOD — ST HELENA — <1816> — DAY

The inmates of Longwood are sitting around the drawing room. The furnishings are plain in the extreme, little better than a job-lot from a junk shop, although Marchand and Ali have gone to great pains to decorate it with a few ornate relics brought from France. Thus a superb Empire lamp in the Egyptian style finds itself on a cheap table beside the battered arm chair in which Fanny is knitting a baby's shawl.

Albine and Montholon sit nearby, playing cards. Gourgaud is disgruntled, as always — his grievance directed towards Montholon.

Napoleon is in the billiard room beyond, rearranging coloured blocks on a dog-eared map, spread out on the billiard table. The monotonous ticking of a large alarm clock is broken by intrusive voices from the hall...

LOWE (O/S)

I wish to speak with General Buonaparte on matters of the utmost importance.

BERTRAND (O/S)

The Emperor is indisposed and may not be seen without a prior appointment.

Sir Hudson LOWE is standing in the open doorway, flanked by two soldiers. Bertrand confronts him, while Napoleon's huge Swiss bodyguard NOVARREZ stands in readiness.

LOWE

I have made several applications, to which I have not yet been favoured with a reply. I must insist that I see General Buona-arte in person. His Majesty's Government requires that General Buonaparte's presence be verified twice a day - if necessary, by the employment of force!

Novarrez folds his arms, barring further access to Lowe as Napoleon appears from the billiard room.

NAPOLEON

Sir, I warn you that if anyone intrudes upon my privacy, he shall

not pass except over my dead body.

LOWE

Ah... General Buonaparte... I am glad to see you are well, sir.

NAPOLEON

I am far from well, but as you have seen fit to expel the good Doctor O'Meara, are you surprised?

LOWE

My own doctor Arnott is at your disposal.

Napoleon laughs, catching the eye of one of the soldiers who smiles shyly.

NAPOLEON

An English doctor?!

LOWE

No, sir - a Scotsman.

NAPOLEON

Shall I tell you what I think? I think that you are under orders to have me killed. I believe you to be capable of anything, and so long as you live with your hatred, we shall live with our thoughts.

As always, Lowe is unable to look Napoleon in the eye.

LOWE

Sir, I did not come here to be insulted. His Majesty's Government has further instructed me to obtain a pledge from each of your companions, solemnly declaring that it is their desire to remain on St Helena, and that they shall share in the detention imposed upon General Buonaparte so long as he shall live...

Albine looks appalled – Fanny bursts into tears.

NAPOLEON

Which will not be long, I assure you. But you will need something more potent than arsenic. If rats can withstand it, so can I.

LOWE

I will ignore that remark, sir, and pass on to the more pressing question of your household expenses. His Majesty's government requires that you reduce your provisions by one-third.

NAPOLEON

Who asked you to feed me? If you stopped your provisions and I was hungry, all I would have to do is walk over to your soldiers camp – and I am sure enough that they would not deny food and drink to the first and the oldest soldier of a united Europe.

Napoleon smiles at the young British soldier, who goes weak at the knees. Lowe turns to Bertrand, hands him a document.

LOWE

My Government is not unreasonable, and if General Buonaparte were to cooperate a little more, then...

NAPOLEON

I am not General Bonaparte to you, sir! To these brave soldiers – yes, but you? You're not a soldier – you're nothing but an office clerk! You don't know what goes on in the soul of a soldier, whereas I have grown up on the battlefield. I am a soldier because that is the special faculty I was born with.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

That is my life, my habit. I have commanded wherever I have been. I commanded at the siege of Paris - I carried the soldiers of the army of Italy with me as soon as I appeared among them - I commanded at the Pyramids - at Marengo - at Austerlitz - I was born that way!

The two British soldiers look ready to mutiny, and Lowe beats a hasty retreat...

LOWE

I have nothing further to discuss with you, sir. Good night.

And he leaves. Napoleon turns to Bertrand.

NAPOLEON

The man has no imagination. He cannot see how history will remember him. Were it not for me, his name would fade quietly into oblivion. Bertrand, have my silver plate broken up in full view of any ship leaving for Europe. My war with England is far from over!

120 EXT. AUSTERLITZ - PANORAMA - <1805> - DAY

A freezing December morning, the ground white with snow.

We are looking out across a valley, with a low plateau on the far side. Apart from bird-song, all is tranquil and still. Then a wistful THEME creeps in as the CAMERA PANS gently RIGHT. We are now looking south, where the plateau dips down towards a sparkling frozen lake.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Do you remember how you once said "If I were to die Bonaparte, who will there be to love you?" That was a very long time ago, wasn't it?

Now we PAN LEFT, from south to north, passing along the plateau as it slopes towards a pretty little town in the distance, a church spire glistening in the frosty sunlight.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Ah, my sweet Josephine - everything passes - beauty - wit - sentiment - even the sun - but one thing is eternal... my wish for your happiness.

Napoleon is seated on a white horse on the edge of a ridge, surveying the valley through his spyglass, surrounded by his Marshals (Murat, Lannes, Soult) and Chiefs-of-Staff. A tiny domed church is behind them, with snow-clad forests beyond.

While Napoleon's V/O continues, we hear him bombard his harassed Chief-of-Staff Berthier with questions: "Compass bearings?" Berthier indicates north, east and south (west is behind us) while struggling to extract a map from his mobile files. "What hour will the sun dawn in two day's time?" Berthier ferrets for a book of tables... "December the second old style... Military dawn, 07.45 hours, actual sunrise - 08.09"... "What do they call that hill?" "The Pratzen Heights" "That town?" "Austerlitz."

NAPOLEON

Mark this landscape well, my fine Marshals. Here in two days time we shall have a great victory over the armies of Austria and Russia.

MURAT

But Sire, Davout's 3rd Corps are still eighty leagues from Vienna... and Ney can't be here before...

Napoleon overcomes all objections, but we hear only his letter to Josephine...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My Josephine... all day I have been like a mother in labour. There's no greater coward than I am when drawing up a plan of campaign...

121 EXT. AUSTERLITZ MONTAGE - <1805> - DAY/NIGHT

Napoleon seems to be in every place at once - surveying the battlefield, interrogating captured spies, supervising the arrival of troops, exhausted after days of forced marches.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I magnify every danger, every possible stroke of bad luck that my mind can imagine. My nervousness is painful - not that I don't show a cool face to those around me...

Napoleon welcomes his exhausted Imperial Guard as they collapse into camp, Léon among them. With their foot-high bearskins, they tower over their "little general". Napoleon teases their complaints - "My old Grumblers!" - tweaking their ears and reviving their spirits.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

The monarchs I am fighting chose to keep a great distance between themselves and their men, but I like to go among them, and talk to them, and hear their little histories. My whole anxiety is to obtain a victory with the least loss of blood, for my soldiers are in truth my children...

Berthier is rushing about, dispatching documents, processing intelligence and transmitting orders from Napoleon. Egged on by Léon, one of the Imperial Guard step forward.

GRUMBLER

Please, sire – keep out of the firing line tomorrow, and I promise you will only have to fight with your eyes. If we are to die, it is for the glory of our people – but if you were to die, sire... what would become of France? Let your guard will win you a glorious victory, eh lads?

(a great cheer)

To celebrate the anniversary of your coronation!

Napoleon gives the Grumbler's moustache a sharp, affectionate tug. The men laugh and cheer.

122 INT. NAPOLEON'S HQ - AUSTERLITZ - <1805> - NIGHT

Napoleon paces to and fro inside his bivouac – a ramshackle peasant's hut – dictating to Bourrienne and Meneval.

NAPOLEON

Letter to Talleyrand: Tomorrow we shall have a big battle against the armies of Austria and Russia. I have done my utmost to avoid it, but to retreat now would be to invite the invasion of France...

(to Meneval)

To Talma: My dear Talma. I see from your selection of dramas for the forthcoming season that you propose to perform "Britannicus" again...

While dictating, Napoleon moves to the huge map table, where D'Albe, chief of the Topographical Engineers, arranges various coloured blocks and pins on the map in accordance with latest reported positions.

We follow Napoleon at a slower pace, absorbing his surroundings.

In one corner of the room is his green tent, drawn back to reveal the familiar iron bed within. We move past his portable library of several hundred books – Corneille, Racine, Plutarch, Machiavelli, the Koran, the Bible, Euclid... until we reach the map table, lighted by candles at each corner...

NAPOLEON

(to Bourrienne)

I admit that I did not suspect that the Austrians and Russians would be drawn by the gold of England so fast, but I have made so many mistakes in my life that I am past blushing for them.

(to Meneval)

In Act II, Scene 4, your character is heard to say, "Only too happy would I be if the favour of a divorce relieved me of a yoke laid upon me by duty." You will omit these lines. The play is too long in any event, and a little pruning here and there will improve the dramatic flow...

Napoleon looks up to see the Mameluke Roustam at the door.

ROUSTAM

Prince Murat, Marshal Lannes and Marshal Soult wish an audience, Your Majesty.

Napoleon waves them in and Roustam stands aside. All three are newly-created Marshals of the Grand Army, peacocks in gold-encrusted uniforms, to which Murat – now a Prince – has added diamonds and rubies. Murat and the hesitant SOULT hang back, allowing Lannes to be their unwilling spokesman.

NAPOLEON

Well, Jean – why so glum? It doesn't suit you.

LANNES

Sire... I feel – we feel – that you should give consideration to a general retreat. Our situation is precarious.

Napoleon seems mildly surprised. Soult and Murat look anxious, preparing to receive the Emperor's wrath. Instead of which he laughs, tweaking Lannes' ear.

NAPOLEON

For you, my dear Jean, to be advising a retreat? Does that not strike you as most unusual, Prince Murat?

MURAT

Indeed, Your Majesty – most unusual.

Lannes turns indignantly on Murat, his hand grasping his sword as though offering a duel...

LANNES

Why you damnable swine –
(to Napoleon)

It was "Prince" Murat who came up with the idea in the first place – only he was too cowardly to propose it himself.

NAPOLEON

So you don't agree with him?

LANNES

Well, I...

MURAT

Your Majesty – the men are exhausted – four days of forced marches – day and night without....

NAPOLEON

I was not asking you, Prince Murat

–

(to Lannes)

I am asking Jean.

Lannes turns to the huge map table, affording us a bird's eye view of the (forthcoming) battlefield. Napoleon's forces (in blue) are arranged along a three-mile front overlooking the valley we saw earlier. The frozen lake is to the south (our right flank); the Pratzen Heights faces our centre, and the little town of Austerlitz faces the extremities of our left flank.

At present, the Pratzen Heights are held by French cavalry and infantry. Beyond them to the east is the huge Russian army (green) spreading southwards beyond the Pratzen Heights, augmented by Austrian troops (red) to the north-east of Austerlitz.

LANNES

The enemy outnumber us two to one – over a hundred thousand men. We have barely fifty.

NAPOLEON

If the art of war were nothing more than the art of avoiding risks, glory would become the prey of mediocre minds. I have made all the calculations.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

I evaluate the strength of an army by multiplying its mass times its speed. The enemy may have superior numbers, but we have speed... and we have luck.

Napoleon kneels on the table to illustrate his tactics -

NAPOLEON

I could rout the enemy by any one of half a dozen different tactics. I could defeat them here, so long as I held onto the Pratzen Heights... but that would be just an ordinary battle.

(an idea forming)

But if I were to take your advice and retreat - abandoning my fine position to the Russian left flank... then it becomes much more interesting.

Napoleon slides the blue blocks down the slopes from the Pratzen Heights and across the valley to rejoin the rest of the French army. Then he moves up four green blocks - the Russian left wing - to occupy the plateau recently ceded by the French. Napoleon has reached his decision.

NAPOLEON

Marshal Soult, Prince Murat - you will conduct an orderly retreat - to here. If my intuition is sure - and it has never felt surer - the Russians will have fallen for the bait and seized the Pratzen Heights in triumph by midnight. Tomorrow they will be ours.

Napoleon takes a pinch of snuff. Murat and his fellow Marshals look astonished - this is not quite the retreat they had in mind.

123 EXT. TENT - AUSTERLITZ - <1805> - NIGHT

Napoleon leaves his bivouac with Lannes, saluting the Imperial Guard who surround the HQ. Beyond is Larrey's field station, set up in a farm stable, where his team prepare for the battle, laying out stretchers, bandages, saws...

Napoleon pauses to talk with Larrey, assuring him that more ambulances and supplies are on their way... but his words are drowned beneath the clatter of a mobile printing press, spewing forth copies of Napoleon's Proclamation to the Grand Army. These are snatched up by couriers as they come off the circular printing drum and distributed far and wide among the ranks, bivouacked along the entire hillside...

Napoleon mounts his horse and starts off with Lannes and his Escort (including Bertrand) to visit the outposts. It is twilight, and the horse-grenadiers carry lighted torches...

124 EXT. AUSTERLITZ - HILLSIDE - <1805> - NIGHT

We move in parallel with Napoleon, following the couriers distributing the proclamation to the company commanders.

The men are everywhere clustered around campfires, trying to keep warm on this starlit, bitterly cold December night.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Soldiers! Russia and Austria have again allied themselves with England in their declared war of extermination on the French Republic! Tomorrow we shall deliver a thunderbolt that will shatter the pride of our enemies - and avenge the deaths of our brave sailors at Trafalgar!

The commanders read Napoleon's proclamation aloud to the men by the flickering light of the many fires. As we TRACK with Napoleon, the different voices blend seamlessly...

COMMANDER #1

Tomorrow I shall command the battle in person, but I shall not expose myself to enemy fire if, with your usual courage, you throw their ranks into disorder and confusion..

COMMANDER #2

... but if victory becomes uncertain, even for a moment, then you will see your Emperor in the front rank of danger, daring all to save all!

Cynicism is remarkably absent. A few Grumblers raise a wry smile, but this is more at the naivete of the young drummer boys and raw recruits, aching to fight for their Emperor...

COMMANDER #3

Remember, my soldiers - you must have the will to live, and the willingness to die! Glory can only be won where there is danger...

COMMANDER #4

Death is nothing, but to live without glory and honour is to die every day!

A group of Grenadiers are sitting round their camp fire, puffing on clay pipes, having just heard Napoleon's proclamation. Napoleon joins his men for a few words and a bite of baked potato. We hear fragments of conversation...

NAPOLEON

Do you remember when we crossed the Alps and slapped the Austrians on both cheeks at Marengo? You were with me, Baptiste - and you, Jean-Paul...

JEAN-PAUL

I was with you before that, sir - I was a drummer boy with you in Egypt - I caught the plague at Acre...

Napoleon pretends to remember him - more banter - then he remounts his horse and joins Lannes. Meanwhile Léon has taken up a handful of bedding straw and set it on fire. Holding a bunch in each hand, the men light them one from the other, crying "Vive L'Empereur!" and tossing them in the air. Soon the entire hillside along a four-mile front is studded with fire from fifty thousand torches.

NAPOLEON

This is the finest moment of my life. Yet even this moment is saddened at the thought that I shall lose so many of these brave men tomorrow. And by this sadness, by this pain I feel in my heart, I know they are indeed my children - and I shall weep for them.

LANNES

You must fight such thoughts, sire - or they will spoil you for war...

Napoleon gazes down at the moving wave of adoring, jubilant, uplifted faces, chanting his name and rattling their shakos on the points of their bayonets. This is worship bordering on idolatry - and Napoleon absorbs every moment...

NAPOLEON

You may be sure that if I had a son and he were fighting tomorrow, I would not flinch if they brought me the news that he was dead. Not the slightest sign of emotion would be visible... everything would appear calm and in control... But when I am alone - that's when I suffer... that's when the feelings of the man burst forth...

From the far side of the valley, the cheering French are answered by a distant wave of jeering.

Napoleon glances at his pocket watch. It is midnight. He looks through his spyglass: as predicted, the Russians have taken the Pratzen Heights, and are celebrating their triumph. Napoleon bangs his fist in his palm, gleefully relishing the moment.

NAPOLEON

I have them!

125 EXT. NAPOLEON'S HQ - AUSTERLITZ - <1805> - DAWN

In Tolstoy's words, "the fog lies unbroken like a sea in the valley, but higher up, where Napoleon stands with his Marshals around him, the sky is a clear blue, and the sun's vast orb quivers like a huge, hollow, crimson float on the surface of that silky sea of mist. The Emperor's gleaming eye is fixed intently on one spot: the Pratzen Heights..."

Flanked by Berthier, Bertrand and his ADCs, Napoleon briefs his Marshals, dressed in their finest uniforms and plumed hats - Soult (IV Corps), Lannes (V Corps), Murat (Cavalry), Oudinot (Grenadiers), Davout (III Corps) and Bessières (Imperial Guard). They stamp to keep warm, their breath hanging in the air. Napoleon checks his fob-watch...

NAPOLEON

Marshal Davout, begin your retreat.

The "Iron Marshal" hurries off...

NAPOLEON

Marshals Lannes and Soult will await my signal... Bessières, the Imperial Guard to be held in reserve and on no account to advance without my order!

As Napoleon continues his briefing, we move away, passing MUSICIANS from the Grenadiers of the Imperial Guard, tuning their instruments and taking up positions - Mameluke percussionists, bearded bassoonists and cuirassier trumpeters.

Napoleon finishes his briefing, and Oudinot and Lannes hurry off. Soult and Murat remain. Napoleon again consults his watch... tension building... then a BUGLE echoes in the mist, sounding Davout's retreat...

Napoleon puts his eye to his spyglass... and with a great cheer, the Russian infantry spills down the slopes of the Pratzen Heights and into the mist-filled valley. Then he looks north, to the area left of the Heights, where there is now a gaping hole in the Russian centre, as predicted...

NAPOLEON

Marshal Soult, how long will it take you to reach the Russian centre?

SOULT

Less than twenty minutes, sire.

NAPOLEON

Then we shall wait twenty minutes.
When the enemy is making a blunder,
we must take care not to interrupt
him.

Despite the advancing menace, Napoleon seems perfectly relaxed. He squints at Murat, his white uniform a dazzle of gold braid, lace and galloons, his hat festooned with peacock feathers and encrusted with diamonds.

Napoleon smiles, but keeps his thoughts to himself and returns to his bivouac while war artists set up their easels and sketch-pads along the edge of the ridge.

126 INT. NAPOLEON'S TENT - AUSTERLITZ - <1805> - DAWN

Alone in his inner tent, Napoleon takes a cat-nap on his campaign bed. A trumpet sounds. He is on his feet instantly, checks his watch, takes out his portrait of Josephine, kisses it, tucks it away and is about to leave when he catches sight of his reflection in a looking-glass. He studies himself a moment - then removes his hat, pulls out the feathers and tears off the lace frills. As the thunder of hooves becomes louder...

127 EXT. NAPOLEON'S HQ - AUSTERLITZ - <1805> - DAWN

... Napoleon re-emerges, now wearing a long grey coat. He replaces his hat, stripped of all embellishments save the tricolour, and seems to grow two feet in the process.

Napoleon mounts his horse, joining Murat and Soult, then scans the horizon with his spyglass. The last Russians are swarming down the sides of the Pratzen Heights and into the mist-filled valley - a torrent rushing towards us.

MURAT

We must attack, your Majesty!

Napoleon's POV: on the far hill, removed from the rest of the opposing army, are the two Emperors, also on horseback - the gaunt, melancholy FRANCIS of Austria, and the young Tsar of all the Russias: ALEXANDER I. The Emperor Francis is summoned away, leaving Alexander to gaze about him. He is a tall, handsome man, who reminds us of Bonaparte at Arcola. He raises his own telescope - looks at us - a brief exchange -- then Napoleon gives the word -

NAPOLEON

Now, Murat - now is the moment!

Napoleon draws his glittering sword -- the Musicians strike up, shakos are hoisted on the men's bayonets -- the sword is raised, held high in the air -- then drops --

128 EXT. AUSTERLITZ - [BATTLE] - <1805> - DAWN/DAY

[MUSIC OVER] The battle that ensues is choreographed by Napoleon himself from his position overlooking the valley. The thunder of the Russian cavalry gets louder and louder -- and suddenly they are bursting through the mist in pursuit of Davout's "fleeing" right wing, who peel aside to reveal a battery of canons, hidden behind earthworks -- the guns blaze -- the Cossacks are decimated. One of the few French casualties is Oudinot, who receives a slash from a sabre...

Soult, Murat and Lannes now launch a counter-offensive -- a massive battering-ram of cavalry, charging through the mist, surfacing on the far side of the valley to the left of the Pratzen Heights...

Napoleon looks up, shielding his eyes against the morning sun. High above, a mountain EAGLE circles about the sky.

From the Eagle's POV, Murat's cavalry -- 7,000 strong -- swarm up through the mist, brandishing sabres and driving a wedge into the enemy's weakened centre. The cavalry is supported by massed infantry: Lannes veers left to roll up the enemy's right wing, while Soult wheels round to pursue the Russian left, swarming down from the Pratzen Heights...

Napoleon gallops furiously along the ridge, dispatching orders to Berthier and his ADCs, while Larrey and his men dart in and out of the gunfire, loading the wounded onto flying ambulances...

At Napoleon's direction, a sudden change in the drumbeat acts as a signal to the Mameluke cavalry of the Imperial Guard, who join Davout's III Corps as they turn about and hew down the astonished Russians. The sight of several thousand Arab warriors brandishing scimitars is enough to quail even the ferocious Cossacks, and the entire Russian left flank is routed...

Napoleon looks out across the valley through his spyglass: Tsar Alexander is sitting on the ground beside his horse, weeping. The mist disperses, revealing the Russian left wing trapped between Davout's III and Soult's IV Corps, now swarming over the Pratzen Heights in pursuit of the Russians. Most are sabred to death, but the artillery has one avenue of escape: the frozen lake to the south...

129 EXT. AUSTERLITZ - [LAKE] - <1805> - DAY/DUSK

[MUSIC OVER] Napoleon raises his spyglass to see: the Russian gun-teams desperately hauling their canon and fleeing across the shimmering, frozen surface...

Napoleon dismounts, walks to a 12-pounder canon. The gun-crew salute. Napoleon squints along the barrel of the gun – realigns it – then steps back with a nod to the gunner... As the MUSIC reaches its climax, the gunner rams home the charge, Napoleon lights the quill – and through his spyglass sees the iron ball hurtle towards the lake, shattering its surface ahead of the fleeing Russian gun-crews...

The crack zig-zags across the ice into the path of the Russian artillery – the surface yields beneath the enormous load – and 36 gun crews are dragged beneath the freezing waters of lake, their screams of wild dismay bringing the orchestrated sequence to an appalling yet rapturous close.

130 INT. THRONE ROOM – TUILERIES – <1806> – DAY

The opulent Throne Room at the Tuileries, lit with thousands of candles and filled with guests in their finest attire. Even Louis XIV never held court in such lavish style as this. They include civilians, Government officials and former exiles of the old regime, as well as members of the Imperial Family: Eugène, Prince Murat and Caroline, the dazzling Pauline; and Letizia, dressed as always in black. Murat's court dress is even more flamboyant than his battlefield apparel. He and Princess Caroline are talking to a tall, dark-eyed actress of 18 – ELÉONORE – as though briefing her.

Many of Napoleon's Marshals are also present: Oudinot (still bandaged from his wounds at Austerlitz), Lannes, Soult, Bertrand – and a new face with flaming red hair: Michel NEY.

A corridor of Guests await presentation, among them a nervous old DUCHESS of the ancien regime, standing with Talma.

DUCHESS

I don't hear very well Monsieur Talma.

TALMA

Relax, my dear Duchess. The Emperor only ever asks two questions – what is your name and how old are you.

The Duchess anxiously repeats to herself parrot fashion, "What is your name" and "how old are you"...

A fanfare of trumpets – the doors open and Napoleon enters, dressed in his simple green-and-white uniform, accompanied by the limping Talleyrand. Napoleon gazes at his Court a moment – spots familiar faces, including Fouché...

NAPOLEON

(whispering to Talleyrand)
Just look at my virtuous Republic-ans. All I had to do was give them a title, hang gold braid on their clothes and lo, they are mine.

Napoleon proceeds along the line-up with Talleyrand, who introduces a few chosen guests. Josephine follows, every inch an Empress, escorted by her ladies-in-waiting.

TALLEYRAND

Your Majesty, may I present Prince Clemens Wenzel Fürst von Metternich, the new Austrian ambassador.

Metternich (33) - a handsome, Teutonic diplomat, with blue eyes and curly fair hair - bows graciously.

METTERNICH

Sire, I bring warm greetings from the Emperor Francis... and white geraniums for the Empress.

Napoleon and Josephine exchange discreet smiles.

NAPOLEON

We welcome you to Paris, Prince Metternich... and trust you will represent the interests of Austria better than your predecessor.

METTERNICH

Sire, the preservation of peace between our two empires shall ever be my prime endeavour.

We sense that Talleyrand and Metternich - both aristocrats from the old regime - have an intuitive empathy. Caroline catches Metternich's eye and gives a flirtatious smile as Napoleon moves on down the line...

NAPOLEON

And what is your name?

LAS CASES

Emmanuel-Augustin-Dieudonné-Martin-Joseph, Comte de Las Cases, Your Majesty.

Las Cases - ten years younger than the Las Cases we know at St Helena - bows graciously.

NAPOLEON

Welcome back to your old Estates, Comte de Las Cases... but not to your old privileges.

Napoleon moves briskly on, as though inspecting troops. He reaches the anxious Duchess.

NAPOLEON

And what is your name, Madame?

DUCHESS

The Duchess de Brissac, your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

How many children do you have?

DUCHESS

Seventy four, your Majesty.

The laughter is brief, Josephine consoling the confused Duchess while Napoleon ascends the throne.

HERALD

Whereas it has lately pleased us to raise our well-beloved brother Joseph to the title, rank and dignity of King of Naples and the Two Sicilies, take notice that we do hereby dispose of the United Provinces of the Netherlands in favour of our well-beloved brother Louis and our daughter Hortense, elevating them to the title, rank and dignity of King and Queen of Holland.

Hortense and Louis ascend the steps to the throne. Napoleon crowns his brother with a symbolic wreath.

NAPOLEON

Protect Dutch liberties, Dutch laws, Dutch religion – but never cease to be French. Go, reign, and make your people happy.

Louis and Hortense look anything but happy in each other's company – an arranged marriage that is visibly doomed. Napoleon joins their unwilling hands and presents them to the applauding Court. Augereau whispers to Lannes...

AUGEREAU

Well my fine Duke of Montebello... to think we fought a revolution to get rid of all this nonsense!

LANNES

Do I hear you complaining, my fine Duke of Istria?

131 INT. DINING ROOM - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

A grand dinner party follows the investiture - tables laden with roast swans and wild boars. Napoleon presides, eating with manners more suited to a soldiers' mess than courtly etiquette. Josephine is at the far end, charming those around her.

NAPOLEON

You tire out your arms too much on stage, Talma... Caesar would never have been so lavish with his gestures. An Emperor knows that a gesture is a command and that one look may signify death...

TALLEYRAND

(aside, to Metternich)

It was Talma who taught him how to play the Emperor in the first place.

Napoleon notices Eléonore, the tall, willowy brunette seated further along the table next to Murat. While Napoleon talks, he watches Eléonore - as he did Josephine so long ago at Barras' dinner party...

NAPOLEON

Another thing, Talma. There's a line that seems to elude you. You make it sound too sincere when Caesar says "To me a throne and infamy are one." Caesar isn't saying what he thinks. Don't make Caesar talk like Brutus. When Brutus says that he hates kings, he means it, but with Caesar, no. Note the difference.

TALMA

Indeed I have already done so, Your Majesty.

Pauline is as dizzy as ever, wearing a fabulous diamond necklace. She flirts with Napoleon... while he flirts over her shoulder with the willowy Eléonore.

PAULINE

You make Joseph King of Naples, Louis King of Holland, Eugène Viceroy of Italy, Caroline and Elisa are given duchies, whereas all I get is a miserable village with subjects who run about on all fours with curly tails!

Napoleon is too entranced by Eléonore to react. Josephine is aware of the flirtation, but retains her composure.

PAULINE

I warn you Nabulio that I'm going to scratch your eyes out if you don't give me a proper state to rule...

PAULINE (CONT'D)
 something bigger than a pocket
 handkerchief and a population of
 pigs! It's not fair. I shall
 complain to Mama.

Napoleon hurriedly finishes his meal, still with his eye on
 Eléonore. Murat is again whispering to her, encouraging her.
 Napoleon is getting impatient...

NAPOLEON
 How can you rule with that fool
 Borghese as your husband? He may be
 rich but he's a complete idiot!

PAULINE
 No one knows that better than I,
 dear brother... though what on
 earth that has to do with ruling a
 country I can't possibly imagine!

132 INT. STATE ROOM - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

Many of the guests are still present, and Josephine is with
 Talma and Eugène, though her eye is on Napoleon, standing
 some distance away with his back to a roaring fire, talking
 to Talleyrand and Metternich.

NAPOLEON
 The partition of Poland was an
 iniquitous deed, and if Prussia
 takes bribes from England and
 declares war on me, I will crush
 her pride - and force her to
 restore the lands she stole from
 the Poles.

Caroline has appeared in the doorway, and has caught
 Napoleon's eye. He turns back to Metternich...

NAPOLEON
 So you'd better warn your Emperor
 Francis that if there is to be war
 between Prussia and France, then I
 shall expect Austria to fulfil her
 treaty obligations and remain
 neutral.

Napoleon joins Caroline and Murat, leaving Talleyrand and
 Metternich alone. Josephine's anxiety increases as she sees
 Caroline whispering to Napoleon. He nods, briefly whispers
 back, indicating Metternich, then leaves the room with Murat.
 Eugène squeezes his mother's hand in sympathy.

METTERNICH
 Tell me, Prince Talleyrand... Is it
 your Emperor's intention to right
 all the wrongs of Europe?

TALLEYRAND

And beyond, I fear.

METTERNICH

Then perhaps he might consider the restoration my family's vineyards on the Rhine... stolen by France twenty years ago?

Talleyrand smiles as Caroline approaches, sweetly seductive.

TALLEYRAND

Perhaps if you were to have a word in the ear of his Majesty's sister?

133 INT. PASSAGE - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

Napoleon leaves Murat, then makes his way to his private study where Roustam stands guard. He moves aside, giving a brief nod to Napoleon's enquiring look as he opens the door.

134 INT. STATE ROOM - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

Josephine sees Murat return to the room. They exchange looks of mutual animosity before he joins Caroline, now laughing with Talleyrand and Metternich. While Talleyrand introduces Murat to Metternich, Caroline sees that Josephine is about to leave the room in pursuit of Napoleon...

135 INT. NAPOLEON'S BUREAU - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

Napoleon playfully chases after the semi-clad Eléonore. She dives beneath his desk, strewn with maps...

NAPOLEON

If you don't come out at once, I shall eat you for dinner!

He pulls the same hideous face he used to scare Betsy, and the squealing Eléonore scrambles out. Napoleon grabs her, plying her with kisses...

136 INT. STATE ROOM - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

Josephine is about to make good her escape when Caroline catches her hand to detain her...

CAROLINE

Your Imperial Highness, would you be so good as to favour Prince Metternich with an introduction to your charming children?

137 INT. NAPOLEON'S BUREAU - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

Napoleon dodges Eléonore, taking refuge behind the large globe in the corner of his study. He has taken off his Imperial coat, and his shirt is hanging out. She spins the globe - he stops it...

... the palm of his hand falling on the Empire of Russia.

A brief reaction - long enough for Eléonore's fingertips to touch his shoulder, but he dodges aside and runs off...

ELÉONORE

But I caught your Majesty...!

NAPOLEON

Oh no you didn't!

ELÉONORE

That's cheating!

138 INT. BANQUET HALL - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

Metternich bows to Eugene as Josephine introduces him...

JOSEPHINE

My son, Prince Eugène de
Beauharnais - Viceroy of Italy...

METTERNICH

I tender my congratulations, Prince
Eugène. I understand you are
shortly to be married to the
Princess Auguste of Bavaria?

EUGENE

If that is my father's wish.

Metternich looks to Josephine - but she has gone.

139 INT. NAPOLEON'S BUREAU - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

Napoleon scrambles up the library step-ladder, mounted on wheels. Giggling with glee, Eléonore starts to push it about the room, Napoleon laughing -

NAPOLEON

You'll hurt yourself! Stop it or
I'll be cross!

She obeys at once, bringing the ladder to an abrupt halt. Napoleon falls backwards onto a velvet sofa, richly embroidered with golden bees, whereupon Eléonore leaps on top of him and they both roll onto the carpet.

It is thus that Josephine finds them when she opens a small secret door at the back of the study. Napoleon is too busy unlacing Eléonore's bodice to notice her silent appearance. The girl sees her first – screams – whereupon Napoleon turns on Josephine –

NAPOLEON

Get out!!

Josephine trembles in the doorway, tears brimming. Napoleon picks up a china lamp stand and hurls it at her – it hits the corner of the bookcase, smashing into fragments. Eléonore is terrified – as is Josephine...

Napoleon is so incensed that he seizes a stool and flings it across the room. Josephine bolts. Napoleon gives chase...

140 INT. STAIRS & PASSAGE – TUILERIES – <1806> – NIGHT

... down a narrow spiral staircase and along a dark corridor before cornering her. His rage is terrifying – Josephine cowers before him.

NAPOLEON

How dare you spy on me?!

JOSEPHINE

(stammering)

And... and you, you sire – how could you humiliate me like that in front of the entire court – in front of my own children...?

NAPOLEON

You humiliate yourself, woman – you're pathetic – look at you, crawling about corridors spying on your husband! Does Joseph's wife spy on him? Does Caroline spy on Murat? They're reasonable women, they accept it as part of man's nature so why can't you?

JOSEPHINE

Because... because I love you...

NAPOLEON

You don't know what love means!! When I was fighting in Italy – forced marches day after day – no time even to take off my boots... yet always I found time to write to my beloved Josephine – twice, three times a day... and what were you doing? Reading my letters aloud to your aristocratic friends, laughing at my love for you...

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

"Oh my little Bonaparte, he's so drole!"... that's when you weren't too busy entertaining Barras between the sheets - and Murat - and that fop Charles... even Fouché!

JOSEPHINE

It's not true, sire...!

NAPOLEON

Fouché has files to prove it!

JOSEPHINE

Fouché has files to prove you're the man in the moon if you wanted them! Your family will tell him anything to blacken my name and force you to divorce me...! And what do you mean, I read your letters aloud? I could not even read them myself - couldn't read your writing - you write like a - like a CAT!

Josephine's anger suddenly implodes - she starts laughing at what she just said. Napoleon stops in his tracks...

141 INT. JOSEPHINE'S BEDROOM - TUILERIES - <1806> - NIGHT

A grey African PARROT squawks in Spanish.

JOSEPHINE

Icállate!

Josephine draws the curtain on the parrot's cage, then turns to Napoleon, who is sharing her bed with two young Irish wolfhounds. The room is filled with roses, and is furnished in High Empire Egyptian style, with an ornate red canopy over the bed.

Josephine moves seductively towards him, side-stepping Napoleon's scattered clothing.

JOSEPHINE

What do you know about her?

NAPOLEON

You didn't give me much time to find out.

JOSEPHINE

Then I will tell you, sire...

As she does so, Josephine artfully goes to work...

JOSEPHINE

She is an actress – not a very good one, so Talma tells me. First she was Talma's mistress, then Murat's –

NAPOLEON

Prince Murat's...

JOSEPHINE

(kissing him)

– until he became bored with her too. I understand from Talma that her repertoire is somewhat limited. It was then that your Majesty's adorable sister Caroline...

NAPOLEON

Princess Caroline...

JOSEPHINE

... persuaded her to give herself to you... so that his Majesty might learn whether or not his crown jewels...

(kissing him)

... are as fertile as his mind. But there is one small problem that has been over-looked. If she were to bear a child... how would your Majesty know it was yours?

NAPOLEON

Ah, my sweet Creole... you have an excellent heart, but your reasoning is less sure. I need a legal heir, not a bastard. I was merely enjoying myself for a few minutes. A girl like her is just a passing amusement – a mere transaction on a sofa. I've not given up the thought of naming Eugène as my successor... on condition that you stop being jealous about silly girls who mean nothing to me.

The Parrot squawks "Bobada!" as Napoleon takes the upper hand in their love-making...

NAPOLEON

I am apart from everybody, I accept no one's conditions. To all your tears, I have the right to answer with the eternal "I"... You must submit to every one of my whims...

JOSEPHINE

Oh yes, my Lord...!

142 INT/EXT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1817> - NIGHT

CUT to the slow, monotonous tick-tock of the alarm clock. Napoleon is sitting in an armchair by the fire, listlessly poking at the flames, his mind far away. Fanny and Albine sit at a small table, playing cards, Bertrand reads, while Gourgaud stares out of the window.

FANNY

Remind me, dear Albine - is the Governor's garden party this weekend or next?

ALBINE

I must confess, dear Fanny, that I haven't the faintest idea. Would you care to cut the pack?

FANNY

General Gourgaud is sure to know -
(whispering)
... they say he has a lady friend in town.

GOURGAUD

And what if I have? At least all of you have your husbands and wives - I have no one - and no friends either!

NAPOLEON

Gourgaud, my Gorgotto - I am your friend, now do stop overplaying your part. You're meant to cheer me up, not look so glum. You can be as gloomy as you please, but not in my presence. You look sadder than a nightcap.

GOURGAUD

But I am sad, sire... my heart is full of sorrow...

NAPOLEON

You speak of sorrows? You? And I? What sorrows have I not had? Do you suppose that I don't have bad moments? When I wake at night, and remember what I was, and what I am? You at any rate have nothing to regret... so cheer up, my boy - corragio!

GOURGAUD

I'm sorry your Majesty, but I find the sneers and taunts of Count Montholon and...

A sudden CRASH somewhere outside the building. Napoleon springs to his feet, while the easy-going Count Montholon moves to one of the windows and peers behind the blind...

MONTHOLON

The young sergeant from the 53rd,
still trying to verify your
presence.

Napoleon takes a pinch of snuff and hurries over to Montholon, enjoying the diversion...

NAPOLEON

Did he see you?

MONTHOLON

I'm afraid so, sire.

NAPOLEON

Fool! Now I can't spy on him!

GOURGAUD

You can if you come over to this
window, your Majesty...

NAPOLEON

Let's see if I can't show a little
more cunning than you, Montholon.

Napoleon creeps along to the window, then backs against the curtain, playing the part very seriously. He peers through a purpose-made hole in the blind, Gourgaud drawing close...

NAPOLEON

Fetch my spyglass, there's a good
fellow – and be quick about it.

Gourgaud obliges, racing off while Napoleon peers through the hole to see a young British sergeant skulking about the bushes in the undergrowth behind the house. Gourgaud returns with the spyglass and Napoleon puts it to his eye –

NAPOLEON

Poor fellow. How those wretches
must hate me!

A crash as the Soldier stumbles and falls into a bush. Napoleon claps with delight –

NAPOLEON

He fell into my trap!

The Soldier picks himself up, brushes his uniform down, gives up and heads back to the lights of the camp.

NAPOLEON

Ah well. So much for entertainment.

Napoleon slumps in his chair and goes back to poking the fire. Gourgaud sits opposite, jotting down his last utterance. A long silence, just the ticking alarm clock.

NAPOLEON

Do you know who once owned that clock?

FANNY

(sotto voce)

Frederick the Great...

NAPOLEON

Frederick the Great. I picked it up in Berlin after thrashing the Prussians. It was the only thing in Prussia worth taking.

(a long sigh)

Ah, how long the nights are.

GOURGAUD

And the days, sire?

Napoleon stabs the fire – and a rat scuttles out from behind the coal scuttle. No one takes any notice. Napoleon stares into the flames while taking out a snuff-box. He takes a pinch – replaces the lid – a portrait of Josephine. Gourgaud moves closer, frustration mounting...

GOURGAUD

Sire, I have one great fault... and that is I am too much attached to your Majesty – unlike Count Montholon...

NAPOLEON

Gourgaud... you are such a child.

GOURGAUD

Me, a child?! I shall soon be 34! I have 18 years of service – 13 campaigns – three wounds! I saved your Majesty's life at Brienne!

Fanny and Albine pay no attention.

NAPOLEON

So you've told me many times. Thank you, Gourgaud.

ALBINE

What a pity there was no one to witness your heroism, General.

Gourgaud glares at Albine – tears welling – then turns and storms out. Napoleon stabs the fire.

NAPOLEON

(to Bertrand)

Poor Gorgotto – he's quite impossible. Jealous of everyone... he treats me as though I were his lover! Ah, how time drags. What a cross! It takes the courage of a saint to stay alive in a place like this!

143 EXT. WARSAW – POLAND – <1807> – DAY

Napoleon's triumphal entry into Warsaw – no Roman Emperor ever received such wild acclaim. He rides with Lannes, Murat, Eugene, Bertrand and Berthier, their carriage filled with flowers tossed through the window by the jubilant crowd.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Soldiers of the Grand Army! We have destroyed the Prussian invaders, and today we liberate Warsaw from her German yoke. Her people will enjoy the benefits of my Civil Code – the Jews shall have their rights and the serfs their freedom. Yet half of you complain of not having fired a single shot. My soldiers, your chance will come soon enough, for Poland herself cannot be restored until we have driven the armies of Russia and Austria from her sacred soil. The Russians boast they will march against us, but we will advance to meet them -- and spare them half the journey!

A beautiful face is suddenly at the window – a blonde girl of 18, with corn-blue eyes, dressed like a peasant...

GIRL

Welcome, sire – a thousand welcomes to the liberator of Warsaw!

Napoleon is struck by her simple beauty, but before he has time to hand her a bouquet from the dozens in the carriage, she falls away and is lost in the crowd.

NAPOLEON

Berthier. Find her.

"Yes, your Majesty" – and Berthier hops out into the crowd while the carriage sweeps onward, into the heart of Warsaw.

144 INT. BALLROOM - WARSAW - <1807> -NIGHT

A reception is being held in Napoleon's honour. He stands talking to Prince Eugène and his extraordinarily beautiful young wife, Princess Amelia AUGUSTA of Bavaria (18). Both are evidently much in love. Napoleon takes a pinch of snuff - or rather holds it against his nose, letting most of it drop on the magnificent carpet. Talleyrand limps over.

NAPOLEON

You see, Talleyrand? My family complain that I force them into unhappy marriages, but Prince Eugène could not have made a finer choice - if I were twenty years younger, I'd have married her myself. And not only a happy marriage but a happy alliance with Bavaria! At least if I cannot be a father I can become a doting grandfather...

Murat takes Napoleon aside, whispers in his ear. Napoleon turns to see the girl with the corn-flower eyes, no longer disguised as a peasant but in a white dress, surrounded by members of the old Polish nobility. They seem to be trying to persuade her to meet the Emperor, but she is as reluctant as Napoleon is eager to make her acquaintance. An old Polish Nobleman tries to cajole her. Napoleon moves closer...

MURAT

She's the Countess Walewska, sire - married to the nobleman on her right.

NAPOLEON

He's old enough to be her grandfather!

MURAT

Seventy-two, sire... and a true Polish patriot. He's even prepared to sacrifice his wife... in the cause of Polish restoration. But it is a dangerous cause, Sire - do not be lured into a perilous...

But Napoleon has moved closer towards Marie and is no longer listening. Murat nudges Lannes with a grin. But as Napoleon advances, so Marie retreats from him...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I saw only you, I admired only you, I desired only you. I shall grant you every wish within my power, for the restoration of Poland is as dear to me as it is to you...

Napoleon draws even closer - and is about to pounce when Marie abruptly turns and sweeps out of the room.

145 INT. STATEROOM - WARSAW PALACE - <1807> - DAY

Napoleon paces up and down in front of a huge map of central Europe, hung on the wall of a palace stateroom transformed into operational HQ. The map conveniently indicates the outline of former Poland - now carved up between Austria, Prussia and Russia (Warsaw being in the Prussian sector). There is all the usual activity, but we hear little of it, for we are with Napoleon...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

You have deprived me of all sleep!
Oh, grant a little joy, a little
happiness to a poor heart that
already adores you! Is it so hard
to obtain a letter? You owe me at
least five!

TALLEYRAND

Sire, the Russian Ambassador Prince
Kurakin has arrived...

Napoleon nods briefly, continues pacing, up and down...

146 INT. ANTECHAMBER - WARSAW PALACE - <1807> - DAY

... up and down, hands behind his back. A diplomatic meeting is under way - Talleyrand, Metternich, and the volatile Russian ambassador, Prince KURAKIN.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Marie, my sweet, brave little
patriot - how can I think - how can
I plan the restoration of your
country if all my mind is consumed
with the memory of you... My only
desire is to see you again - and if
you don't come to me, then the
Eagle shall come to you!

KURAKIN

Russia will never consent to
yielding her Polish territory,
sire. History is on our side,
and....

NAPOLEON

You may tell Tsar Alexander that I
don't wish to hurt anyone, but when
my great chariot is rolling, it's
as well to stand clear of the
wheels.

Metternich whispers to Talleyrand as Kurakin clicks his pompous heels and marches out.

TALLEYRAND

Sire, Poland is not worth a single drop of French blood – her existence as a nation is of no significance to France.

NAPOLEON

Liberty has always been significant to me, Talleyrand. If I can restore the Polish nation, I will do so. I am prompted by no personal gain. I have no pretensions to the Polish throne either for myself or for my family. Let Poland be reborn independent and free... I shall be content with the honour of having been the instrument.

(off Metternich's look)

Prussia has yielded her share. Now it is Russia's turn.

METTERNICH

And Austria, sire?

Napoleon gives Metternich an enigmatic smile.

147 INT. BEDROOM – WARSAW – <1807> – DAY

SMASH! as a watch is hurled to the ground and crushed under Napoleon's heel. He looks up at Marie Walewska, standing on the other side of the room, dressed in white and trying hard to disguise her abject fear...

NAPOLEON

That is Poland today...

Napoleon scatters the broken pieces with his boot...

NAPOLEON

– and that is Poland forever –
unless you choose otherwise!

... the echo of his words fills the ensuing silence, the watch-cogs spinning across the wooden floor to where Marie stands, trembling, clutching a silver cross at her breast.

148 EXT. TILSIT – RIVER NIEMAN – <1807> – DAY

The massed band of the Imperial Guard strikes up as an ornate barge sets out across the frontier River Nieman, bearing Napoleon the Conqueror, his arms folded, wearing his green-and-white uniform and accompanied by his staff.

A large blue-and-white pavilion is moored on a raft midstream, flying the crossed flags of Russia and France. A ceremonial division of the Imperial Guard are arrayed on the east bank, facing a depleted corps of Cossacks on the far side.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My dear Josephine. I write only a few lines as I am very tired. You will have seen from the 24th Bulletin that my children have routed the entire Russian army – 80 guns, 30,000 captured or killed...

Another barge has set out from the opposite bank, carrying the young Tsar ALEXANDER with his diplomatic staff...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

... 25 Russian generals killed or taken prisoner, the Russian Guard smashed – truly the battles of Jena and Friedland are worthy sisters to Marengo and Austerlitz.

Napoleon's gondola arrives first. He springs onto the raft, carpeted in velvet encrusted with golden bees. The entrance to the pavilion is crowned by a large "N". Napoleon forsakes Talleyrand and his staff and hurries inside...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I am shortly to meet with Alexander, the Tsar of all the Russias. The Prussians are also anxious to pay court to me, but they can wait. Goodbye, my dear friend. One of these fine nights I shall turn up like a jealous husband – so be warned!

Napoleon emerges on the far side of the pavilion, crowned with a matching "A", as Alexander's gondola approaches the raft. Although fair, blonde and nearly a foot taller than Napoleon, the Tsar bears a striking resemblance to the young Bonaparte – even his uniform resembles Napoleon's at Arcola.

Alexander's admiration for the Emperor is evidently not shared by Prince Kurakin and the rest of his staff, despite efforts to conceal it. The same may be said of Prussia's King Friedrich WILHELM III – a sad, vacillating man, who has been left behind on the bank with his stunningly beautiful wife, Queen LOUISA – a latter day Amazon dressed in the uniform of a cavalry dragoon – and his senior Marshal, the stern, fiery, mustachioed Prince Gebhard von BLÜCHER (65).

Napoleon stands with his arms folded as the gondola draws alongside the raft. Alexander's initial reaction is one of veiled dread.

Then, with perfect timing, Napoleon's stern expression softens. He offers the Tsar his hand, smiling warmly as he welcomes him aboard.

NAPOLEON

Alexander... at last we meet... in
brotherhood and friendship.

Napoleon leads the astonished Tsar to the end of the raft, and – in full view of the armies on both banks – embraces him, to the tumultuous cheers of both armies, the concern of the diplomats – and the open hostility of the Prussians.

149 INT. PAVILION – TILSIT – <1807> – DAY

Napoleon paces gently up and down, hands behind his back, while Alexander stands ill-at-ease, unprepared for such amiability on the part of his enemy and conqueror.

NAPOLEON

Had I been commanding your army at Austerlitz, I would never have allowed a cavalry charge to take place without the support of infantry – that is one of the cardinal rules in warfare. And at Jena – where was your artillery?

ALEXANDER

I fear I had little choice in the matter.

NAPOLEON

My brother, you are the Tsar...

ALEXANDER

Ah, but when one is not Napoleon, one is obliged to defer to the advice of one's military staff.

NAPOLEON

Then I shall teach you -- and the next time I have to fight the Austrians, you can lead an army Corps of 30,000 men under my command. That way you will learn the art of war, and give your own commands instead of relying on Kutusov. But first we must establish the terms of our friendship, and our position with respect to Poland – and England.

ALEXANDER

Believe me, Sire, our relationship with England is purely economical.

ALEXANDER (CONT'D)

We distrust the English as much as you do, but Poland is another....

NAPOLEON

Excellent! Then everything is settled, and peace is made between us. Come, we will work out a treaty ourselves. We don't need self-serving lawyers and diplomats to advise us. I will be your secretary, and you shall be mine.

ALEXANDER

But sire, surely the King of Prussia should be consulted?

NAPOLEON

Bah! The Queen rules Prussia - she's the only man in Prussia... apart from Blücher - and he's even older than Kutusov. If the German states were ever to unite, Germany would indeed be a force to be reckoned with. But Prussia alone? Bah! Berlin's a mere village! It is you and I who will reshape the map of Europe... and then together we might march to India and bring England to her knees!

(Alexander's eyes widen)

But first we must get to know one another. When I liberated Italy from the Austrians, I demanded 10 million francs in reparations - half to be paid in gold, the rest in works of art. I was much criticized for this, and yet why should this be?

Alexander is beginning to sweat...

NAPOLEON

The government in Paris was utterly corrupt in those times. I knew well enough that the gold would never reach the people, but the paintings and statues I could give to the people - to everyone - by creating the Louvre. For hundreds of years, these great works of art had been hidden from view in private collections. Now they are on public display, for all the world to see.

ALEXANDER

But Sire, the Louvre is in Paris!
If you were to strip us of our
art... why art is the very soul of
a nation!

Alexander looks at him imploringly. Napoleon stares at him,
then smiles - and embraces him.

NAPOLEON

Truly I have found a friend and a
brother. There's no need to be
anxious. I want no reparations - no
gold, no land, no works of art. All
I ask of Russia is her friendship.

Alexander's anxiety transmutes into positive relief. Napoleon
turns to a painting on the wall of the tent - a group
portrait of the Russian royal family, with the Tsar, Tsarina,
and their children.

NAPOLEON

Gérard?

ALEXANDER

Antoine Gros.

NAPOLEON

An excellent likeness of you. Are
these your sisters?

ALEXANDER

Yes, sire...

NAPOLEON

Married?

ALEXANDER

All but the youngest... the
Princess Anna...

Napoleon looks closely at the Tsar's sister - a beautiful
child of ambiguous age... then turns back to Alexander,
embracing him...

NAPOLEON

Ah, my brother... there is nothing
in this world that we cannot
achieve together - if we let our
imagination take wings!

150 EXT. HILLSIDE & NIEMAN - TILSIT - <1807> - DAY

Napoleon and Alexander are racing one another on horseback,
galloping along a cliff. The goal: a small Russian chapel
with an onion dome, overlooking the River Nieman far below.

Napoleon can easily outstrip his rival, and nearly allows him to win - but not quite. They laugh like old friends...

Later, and they are enjoying a picnic meal, served to them by Roustam on Sevrès chinaware.

NAPOLEON

War is essentially a calculation of probabilities. A consecutive series of great actions is never the result of chance alone... it must always be driven by planning and genius. Is it because I am lucky that I am become great? No. My greatness lies in my ability to master luck. Nothing is attained in this world except by calculation. Chance alone can never bring success...

There is a ruined fort on the far side of the river, and as Napoleon continues, he takes mental stock of the location.

NAPOLEON

Now the great art of war consists in calculating all the chances accurately in the first place. A single decimal place may change everything. Accident, hazard, chance, call it what you will... what remains a mystery to ordinary men is a reality to the superior mind.

ALEXANDER

But... with so many variables... how do you draw up your battle plans?

Napoleon turns to Alexander, smiling softly.

NAPOLEON

From the dreams of my sleeping soldiers.

ALEXANDER

Ah, my brother...

Alexander is entranced. Napoleon looks him in the eye - then a soft, seductive smile...

NAPOLEON

But if we are to be true brothers, you must share my ambitions for Poland. Prussia stole the major part, and Prussia shall give it back - but you will have to restore some too.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

There's no need for anxiety - I demand no land from the sacred soil of Russia - but Poland belongs to Poland.

Alexander's enthusiasm somewhat dims...

NAPOLEON

Imagine, my brother - our two great Empires - marching to India by way of Constantinople. By the time we reached the Bosphorus, the shock waves would reverberate to India and England would be on her knees!

151 INT. BANQUET ROOM - TILSIT - <1807> - NIGHT

Napoleon is seated at a circular banquet table, numbering a dozen guests. The beautiful Queen of Prussia is on his left; on his right: Alexander. Other guests include Talleyrand, Metternich, Prince Kurakin, Marshal Blücher, the one-eyed General Kutuzov (70), and the unhappy King Wilhelm. Several conversations are in flow, but no one seems anxious to talk to the Prussians, least of all Napoleon, whose sole focus of attention is Alexander.

NAPOLEON

Mankind is young compared to the earth, no matter what the Bible says, and thousands of years from now man will be quite different from what he is today. Science will be so advanced by then that perhaps they will have found a way to prolong human life indefinitely...

Alexander is fascinated, but the Queen of Prussia is becoming increasingly agitated. She would evidently like to speak with Napoleon, but he pretends not to notice...

NAPOLEON

Chemistry as applied to plants and agriculture is still in its infancy. We have recently discovered extraordinary phenomena which our present knowledge cannot explain. Electricity and magnetism. What are these twin forces? Two sides of the same coin? Ah, there lies the great secret of the universe. To absorb, to emit, to form new combinations - *c'est la vie!*

The Queen can endure no more -

QUEEN LOUISA

Sire – your Majesty – I beg of you,
in the name of God's mercy, do not
tear my beautiful Prussia apart for
the sake of Poland!

Other conversations go quiet. Napoleon smiles graciously.

NAPOLEON

That is a very beautiful chiffon
you are wearing, your Majesty.

QUEEN LOUISA

Are we to speak only of chiffons at
such a moment as this, sire?!

NAPOLEON

I was speaking of the universe ...

... and Napoleon turns politely back to Alexander, leaving the Queen to fume at her caviar. She catches the eye of her husband, who can only offer a helpless gesture, but Marshal Blücher whispers reassuringly in her ear. He is seated next to the one-eyed, white-haired Kutusov, who clearly feels nothing but contempt for their Corsican host.

NAPOLEON

I have offered a reward of 100,000
gold francs to anyone who can
advance our knowledge of these
hidden forces. What is magnetism?
What is energy? Say what you like,
everything is energy more or less
solidified, more or less organized.

ALEXANDER

But what of the human soul, my
brother?

NAPOLEON

Some sort of magnetic force – like
love. If had a religion, I should
adore the sun – the source of all
life on earth... yet only a madman
will say for sure that he wishes to
die without a confessor. Ah, my
friend – there is so much that one
does not know, that one cannot
explain.

Napoleon seems lost in his imagination.

NAPOLEON

Do you know what I admire most
about life? The total inability of
force to organize anything. There
are only two powers in this world –
the sword and the spirit.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

And in the long run, the sword is
always beaten by the spirit.

152 EXT. PARADE GROUND - TILSIT - <1807> - DAY

A battalion of Cossacks are arrayed in formation, performing an aggressive drill routine for the benefit of Napoleon and Alexander, who are side by side on horseback, flanked by their respective military staffs. Lannes eyes the one-eyed Kutuzov with evident caution.

NAPOLEON

Is it not ludicrous that France and
Russia - the two greatest nations
on earth - should have been
fighting one another when together
we could have crushed England long
ago?

ALEXANDER

My brother, I can only lament the
follies of the past.

Napoleon takes the salute... then a thought...

NAPOLEON

How old is the Princess Anna?

ALEXANDER

Thirteen, sire.

NAPOLEON

As young as that?

Napoleon looks briefly disappointed. Then, with a sudden gleam in his eye, he dismounts, strides forward, selects a Russian soldier at random and presents him with the Legion of Honour. The apparently spontaneous gesture meets with astonishment and approval from Alexander and his troops. Murat grins; Kutuzov grits his teeth.

NAPOLEON

Soldiers of Russia - from today,
our two empires are one great
family!

The Cossacks look bewildered, until it is translated into Russian, whereupon Alexander prompts a great cheer of approval. Napoleon walks back to Alexander, who has dismounted and taken off his exquisite sable coat, lined with ermine...

ALEXANDER

My brother, allow me to be your
furrier and present you with my
coat... and my horse, Tauris - the
finest in my stable.

Tauris, a magnificent silver-grey Persian, paws the ground. Alexander drapes his sable coat around Napoleon's shoulders, and the two sovereigns embrace, to further applause from the Cossacks – and the hostility of Kutuzov and Kurakin.

153 INT. NAPOLEON'S TENT – TILSIT – <1807> – NIGHT

Napoleon claps his hands loudly. He is with Alexander in his inner sanctum, where they have been playing chess by candlelight. The tent flap swings open and Roustam wheels in a mahogany chest, bows low, then opens the lid with a flourish and lifts out the "Description of Egypt", Volume 1.

NAPOLEON

What is it that separates one people from another? Education, isn't it? I want my rabble to be the most educated in the world... and if you take my advice, you will do the same for your serfs...

ALEXANDER

Sire, I have over twelve million... no better than savages...

NAPOLEON

You cannot keep them in ignorance for ever. Without knowledge, without education, there is no equality but the equality of misery, servitude and ignorance. Everything we found in Egypt we have given to the world in these pages.

Roustam hands Napoleon a feathered pen dusted with gold.

NAPOLEON

I have one further gift.
(produces two documents)
A preliminary treaty, which I drafted myself. Talleyrand and Kurakin will take months discussing details, but I wanted to set down a simple statement of friendship, of our common cause against England, and our joint commitment to close all our ports to her trade – even if it means foregoing Mr. Wilkinson's fine swords – and his razor blades – and my Indian tea.

ALEXANDER

But my brother, you must remember that we are a trading nation, and England is one of our wealthiest customers...

NAPOLEON

I know, I have to deal with the same grumblers in Paris. Even the Empress Josephine grumbles when I won't let her buy English silk and English lace... but there we are. We must all make sacrifices if we are to bring England to her knees.

Napoleon hands one copy of the letter to Alexander, who receives it with mixed feelings...

NAPOLEON

You will notice that I make no demands and seek no reparations... only that you will not resist my efforts to create a homeland for the Poles.

(Alexander hesitates)

Take courage, my brother – be ahead of your age, enlarge your imagination, see far into the distance. There is nothing so difficult to imagine that it cannot be accomplished in the end.

Napoleon opens the title page of the "Description of Egypt", takes a pen from Roustam, dips the gold nib in ink, and inscribes in his rapid, illegible scrawl – "From your devoted brother, Napoleon." Alexander's eyes are smarting.

ALEXANDER

Sire... I am overwhelmed.

Napoleon smiles seductively, coaxing him to take the pen.

A beat as they gaze at one another... then Alexander takes it and signs his flowery, elaborate signature to the treaty.

154 EXT. FINCKENSTEIN CASTLE – PRUSSIA – <1808> – NIGHT

A dark, foreboding castle worthy of Count Dracula, back-lit against the scudding clouds of a moonlit sky.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My dearest Josephine. I am as pleased with Alexander as he is pleased with me. If he were a woman, we should undoubtedly have made love together. I too am anxious to see you, but it is out of the question that I should allow you to undertake such a journey – these Polish roads are like quagmires, and the countryside full of brigands and thieves.

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)
 Stay in Paris - be gay and happy -
 I shall be back soon enough...

155 INT. BEDROOM - FINCKENSTEIN CASTLE - <1808> - NIGHT

Napoleon sits at a desk, wearing a dressing gown and writing by the light of a candle. As he continues, we move slowly about him to reveal the room beyond...

NAPOLEON (V/O)
 I don't know what you mean by
 ladies who correspond with me. I
 love only my little Josephine,
 good, sulky, capricious, who can
 quarrel as gracefully as she does
 everything else... except when she
 is jealous, and then she becomes a
 little devil...

Someone lies in the four-poster bed beyond...

NAPOLEON (V/O)
 Goodbye, dear friend - pray believe
 that I regret not being able to
 send for you. Say to yourself, here
 is the proof of how precious I am
 to him...

It is Marie Walewska, reading a book by candlelight. She glances up as Napoleon leaves his desk... touching her cross, she smiles sweetly as he sits on the bed beside her. Each is deeply in love with the other, despite Napoleon being twice her age.

NAPOLEON
 My brave little patriot...

He lifts her chin, trying to chose in which place to kiss her first. She makes the choice for him...

156 EXT. ATLANTIC SHORE - BAYONNE - <1808> - DAY

Waves pound on a wild Atlantic beach in the shadow of the towering Pyrenees. Napoleon is stripped to the waist, chasing someone into the sea, splashing her amid much playful protest and shrieking. The splashing subsides, Napoleon kisses Josephine, and then they're off again...

WIDER: the Imperial couple are guarded at a discreet distance by a dozen Cavalry Officers either side, up to their horses' thighs in the sea. Murat, Oudinot and Lannes are further along the beach, stripping off and comparing scars. Murat has 8 sabre scars, Lannes has a dozen, while Oudinot can boast over twenty. Set back from the sea beyond the dunes are the tents of the Imperial Guard.

Roustam wades into the surf, calling out –

ROUSTAM

Your Majesty! His Majesty the King
of Naples has arrived!

This puts a dampener on Josephine's spirits, but Napoleon seems genuinely pleased to see his brother Joseph, first walking – then running down the beach, embracing on the sand in true Corsican fashion.

NAPOLEON

Joseph! How pleased I am to see you
– and how well you look! Those
Italian actresses seem to have kept
you in good trim...

JOSEPH

And you, sire – you look splendid.

NAPOLEON

His Majesty's health has never been
better!

(slaps his stomach)

I'm in the saddle all day – I sleep
no more than four hours a night – I
eat almost nothing – and yet I have
energy left over to be converted
into mass... there's science for
you!

(locks arms with Joseph)

Tell me, Joseph – how would you
like to be King of Spain?

JOSEPH

I had a fearful premonition that
this is why your Majesty had
summoned me.

NAPOLEON

Good, then you've had plenty of
time to think about it.

JOSEPH

Spain is our ally, Sire....

NAPOLEON

Spain is bankrupt! And if we don't
go to her aid, England will be only
too happy to oblige – Wellington
already has 50,000 troops massing
in Portugal!

JOSEPH

But there is no justification for
an invasion of Spain...

NAPOLEON

Who spoke of an invasion?? The King of Spain has abdicated! He has personally begged me to place one of my family on his throne instead of his idiot son! I offered the throne to Louis, but he's become a dutchman - a dealer in cheese... Jerome is too lazy being the King of Westphalia... and since brother Lucien has abandoned me, I have no one else to turn to but you. Don't let me down, Guiseppe...

JOSEPH

... the Spanish will never accept me as their king - they regard all Frenchmen as atheists -- and you, sire, as the Antichrist!

NAPOLEON

Bah! The Spanish people cry out for liberty! Their lives are ruled by a set of grossly ignorant monks and a royal family as mad as their cousin George III!

157 INT. IMPERIAL TENT - BAYONNE - <1808> - DUSK

Goya's group portrait of the Spanish royal family says all.

NAPOLEON

Congenital imbecility if ever I saw it... and Goya is remarkably faithful in his likenesses. I have met them all. King Charles is a good soul. He gives the impression of an honest and kindly patriarch, but his son is very stupid, very surly, and very hostile to France. As for the Queen, her heart and history are revealed in her face... which surpasses even Goya's talent to disguise.

Joseph studies the portrait, hanging on the wall of the Imperial Tent. Napoleon and Joseph are alone...

NAPOLEON

It wouldn't matter if the country were run by effective government, but the people are ruled by priests, oppressed by the Holy Inquisition and brutalized by feudal tyranny!

JOSEPH

But sire, the Spanish are Catholic
to their finger-tips...

NAPOLEON

Bah! When you proclaim the new
constitution I am giving them, they
will welcome you as a liberator...
as they did in Naples!

Joseph turns away. The tent flaps are open, and beyond lies
the great Atlantic, washed pale in the moonlight.

JOSEPH

When your Majesty created me King
of Naples, I took an oath to serve
my Italian subjects. I love the
people, and I truly believe that
they love me. I cannot just abandon
them...

NAPOLEON

Don't concern yourself about Naples
- I'll give the crown to Prince
Murat.

JOSEPH

Murat?! But he has no experience of
government...

NAPOLEON

Sister Caroline will do the ruling,
you know that. Besides, I'll be
needing Murat with me if I have to
fight the Austrians.

JOSEPH

But we are at peace with Austria...

NAPOLEON

Not with Metternich holding the
reins. According to Caroline, he's
been urging the Emperor Francis to
reclaim northern Italy...

JOSEPH

How would she know?

NAPOLEON

Metternich talks in his sleep.

JOSEPH

Sire, haven't we shed enough blood?
Ten years of war, good God! How our
people long for peace!

NAPOLEON

You do not get peace by shouting Peace! What we need is a glorious peace – a lasting peace – not a mere interlude in hostilities arranged by Talleyrand and Metternich to suit their own bank accounts...

(joining Joseph)

I understand my people better than you, Joseph.

(tweaks his ear)

King José... it suits you! Spain is a very different thing from Naples... she has a throne which places you in Madrid – only three days journey from France... why in Madrid you are practically in France, whereas Naples is the end of the world! Go – rule – and make the Spanish people happy!

The SOUND of the distant waves becomes more intensified, OVERLAPPED by the thunder of pounding guns...

158 EXT. BATTLEFIELD/HQ – WAGRAM – <1809> – NIGHT

Dante's Inferno – two phalanxes of a thousand canon belch balls of iron at one another across a valley filled with sulphurous smoke. A full moon emerges from behind scudding clouds – sheet lightning briefly illuminates the battlefield, followed by growls of approaching thunder. Larrey's flying ambulances duck and dive through the waves of choking fumes, attempting to rescue the maimed from both sides.

CAMERA CRANES DOWN into Napoleon's field HQ at Wagram, set up in a ruined farmyard. Berthier's staff race hither and thither, dispatching messages while receiving a constant input of fresh information...

In the centre of this maelstrom is Napoleon, asleep in his field chair, spyglass on his knee, one leg resting on a drum, arms folded. Roustam stands guard nearby while an artist (Roehn) sketches the sleeping Emperor.

Murat, resplendent as always in his yellow-and-white, gold braided uniform, is trying to obtain an audience but is being held at bay by an anxious Berthier.

MURAT

I must speak to the Emperor at once!

BERTHIER

Cannot your Majesty see that the Emperor is sleeping?

NAPOLEON

(without opening his eyes)
Well, Murat – what is it that can't
wait another five minutes?

With a signal to Roustam, the Mameluke stands aside and Murat advances. Napoleon has not moved a muscle.

MURAT

Your Majesty – my brother – I must
insist that Surgeon Larrey stops
using my horses to feed the wounded
– not just Frenchmen, your Majesty,
but Austrians – and with my horses!

Larrey has arrived, splattered with blood, followed by Berthier, who hands Napoleon several dispatches. Now he opens his eyes, reading them while questioning Larrey.

NAPOLEON

Well, Larrey – is this true – that
you've been turning the King of
Naples' horses into soup?

LARREY

Yes.

He adds no more. Napoleon looks up at him...

NAPOLEON

You will no longer take horses from
King Murat's cavalry.

Larrey says nothing, but Murat is delighted –

MURAT

Why, thank you your Majesty!

Napoleon calls out – "Meneval!" – then gets to his feet, turns to Larrey, takes out a gold Legion of Honour and pins it to his blood-stained coat.

NAPOLEON

Jean-Dominique Larrey, I hereby
create you Baron of the French
Empire and Surgeon-in-Chief to the
Grand Army.

(embraces him)

In future, you may draw emergency
rations from my own Imperial Guard.

Murat looks as stunned as Larrey. Napoleon strides away, joining Lannes, Soult, Bertrand and Prince Eugène...

NAPOLEON

Any sign of the Russians? Alexander
promised me 30,000 – where are they?

LANNES

Never trust the Russians, sire...
we're better off without them...

159 EXT. VILLAGE RUINS - WAGRAM - <1809> - NIGHT

We try to keep pace with Napoleon as he strides out of his bivouac into the ruins of Wagram - a village flattened by bombardment. A blot of lightning briefly illuminates the chaotic scene: famished and homeless villagers, huddling forlorn amid piles of rotting bodies while shot and shell pound about them. A constant stream of maimed and wounded flows in from the hellfire beyond, some on stretchers, some carried, but most simply dragged to a field hospital set up in a ruined church.

Napoleon finishes reading his dispatches while striding with Lannes across the ruins. He has to shout over the din of shellfire, thunder, and screams emanating from the church.

NAPOLEON

This infernal Spanish business is costing me dear! Joseph keeps begging for more troops - I'll have to send him Ney. If there's one thing Spain needs, it's a General - and if there's one thing it could do without, it's King José. I must have been mad to put so much faith in my brothers. Look at Louis - he lectures me on how my war with England is harming Dutch trade - he's become a shopkeeper - an....

But Lannes is not listening. He has seen a mutilated body being carried past, and has recognized the young soldier as his own ADC - Pouzet. He kneels beside him as they lay him on the ground. Pouzet dimly opens his eyes... stares blankly at Lannes - then his eyes suddenly widen as he gazes up at the Emperor. Napoleon grasps his hand, and Pouzet's whole countenance seems to glow -

NAPOLEON

My son, you are covered in glory!

Pouzet whispers "Vive l'Empereur", then dies, his face bathed in the glow of fire and lightning. Lannes turns away, his jealousy subordinate to his grief.

Another clap of thunder, and now at last comes the rain - big, fat drops, splashing on Lannes' cheeks. He wanders over to a broken piece of wall and sits down. Napoleon watches him as Murat races up -

MURAT

Your Majesty, the Austrian right flank is in retreat!

Napoleon snaps back into action, mounting his horse -

NAPOLEON

Let Prince Eugène pursue them -
don't let them slip away - order
Bessières to deploy the Guard
against their left flank! Jean...
we have them!

But Lannes is lost in thought, oblivious to the rain now pouring down in torrents. As he crosses his legs, an iron ball ricochets off a wall and smashes through his kneecaps.

NAPOLEON

Jean!!

Napoleon yells to the two stretcher bearers - Pouzet's body is hastily dumped to make way for Lannes, his legs both shattered at the knee...

Napoleon leaps from his horse and races after Lannes...

160 INT. CHURCH - WAGRAM - <1809> - NIGHT

... into the roofless church, past mounds of amputated limbs swarming with flies to where Lannes is already having brandy poured down his throat while Larrey prepares to amputate. Napoleon gazes disbelieving at his stricken friend - their eyes meet - Napoleon strains every nerve...

An orderly offers a belt for Lannes to bite on, but he pushes it aside, choosing instead to clasp Napoleon's hand. As Larrey goes to work, Napoleon throws himself across Lannes, soaking his own white cashmere waistcoat a bright damp crimson, suddenly sobbing on his shoulder...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My dearest Josephine, I am in great grief for the loss of Jean Lannes, who died in my arms. I have lost the most distinguished general in my army, my comrade for sixteen years, and my closest friend. Why is it that at the moment of leaving life, so many cling to it with all their might? Surely happiness lies in sleep? But Lannes, the bravest of men, Lannes, deprived of his two legs, did not want to die...

... and this we see, the images in surreal slow-motion as we witness the death of Lannes as he clings to Napoleon...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

With his last remnant of life he clung to me. He wanted only me, thought only of me.

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)

A sort of instinct perhaps, for surely he loved his young wife and his children more than he did me, yet he never spoke of them. It was as if I were his protector. For him I was some vague and superior power - I was his Providence - his God...

(beat)

And so all things come to their end. Do all you can to console his poor wife - but spare her the truth of his last moments. Tell her that his last thoughts were about her... as mine shall be about you.

... as his life fades, Lannes' eyes remain glazed and shining, fixed on Napoleon.

161 EXT. SCHONBRUNN - COURTYARD - VIENNA - <1809> - NIGHT

A Military band strikes up, and Napoleon - flanked by Murat, Ney and Eugène - rides into the courtyard before the great Palace of Schönbrunn - another victory parade, though the Viennese are less enthusiastic than the Poles.

As Napoleon inspects his Imperial Guard, we notice a young student worming his way purposefully through the crowd. Napoleon rides by, and the student suddenly pulls a knife, but before he can make his break, he is spotted and overpowered. Napoleon rides on, oblivious to the incident.

162 INT. SCHONBRUNN - GALLERY - <1809> - DAY

The young student - STAPS - is standing in an ornate mirrored gallery, flanked by guards, while Napoleon paces up and down, hands behind back, questioning him.

NAPOLEON

What did you want of me?

STAPS

To kill you.

NAPOLEON

What have I done to you? Who made you my judge?

STAPS

I wanted to bring the war to an end.

NAPOLEON

Why didn't you go to the Emperor Francis?

STAPS

Him? What for? He doesn't count.
And if he died his son would
succeed him. But you have no son,
and after you the French will be
gone from Austria.

NAPOLEON

Do you repent?

STAPS

No!

NAPOLEON

Would you do it again?

STAPS

Yes!

NAPOLEON

What, even if I spared you?

STAPS

Yes!

NAPOLEON

You must be mad, or else ill.

STAPS

I am neither mad nor ill, but in
full possession of my faculties.

NAPOLEON

Then why did you want to kill me?

STAPS

Because you are ruining my country!

NAPOLEON

Who put you up to this?

STAPS

No one. My heart told me that by
killing you, I should do good
service to Europe.

NAPOLEON

How old are you?

STAPS

Seventeen.

NAPOLEON

Ask my forgiveness, say you're
sorry and I will grant you your
life.

STAPS

I don't want your forgiveness, and I'm not sorry. My only regret is that I failed to kill you.

NAPOLEON

A crime means nothing to you then?

STAPS

To kill you would not be a crime but a public service.

Napoleon spots a little oval portrait on Staps' jacket, similar to his own miniature of Josephine.

NAPOLEON

Whose portrait is this?

STAPS

The girl I love.

NAPOLEON

What will she think about this?

STAPS

She'll be sorry it miscarried - she hates you as much as I do.

NAPOLEON

Such a pretty girl. If I pardon you, I suppose it will gladden her heart?

STAPS

Yes indeed - because then I shall be able to kill you next time.

Staps breaks free of the guards and makes a rush at Napoleon, but Noverraz hurls himself at the boy. As the guards drag him from the room, Staps cries out --

STAPS

Liberty forever! Death to the tyrant!

Napoleon is clearly shaken. He moves to the window...

NAPOLEON

So young - so educated - so well brought up - why would such a boy want to kill me?

(firmly, to Talleyrand)

We must make peace. Reduce our war indemnity demands by half. Get the matter settled with Metternich. Add whatever clauses you think necessary, but make peace at all costs.

TALLEYRAND

Sire... if your Majesty truly desires a lasting peace with Austria... may I suggest an alliance that will prove stronger than any treaty...

Napoleon pauses - looks at Talleyrand... and follows his eyeline to a painting on the wall of a young, fresh-faced girl, standing with her father, the gaunt Emperor Francis.

TALLEYRAND

The Hapsburgs are the oldest family in Europe - the direct descendants of Caesar and Charlemagne. If a union between the House of Hapsburg and the - uh - House of Bonaparte were to produce a male heir, that son would be recognized by every royal House in Europe as being... how shall I say - one of the family.

NAPOLEON

(laughing)

You... aristocrats! What are you and Metternich hatching between you?

TALLEYRAND

Sire, like you I think only of France and her future...

Napoleon looks at him a moment - then back at the painting - at the young, fresh-faced girl with the slanting eyes. Talleyrand smiles... a desolate cry LAPS OVER...

163 INT. NAPOLEON'S STUDY - TUILERIES - <1809> - DAY

... and Josephine faints on the bee-embroidered carpet where Napoleon and Eléonore made love. Eugène and Hortense are there to console her, but Josephine's eyes remain closed. Napoleon is overwrought - calls for Novarrez...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

The policy of my Empire and the needs of my people, which have guided all my actions, demand that I should leave to my children the throne on which Providence has placed me...

The burly Swiss bodyguard hurries in, and with Eugène's help they carry Josephine...

164 INT. PASSAGE/STAIRS - TUILERIES - <1809> - DAY

... along the passage, up a small circular staircase...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Having lost all hope of having children with my well-beloved wife, the Empress Josephine, I am obliged to sacrifice my dearest affections and to dissolve our marriage...

165 INT. JOSEPHINE'S BEDROOM - TUILERIES - <1809> - DAY

They carry her into her bedroom and lay her on the bed.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

God alone knows how hard a step this is for me to take, but no sacrifice is too great for the sake of France. For fifteen years, the Empress has made my life beautiful by her presence. She was crowned by my own hands...

166 INT. THRONE ROOM - TUILERIES - <1809> - DAY

Josephine enters the magnificent Throne Room, supported by Hortense and Eugène. She wears a simple white dress, without jewels and without crown.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

... and I have determined that she shall preserve the rank and title of Empress. Above all, I pray that she should never doubt my sentiments, and that she should ever regard me as her best and dearest friend.

Napoleon is already there, sitting immobile on his throne, staring blankly. The Bonapartes are all present - Louis, his left arm almost paralysed - King Murat and Queen Caroline of Naples, Jerome (King of Westphalia), Pauline, and the black-robed Letizia, her expression sleek with satisfaction. Among the Court are Talleyrand and Fouché. Josephine is seated in an armchair in the middle of the room, flanked by Hortense and Eugène, his arms crossed, trembling with emotion.

Talleyrand hands a document to Josephine, who is weeping quietly, the tears running down her cheeks. She starts to read in a faltering voice -

JOSEPHINE

With the permission of my dear and August husband, I am pleased to give him the greatest proof of attachment and devotion which has ever been given on earth by... by...

Josephine's voice is choked with sobs, and with an imploring gesture she hands the document to Eugène. He takes it with trembling hands, fighting his emotions...

EUGENE

... by consenting to the dissolution of a marriage which has deprived France of the happiness of being one day governed by the heir of a man raised up by Providence. I know how much this act has chilled the Emperor's heart, but both of us exult in the sacrifice which we make for the sake of our country.

Napoleon's eyes are brimming with tears.

167 EXT. COURTYARD - TUILERIES - <1809> - DAY

Pouring rain. Josephine stands with her children, dismally watching her possessions - including her wolfhounds and Spanish-speaking parrot - being loaded into a carriage.

Eugène and Hortense help her into the carriage. She pauses on the top step - takes a last look up at the Palace window. Napoleon gives a half-hearted wave...

168 INT. NAPOLEON'S STUDY - TUILERIES - <1809> - DAY

... then turns into the room. He looks about him - spots a miniature of Josephine on his desk. He picks it up, kisses it, then opens a drawer, summons up his courage and places the portrait face down, closing the drawer with a snap.

169 INT. BALLROOM - COMPIEGNE - <1810> - DAY

A violinist plays in a vast ballroom, where Napoleon waltzes around the floor, using a chair as a partner. Murat and Pauline are watching him, laughing...

PAULINE

No, no - not like that - place your left foot forward, then your right.

Napoleon tries, but can't get the hang of it.

NAPOLEON

You can't teach an old dog new
tricks - after all, forty is forty
- I'm far too old for this sort of
thing...

Murat gives a demonstration with Pauline, and Napoleon tries again. In the background, footmen are removing a painting of Austerlitz - and replacing it with a portrait of the sallow-faced Emperor of Austria. Napoleon tries again, but the results are no better and he flings the chair aside.

NAPOLEON

I have a much better idea. Come,
Murat - we shall ride out to meet
Princess Marie-Louise ourselves!
No one will tell me what she really
looks like, from which I can only
conclude that she's perfectly
hideous...

(glancing at portrait)

So long as she doesn't have the
Hapsburg chin - and bears me a
fine and healthy son!

170 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - COMPIEGNE - <1810> - DAY

Napoleon rides Tauris like the wind along an open country road, Murat at his side. They spot a carriage in the far distance, flanked by outriders.

Spurring his horse to full gallop, Napoleon reaches the carriage, halting in a cloud of dust alongside it. The carriage bears the royal arms of Austria, and is escorted by Imperial Guard Chasseurs who recognize their Emperor in some astonishment.

Napoleon leaps from his horse, races to the carriage - opens the door - and beholds his 18-year-old bride - MARIE-LOUISE - cowering in the corner next to Caroline and her ladies-in-waiting. With her generous lips, limpid blue eyes, and a delightfully full bosom, Napoleon is entranced. He dives inside the carriage and spontaneously embraces her while Murat and Caroline exchange smiles.

171 INT. ROYAL BEDCHAMBER - COMPIEGNE - <1810> - DAY

Much giggling and romping within the shrouded confines of a four-poster bed - then Napoleon clambers out from behind the curtains and starts to redress.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

To Francis, Emperor of Austria.
Sire, my brother and father-in-law:
Your Majesty's daughter has
exceeded all my expectations, and
for two days I have never ceased
offering her and receiving from her
the proof of the tenderest feelings
uniting us. We suit each other
perfectly...

The curtains part and Marie-Louise's happy face appears.

MARIE-LOUISE

Can we do it again?

172 EXT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1817> - DAY

A small carriage pulls up at one of several sentry posts that surround the gloomy estate, situated at a discreet interval from the Longwood bungalow. A British soldier hurries over to inspect the occupants.

173 EXT. LONGWOOD - GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1817> - DAY

A group of children - Bertrand's two young sons, Arthur Napoleon (8) and Henri (5), his daughter Hortense (7), and Montholon's son Tristan (5) are playing prisoners base with Napoleon, assisted by Napoleon's bodyguard - the huge, lumbering Novarrez.

Gourgaud sulks on the sidelines, as usual, scowling at Bertrand and Montholon, who are working on documents at a small table.

Under the shabby awning that serves as an extension to the bungalow, Marchand and Ali are laying the dinner table while Albine and Fanny arrange flowers.

Napoleon is chasing young Arthur Napoleon, a handsome boy of 8 with blonde hair and rosy cheeks. Napoleon corners him, then bears down on the boy, pulling his ogre face...

ARTHUR NAPOLEON

You can't frighten me!

Napoleon makes a grab for him, but the boy slips from his grasp - then falls over, grazing his knee with a howl.

NAPOLEON

Where's your courage, young
Napoleon?

(calling)

Bertrand! Tell your son he must
live up to his name or I may take
it back!

ARTHUR NAPOLEON

I've hurt my knee and you don't care!

NAPOLEON

Indeed I do. This soil needs a little young blood, then perhaps something might grow in it...

Arthur goes running to Bertrand, leaving Napoleon alone. He murmurs "Coraggio" as though to himself... then the sound of arrivals and he turns to see Betsy, with her mother Mrs Balcombe and elder sister Jane. Betsy comes running over. She is now two years older, and her unabashed nature is beginning to succumb to maturity.

She pauses as she reaches Napoleon, as though suddenly getting cold feet. He wipes his brow with his red Madras handkerchief, and only now looks up at her.

BETSY

Hello, Boney... sir. Happy birthday. I've brought you a present.

Betsy hands him a soft parcel wrapped in tissue paper. He unwraps it...

NAPOLEON

Thank you, Miss Betsy – though you haven't been to see me as often as you promised.

BETSY

You've no idea how difficult it is to get a pass from Sir Hudson's office to come and see you...

Napoleon opens the parcel: a dark green shawl.

BETSY

I knitted it myself. I wanted to put N's on it, but Sir Hudson would have confiscated it. But he couldn't stop me putting bees.

The shawl is embroidered with little cut-out bees, hand stitched and somewhat erratic.

NAPOLEON

Thank you, Miss Betsy...

MRS BALCOMBE

Old Toby sent you these cherries. They were the last of the season – I'm afraid I ate most of them... and the birds ate the ones I still can't reach.

Napoleon looks at her - she has evidently grown.

NAPOLEON

Be sure to thank Toby. Do you know,
I haven't heard a single bird in
the two years we've been at
Longwood. Not one.

BETSY

That's because you don't have any
flowers. If you had flowers you'd
have butterflies and birds -
perhaps even a few bees...

NAPOLEON

(calling to Arthur
Napoleon)

You hear that, young Napoleon? No
birds without flowers, and no
flowers without blood!

A loud gong SOUNDS -

ALI

His Majesty's dinner is served!

174 INT. LONGWOOD - CONSERVATORY - ST HELENA - <1817> - DUSK

Later, and the curious ensemble are seated at dinner,
presided over by Napoleon. The children are at one end,
supervised by Fanny and Albine, with Montholon and Gourgaud
sitting with Mrs Balcombe and Jane. The Grand Marshal is
seated on the Emperor's left, with Betsy on his right as
guest of honour. Napoleon pats his belly -

NAPOLEON

When I die, the soil of St Helena
will have plenty to nourish it...

BERTRAND

Sire, you will not die on this
island.

NAPOLEON

My life here would be fine if it
weren't for the sentries - and this
dreadful climate. One can't see the
sun or moon for the greater part of
the year - always rain or fog - the
walls are so damp that even the
wallpaper's peeling off. But as for
the country life - it's the best
there is! A sick sheep supplies
food for endless conversation.

Napoleon's chief chef (Pierron) enters, bearing a wonderful confection made from sugar glass, shaped like an eagle and surmounted by a crowned "N". Everyone applauds.

NAPOLEON

You know, Saint Napoleon ought to be very grateful to me, and do everything in his power for me in the world to come. Nobody had ever heard of the poor fellow until I came along. He didn't even have a day in the Catholic calendar. I soon put matters right on his behalf - I even persuaded the Pope to give him the 15th of August - my birthday.

BETSY

Was that before or after you put him in prison?

NAPOLEON

It was the condition of his release.

Betsy senses his humour, but the others take him seriously enough to jot down his words in their respective notebooks.

Napoleon gets to his feet, raising a glass of wine -

NAPOLEON

My good friends, I thank you for all your presents and your kindness. In honour of my 50th birthday, I shall read you a play. The question is, what shall it be? A comedy? Or a tragedy?

The vote is a confusion of both. He takes out a gold napoleon coin and spins it...

175 INT. NAPOLEON'S BUREAU - TUILERIES - <1811> - DAY

... the great globe spins -- and Napoleon's hand again brings it to an abrupt halt on Russia.

NAPOLEON

What does Russia want? Is it to be war? or peace?

Talleyrand, Metternich, Fouché, Eugene, Murat and Ney are among those present, listening to Napoleon's tirade...

NAPOLEON

I will not yield an inch of Poland to Russia - not a village, not a mill!

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

Look how Russia abuses her serfs!
 Moreover she allows every merchant
 in Europe to trade with England
 through her seaports! Alexander has
 broken his solemn oath, and it is
 time I taught him a lesson!

Talleyrand and Metternich are growing decidedly nervous...

TALLEYRAND

Sire, what I fear about Russia is
 her barbarity - and her vastness -

NAPOLEON

Bah! I know Alexander. I once had
 influence over him. It will come
 back. His imagination must be
 struck by some great, bold,
 powerful stroke, and he will come
 back to me. Perhaps he will yield
 at the sight of the vast army I am
 building. If not, well, let destiny
 be accomplished and let Russia be
 crushed under my hatred of England!
 A single blow delivered at the
 heart of the Russian empire, at
 Moscow the Great, Moscow the Holy,
 will put this blind and apathetic
 mass at my mercy!

According to a witness: "With a sudden flash in his eyes,
 the Emperor then raised his voice as if in a trance-like
 exaltation"...

NAPOLEON

As for her vastness... do not forget
 that the long road to Moscow is also
 the road to the orient! Once I have
 freed the Russian serfs, I shall
 march to the Ganges -- and drive out
 the British from India!

The door opens and an anxious, overwrought doctor - DUBOIS -
 enters behind Roustam...

NAPOLEON

What is it?

DUBOIS

Sire, the Empress...!

Napoleon races from the room, followed by Dubois. One of the
 courtiers - Narbonne - turns to Talleyrand in a daze...

NARBONNE

What a man! What tremendous ideas!
 What dreams!

NARBONNE (CONT'D)

He's a genius, no doubt about it --
but is he all right in the head?

176 INT. NAPOLEON'S BUREAU - TUILERIES - <1811> - DAY

Napoleon strides along the corridor, Dubois and others following. We can hear terrifying shrieks getting closer...

NAPOLEON

Is she dead??

DUBOIS

No, sire, but...

NAPOLEON

You're a doctor, not a flunky!
Speak up man!

DUBOIS

Sire, the Empress is not dead...
but... the child...

NAPOLEON

The child is dead?!

DUBOIS

No, your Majesty... but the child
has... presented itself by its
feet...

Napoleon stops short of the door from which we hear the chilling screams...

NAPOLEON

What does that mean??

DUBOIS

I fear I shall have to operate and
use irons. It will probably mean
saving either the Empress or the
child...

Napoleon looks at him in horror - opens the door --

177 INT. NAPOLEON'S BUREAU - TUILERIES - <1811> - DAY

... to see Marie-Louise in the throes of an agonizing childbirth. He runs to her as she turns to him imploringly -

MARIE-LOUISE

Sire! Must I be sacrificed because
I am an Empress?!

-- and another agonized scream. Napoleon takes her in his arms as Dubois hovers, terrified of taking responsibility.

DUBOIS

Your Majesty... may I have your permission to use the instruments?

MARIE-LOUISE

(shrieking)

No!!

Napoleon cradles her face, kissing her - "extraordinarily moved, touched and strangely softened." He turns to Dubois.

NAPOLEON

For God's sake, man - forget her rank! Treat her as you would any shopkeeper from the Rue St Denis!

DUBOIS

But... if there are complications - whom shall I save, sire? The mother, or the child?

NAPOLEON

Why the mother, of course...

Another agonizing howl... Napoleon kisses her, then moves aside as a lady-in-waiting secures her head - and Dubois prepares his instruments.

NAPOLEON

Save the mother...

(shouting)

Above all, save the mother!

178 EXT. GARDEN - MALMAISON - <1811> - DUSK

Josephine is in her rambling "English" garden with her wolfhounds and their puppies. It is now dusk, and the banks by the lake are a shimmering sea of yellow. She is carrying a basket to pick daffodils, trying hard to mask her feelings, and failing.

179 EXT. TUILERIES - PARIS - <1811> - DUSK

An anxious crowd has gathered in the gardens below the Tuileries Palace on the banks of the River Seine...

180 INT. SALON - TUILERIES - <1811> - DUSK

Agonized SCREAMS - Napoleon blocks his ears --

181 EXT. GARDEN - MALMAISON - <1811> - DUSK

Josephine kneels beside a hillside of daffodils, laying her basket beside her. Then a remembered voice from long ago...

BONAPARTE (V/O)

... you will give birth to a little child as pretty as his mother, who will love you like his father, and when you are old, when you are a hundred, he will be your consolation and your joy...

Josephine closes her eyes.

182 EXT. TUILERIES - PARIS - <1811> - DUSK

The distant screams echo from the Tuileries Palace windows - increasing the crowd's apprehension...

183 INT. SALON - TUILERIES - <1811> - DUSK

A final, drawn-out SCREAM -- and the birth is accomplished. Napoleon races to Marie-Louise's side without so much as a glance at the baby. He kneels, listening to her heart. She has all the appearance of death...

184 EXT. GARDEN - MALMAISON - <1811> - DUSK

Josephine's eyes remain closed. Then, at a distance of 12 miles comes the first salvo... a muffled boom from a hundred guns. She picks a single daffodil as Hortense comes running up, slowing as she reaches her mother...

JOSEPHINE

(rhythmically)

21 for a girl... 101 for a boy...

21 for a girl... 101 for a boy...

A second distant boom... and she picks a second daffodil.

185 EXT. TUILERIES - PARIS - <1811> - DUSK

The GUNS explode in our ears -- the Crowd counts outloud in a muffled whisper...

186 INT. SALON - TUILERIES - <1811> - DUSK

The room is now filled with courtiers, watching as Napoleon kisses Marie-Louise, mopping her brow... then he catches the eye of Eugène - follows his eyeline to where the baby is lying on a cushion, wrapped in a shawl and barely moving...

187 EXT. GARDEN - MALMAISON - <1811> - DUSK

Daffodils fill Josephine's basket. Hortense is kneeling beside her. Another distant boom... "20"...

188 EXT. TUILERIES - PARIS - <1811> - DUSK

And another - 21... The volley dies away... the crowd is immobile -- total silence...

189 INT. SALON - TUILERIES - <1811> - DUSK

... and in total silence, Napoleon lifts the baby close to his face...

190 EXT. GARDEN - MALMAISON - <1811> - DUSK

... only the sound of spring birds in the trees. Josephine and Hortense strain their ears...

191 EXT. TUILERIES - PARIS - <1811> - DUSK

At the 22nd volley, silence turns to total pandemonium - amid hurling hats, total strangers fling their arms round each other's necks, screaming "Vive l'Empereur!"

192 EXT. GARDEN - MALMAISON - <1811> - DUSK

... and as the echo dies and another volley sounds, Josephine sobs out her heart in the arms of her daughter.

193 EXT. TUILERIES - PARIS - <1811> - DUSK

The roar of the guns is completely submerged beneath the cries of the ecstatic crowd...

194 INT. SALON - TUILERIES - PARIS - <1811> - DUSK

Napoleon holds his newborn son in his arms. He gazes at him adoringly, as though seeing a reflection of himself in the baby's blue eyes - kisses him - then turns...

195 EXT. BALCONY - TUILERIES PALACE - <1811> - DUSK

... and steps out onto the balcony, proudly presenting his boy to the vast, seething crowd in the gardens below...

NAPOLEON

People of France, I give you my
son... the King of Rome!

Voices shrill, gruff, piercing, hysterical - a frantic, overwhelming cacophony... "Long live the Emperor! Long live the King of Rome!"

Then, from across the Seine, a giant balloon rises slowly into the evening sky - a hot-air balloon, draped in golden filaments, its huge orb emblazoned with a giant "N"...

196 EXT. BALLOON & SKY - SFX - <1811> - TWILIGHT

The Balloonist is the famed Madame Blanchard, dressed in the red, white and blue flag of the French Republic, scattering thousands of tiny leaflets announcing the great event...

The leaflets float serenely down like white lily petals over the city of Paris, its spires and windows glinting in the twilight.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Soldiers! Five years ago on this river, Russia pledged an eternal alliance with France in her war against England!

197 EXT. NIEMAN RIVER - RUSSIA - <1812> - DAY

On a glorious summer's day under a clear blue sky, Napoleon sits astride Tauris, overlooking the River Nieman where he and Alexander swore eternal friendship...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Today her oath is broken. She demands that I sacrifice Poland to her greed, and she allies herself with our English enemies!

Below him, the Grande Armée slithers like a vast serpent towards the river...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Does Russia think we are no longer the soldiers of Austerlitz? Not since Xerxes crossed the Hellespont has the world seen such an army - Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Poles, Saxons, Swiss, Danes, Swedes, Norwegians, Spaniards, Italians, Serbs, Croats, Dalmatians, Austrians, Hungarians, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Bavarians, Venetians, Neapolitans, Canadians, Americans, Irishmen, Scotsmen, Welshmen, even Englishmen - over half a million men from 21 nations, united beneath one flag, fighting for one ideal - liberty and equality for all!

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)
 Forward, then, across the Nieman,
 and let us carry war onto Russian
 soil - and freedom to her serfs!

The great serpent divides into three as it reaches the Nieman, where pontoon bridges have been thrown across under Bertrand's supervision.

Napoleon spurs his horse and rides to where the Imperial Guard - the elite of the Grande Armee - proudly cross the river. Léon lets out a cheer - "Vive l'Empereur!" - as he passes, shaking his shako on the end of his rifle...

The cry is taken up in sixteen languages as the CAMERA CRANES to embrace the titanic army coiling its towards the river: half a million infantrymen, 150,000 cavalry, 4,000 ammunition wagons, 1,200 canon and artillery, 700 flying ambulances, 30,000 carts laden with 6 million sacks of wheat, 28 million bottles of wine, and everything from printing presses to iron forges. "Food on the hoof" - 10,000 cattle and oxen - trudge behind - followed by a six mile baggage train of actors, war-artists, "foreign observers", wives, children, canteen women and whores...

198 EXT. RUSSIA - ADVANCE MONTAGE - <1812> - DAY

But the pastoral river valley soon gives way to an alien landscape, shimmering in the summer heat, where every village has been burned, every horse and cow slaughtered...

NAPOLEON (V/O)
 My dearest Marie-Louise, My
 greatest pleasure is in reading
 your letters - it is the first
 thing I do when the courier
 arrives. They are as charming as
 you are yourself: they picture your
 beautiful soul, and all your noble
 qualities are to be seen in them...

Soldiers swelter in the heat - flies - sickness - death - it is Egypt all over again. Sometimes Napoleon rides in his carriage, drawn by six Limousin horses - a comprehensive travelling office in which he works with Berthier on his maps and plans...

199 INT/EXT. CARRIAGE - TRAVELLING - <1812> - NIGHT

A lantern allows him to toil far into the night, dispatches and letters being passed through the window to outriders. This can be a hazardous enterprise, since across the flat wastes of Russia, Napoleon's coachman is able to drive his team at up to 50mph...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

The enemy has retreated and burned everything in its path. When we reach what on the map is a village, all is ash and dust, while the spaces in between make everything disappear, except space itself... but still we march on, and soon enough the enemy will be forced to give battle. I love you, you know that, and I rejoice to think of you with the little King...

When the lathered horses are changed, buckets of water have to be poured over the smoking hot wheels, sending up clouds of steam into the still, silent night...

200 EXT. ADVANCE MONTAGE - RUSSIA - <1812> - DAY

At other times Napoleon rides Tauris at the head of his vanguard, scanning the horizon for the enemy. But there's nothing to be seen - no huts, no trees, just empty space.

201 INT. RUINED CHURCH - SMOLENSK - <1812> - NIGHT

Napoleon has set up camp in a ruined church. Among those on hand to assist him are two young page boys - ALI, not yet dressed as a Mameluke - and the young Louis MARCHAND.

Napoleon proudly displays Gérard's portrait of the young King of Rome to the admiring approval of his soldiers...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

All the things you tell me about the him give me vast pleasure, and are a great comfort to me. Kiss him for me twice. I often look at Gérard's portrait of him, which I think a good likeness and very beautiful. When he is in my arms I am at the summit of my happiness. My health is very good, my affairs are going well, but the heat is excessive. *Adio mio ben*. Keep well and do not doubt your Napoleon.

NAPOLEON

(to his marshals)

Believe me, gentlemen. If my son were fifteen, he would be here in person, fighting alongside us...

MURAT

If only we were fighting. Where are the Russians? Where's Kutuzov? Where's Alexander?

NEY

Safely up north in St Petersburg.
He's betrayed you sire... and now
he's luring us to our doom...

NAPOLEON

Come, Ney - that's no way for a
Marshal of France to speak...

NEY

Sire, our lines of communication
are so stretched that they are open
to Cossack attack at any time...

NAPOLEON

Sooner or later the Russians will
give battle - and Alexander will
come to me on his knees, begging my
forgiveness.

202 EXT. RUINED VILLAGE - RUSSIA - <1812> - DAY

A few charred and smouldering stumps are all that remain of a
Russian village, their putrid corpses lying amid the ashes.

The Army is famished, and many resort to eating the rotting
remains -until they chance upon a field of cabbages and
hidden granaries under the charred floorboards...

203 INT. CARRIAGE - TRAVELLING - RUSSIA - <1812> - NIGHT

Napoleon is scrawling a letter by light from a rocking
lantern while Berthier dozes across the map table.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

We are advancing in the direction
of the Moscow River, where I will
force Kutusov to stand and fight.
My affairs are going well. My
health is good. I learn that yours
is perfect. Kiss the little King
for me. *Adio, mio ben.* Napoleon

204 EXT. BORODINO - [SFX PAINTING] - <1812> - DAY

The Battle of Borodino, where our war artists are once again
recording the stark images in their sketchbooks...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Soldiers, here at last is the
battle that you have so long
desired! Victory now depends on
your efforts, and is vital.

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)

Do what you did at Jena and
Austerlitz, and the holy city of
Moscow shall be ours!

... the drawings animate to record silent moments from Borodino, "the worst battle I ever fought" - 55,000 French dead, 70,000 Russians. Larrey saws off 200 limbs in 48 hours...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My dearest Marie-Louise. I write to you from the battlefield of Borodino. Yesterday I beat the Russians - their whole army - 120,000 strong. I took several thousand prisoners and sixty cannons. Their losses are estimated at sixty thousand men, though I have many killed and wounded...

The battlefield is strewn with corpses, eight deep...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Tomorrow we enter Moscow. I shall discuss peace terms with the Tsar as soon as he arrives from St Petersburg. My health is good, the weather fresh. Thank you for the portrait of the little king - he is as beautiful as you. Adio mio bene, be cheerful - kiss my son three times for me...

... and then the bleak sketches merge into paintings as the Grand Army finally comes within sight of Moscow - Holy Moscow - its gold and silver domes sparkling on the horizon.

MURAT

Moscow... at last!

Murat whoops with delight, drawing his sword in triumph. He is dressed in pale pink riding britches, bright yellow leather boots, four ostrich feathers and a crown of heron plumes. Murat charges down the hill towards the distant city, followed by the cavalry.

205 EXT. DESERTED STREETS - MOSCOW - <1812> - DAY

But the exhilaration is short-lived, for they find themselves in a city without inhabitants, littered with the debris of a population now flown. Were it not for the scraps of paper fluttering in the breeze, this might be another painting. Napoleon stares ahead of him, perplexed.

NAPOLEON

Where is the Governor of Moscow?
Where are the representatives of
the city? Where are the keys?
Where is everybody?!

206 INT. KREMLIN – MOSCOW – <1812> – NIGHT

A large portrait of Alexander stares back at us in response, benign, enigmatic. The portrait hangs on the wall of one of the great, silent staterooms of the Kremlin, where Napoleon is playing chess with Eugène. The room has been stripped of all but a few chairs and a table. Ali and Marchand are setting up Napoleon's iron bed in his green field tent, incongruously pitched near a blazing fire in the huge fireplace.

Napoleon is an impatient player. He makes his move – and Eugène reluctantly checkmates him.

NAPOLEON

Bah – chess – all skill and no
luck, what sort of battle is that?!

EUGENE

But sire, you told me that a true
hero always plays chess after a
battle, won or lost.

NAPOLEON

So? I contradict myself! I prefer
cards... or even billiards. I'd
give you a game – if the Russians
had not carted the table away. Not
that I'm much better at billiards
either – your mother always used to
beat me...

Bertrand enters, carrying a document.

NAPOLEON

Yes, Bertrand – any news?

BERTRAND

None, sire.

NAPOLEON

Why doesn't the Tsar send someone?!
Does he expect me to march north to
St Petersburg? Well, what is it?

BERTRAND

Sire, the 28th Bulletin of the
Grand Army is ready to be
dispatched to Paris by semaphore...
subject to your Majesty's approval.

Napoleon glances at it.

NAPOLEON

No, no Bertrand – I said our losses were numbered at less than fifteen thousand, not twenty.

BERTRAND

The correct figure is closer to 30...

NAPOLEON

I know that, Bertrand – but since the newspapers always exaggerate, if I say 30,000, they will assume 60,000...

He breaks off, reacting to a muffled explosion. They listen – then another explosion, louder this time...

207 INT. KREMLIN – HALLWAY/POV – <1812> – NIGHT

FAST TRACK with Napoleon, Eugène, and Bertrand as they are joined by Murat, Ney, Berthier, Oudinot – striding down vast corridors, their boots echoing about the empty walls...

They cross the great hall to the balcony doors, where others are clustered at the windows, their faces lit by the glow of flame. Marchand and Ali move aside – Berthier hands Napoleon his spyglass – he puts it to his eye, merging into his POV:

Massive EXPLOSIONS silhouette the onion-domed churches of Moscow against the night sky. Napoleon turns to his staff –

NAPOLEON

I gave express orders: no looting, no pillaging – and no arson! Find the culprits – bring them to me – I will have them shot before the whole army!

208 EXT. MOSCOW – FIRE – <1812> – NIGHT

Napoleon stands back, shielding his face from the inferno with his hand. His staff stand impotently by as the fire rages beyond them. Ney approaches, followed by French infantrymen dragging three ragged lunatics in white shirts.

NEY

Sire, these are the culprits – madmen and criminals – released from prison with orders to burn down the city in exchange for their freedom. They have destroyed every pump, every hose, every water-bucket in the city!

Napoleon looks stunned. He gazes up at the church of St Basil, its dome surmounted by the Cross of Ivan the Great, covered with silver and gold, now enveloped in flames...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Alexander, my brother - how is it possible to destroy one of the most beautiful cities in the world? If I thought that such an act had been committed on your Majesty's orders, I would not be writing you this letter, but I do not believe it possible that your Majesty, with your principles and kindheartedness, could have authorized such barbarism, so unworthy of a great sovereign and a great nation...

The huge Cross of Ivan crashes to the ground, sending up a shower of sparks, dust and ashes.

209 EXT. MOSCOW FIRE - <1812> - NIGHT

Napoleon has set up camp on a hill to the north of Moscow, from where he watches the burning city with his staff. In his own words, the sky is "a mountain of red rolling flames, like immense waves of the sea, alternately bursting forth and lifting themselves to skies of fire, and then sinking into the ocean of flame below."

NAPOLEON (V/O)

If your Majesty still retains any remnants of his former feelings, he will meet with me, and together we can resolve our differences in a climate of friendship and brotherhood. I await your response here in Moscow, but will make the journey to St Petersburg if your Majesty would prefer.

210 INT. KREMLIN - MOSCOW - <1812> - DAY

Back in the Kremlin - spared by the fire which is now dying away - Napoleon paces impatiently up and down, hands behind his back, dictating to Meneval while Murat and Ney stand by.

NAPOLEON

There shall be at our Imperial Conservatoire at Paris places for eighteen pupils preparing for the Théâtre Français, nine of each sex. For this purpose there shall be two instructors in the dramatic arts...

MURAT

Your Majesty, we cannot wait any longer if we are to retreat before winter sets in....

NAPOLEON

I will not retreat! He will answer me! He will come!

(to Meneval, calmly)

There shall also be a Professor of History and Mythology, who shall instruct those pupils who are intended for the Théâtre Français.

211 EXT. KREMLIN - MOSCOW - <1812> - DUSK

Napoleon paces the balcony, looking out at the smouldering ruins of the city. Most of the houses were built of wood, and only the Kremlin and few other stone churches and buildings remain. Eugène comes out onto the balcony, accompanied by a breathless Courier.

EUGENE

Sire, the courier was turned back, two hundred miles south of St Petersburg. The Tsar refuses to receive any letters from your Majesty. He is prepared to discuss peace under any circumstances so long as the Grand Army remains on Russian soil. He says he would prefer to grow a beard and eat potatoes with his serfs.

Eugene hands Napoleon his letter to Alexander, the seal unbroken. He looks at it a moment, then tosses it away.

NEY

Sire... would it not be a notion to liberate the serfs? Imagine, sire - a Grand Army of nine million, marching on St Petersburg with your Majesty at the helm...!

NAPOLEON

Liberate the serfs... are you joking? They'd slit our throats!

212 EXT. MOSCOW - CITY WALLS - <1812> - DAY

The great exodus from the ruins of Moscow has begun - an extraordinary spectacle.

Like Moses leading his people out of Egypt, Napoleon rides Tauris at the head of his troops as they leave the holy city, dragging an incredible convoy of 10,000 wagons laden with supplies and booty salvaged from the flames: furniture, pianos, silks and sables, statues, books, harps, holy relics of silver and gold, including the huge Cross of Ivan, drawn by a dozen horses...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My dear Marie-Louise. As the enemy has burned Moscow to the ground, I have abandoned it to take up winter quarters in Poland. Such weather as we are having is unheard-of – better than Paris – bright sunshine and only two degrees below freezing point. I hope you will soon tell me that my son has cut his teeth and recovered his good temper. My health is perfect and my affairs are going well. Adio, mio bene, be cheerful and kiss the little King three times for me...

There's an carnival atmosphere – the soldiers are finally going home, carousing as they leave the charred city. Among them is Léon, carrying a large sack of booty. Like many of the Guard, he has supplemented his uniform with a bizarre assortment of clothing: a yellow waistcoat of padded silk and a cape lined with ermine. He and his comrades celebrate their departure with bottles of champagne passed along the line. Beyond Larrey and his fleet of ambulances stretches a vast armada of women, children and stragglers who flow in the army's wake...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

The 29th Bulletin of the Grand Army. Our withdrawal from Moscow commenced on 26th of October. The weather was perfect and the movement of the army was carried out with complete success. Then, on the 7th of November, the cold set in...

213 EXT. RETREAT – SLEET – RUSSIA – <1812> – DAY

First rain, then sleet. The wagons become bogged down, booty is abandoned. Léon is obliged to lighten his load as he marches, discarding a pair of silver candelabras from his sack. Napoleon marches with his guard, head bowed, huddled against the driving sleet in the sable-and-ermine coat that Alexander gave him at Tilsit...

214 EXT. RETREAT - BLIZZARD - <1812> - DAY

A blizzard of such magnitude that for a moment we see nothing but white. Then - as in the sandstorm sequence in Egypt - a dark, huddled mass begins to emerge, trudging towards us. Napoleon rides Tauris, head bowed against the driving snow, his face wrapped in furs.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

The thermometer has sunk to 18 below freezing. The roads are covered with ice. Horses die every night, not by the hundred but by the thousand, more than 30,000 horses perishing in a single night...

Léon finally abandons the last of his booty, keeping only the sack to give to a frostbitten friend. Among the Imperial Guard, comradeship is strong, and when one falls, several others drop behind and help him to his feet. But among the common herd of infantrymen, those who fall are stripped of their clothing and left naked...

215 EXT. WASTELAND - RUSSIA - <1812> - DAY

Their tortuous trail is constantly ambushed by marauding Cossacks, suddenly appearing from the forests either side, butchering a section of the line and relieving them of their booty with cries of Houra! Houra! Napoleon himself is nearly caught by a band of Cossacks who surround him, but is rescued by the Imperial Guard...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

The enemy, seeing the roads littered with the traces of this horrible calamity, seek to profit from it by surrounding all our columns with his Cossacks, who, like the Arabs of the desert, make off with all the wagons and carriages that stray from the road. Our entire cavalry finds itself on foot. Our artillery and transports are completely paralysed...

216 EXT. CAMPSITE - RUSSIA - <1812> - NIGHT

At night, huge fires are built, but since most of the trees have been destroyed by the Russian peasants, they resort to burning the last of their pillage - chairs - harps - icons - pianos - even the wagons themselves. A frozen crust of bread costs Léon twenty gold napoleons, a single pair of boots is exchanged for a diamond necklace.

Napoleon sits near a small fire, surrounded by his frozen Grumblers. He takes out a little oval portrait of his son and gazes at it...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

It has been necessary to abandon and destroy a large part of our guns, our ammunition, and our supplies. Our cavalry had lost so many horses that it has become necessary to make a single unit of all the officers who still have their mounts, and to organize them into four companies of 150 men each...

(cross-fading to)

... My dearest Marie-Louise. The Cossacks have swooped down upon our communication lines, which prevents me from hearing from you. I am in good health, the weather very bad and very cold. Three kisses to the little King from me, and tell me how he is getting on with his teething. Adio, mio bene... and be sure to write to your father in Vienna telling him that I am in excellent health...

The fires offer warmth to a fortunate inner circle, but many are trampled to death in the effort to get there. Those that fall asleep by the fire are dragged away and left to freeze in a ditch, unless they are kept alive by the compassion of a comrade - or, like Léon, the warmth of a dead one.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

(29th Bulletin)

Those men whom nature has not tempered and hardened against the accidents of fate and fortune have lost their good humour, and see nothing ahead but disasters and catastrophes...

Since the Russians have burnt every barn in sight, the horses are reduced to eating the bark off trees - before they too are eaten by starving soldiers. Some crawl inside their carcasses to keep warm, only to awake to find themselves trapped inside a frozen rib-cage by dawn. Léon is luckier, but has lost all his fingers on one hand.

217 INT. TENT - RUSSIA - <1812> - NIGHT

Marchand and Ali are preparing Napoleon's camp bed when the flap opens. There's a freezing blizzard without, and Napoleon is shivering...

MURAT

Your Majesty - we must see you at once!

Ali draws back the flap and Murat, Ney and Eugène enter...

MURAT

You have been betrayed, sire!
Forged dispatches are telling the people of Paris that you were killed under the walls of Moscow!

NAPOLEON

Fouché...! I should have had him shot years ago!

NEY

General Malet is believed to have been the instigator...

NAPOLEON

Bah! Fouché's in everybody's shoes - even Talleyrand's!

EUGENE

You must return to Paris at once, sir. If the people believe you are dead, the royalists may seize their chance!

NAPOLEON

I can't desert my army - my children - we have shared this cross together - I cannot abandon them now!

NEY

We will take command, sire.

NAPOLEON

They'll say I'm a coward.

EUGENE

We will know the truth.

Napoleon paces up and down - takes out a gold "Napoleon", flips it back and forth between his hand - suddenly spins it - catches it - glances at it.

218 EXT. BEREZINA RIVER - RUSSIA - <1812> - DAY

Of the half million men who crossed the Nieman in June, there are now less than 20,000 by the time the Grand Army reaches the Berezina river - a torrent of flowing ice...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My dear Louise, I have had no letters from you for many days, but tomorrow or the day after I shall receive them all at once, the road having been cut by the Cossacks. The weather is cold. You must have been very anxious at not hearing from me for several days. My health is very good. Kiss the little King for me and never doubt the sentiments of your faithful Napoleon.

Two very long and very rickety pontoon bridges are being hastily thrown together by sappers under Bertrand's supervision. It is hazardous work - the men up to their necks in freezing water, wiring planks together to form an escape across the torrent of fast-flowing ice.

Napoleon supervises the tortuous crossing, riding between the two western bridgeheads with Bertrand, encouraging the Sappers who carry out constant repairs. Across it trudge the ghosts of the Grande Armée, Léon barely recognizable, his face a frozen mass of sores. The bridges have no rails, and are barely the width of Larrey's decrepit ambulances, trundling across with the surviving wounded. The entire east bank is swarming with soldiers awaiting their turn, while the hills beyond are clouded with an army of 30,000 stragglers, refugees, women and children...

Larrey is making his third crossing when the terrified cry is raised in a dozen languages: "Cossacks! Save yourselves!" Most of the French army are safely across on the west bank, but now the great mass behind them begins to move, driven on by the slaughtering Cossacks...

Napoleon watches, fascinated and repelled. The spectacle is indeed wonderful: a dark wave of human larva flowing down the hillside, sweeping the last of the army ahead of them into the freezing river. Larrey manages to reach the bridge, but is nearly heaved overboard - a soldier recognises him - grabs him - "It's Larrey!" So beloved is this man that he is raised up above the soldiers' heads and passed along the entire bridge to safety...

But for the rest of this seething mass, it is too late... The bridges creak and groan - Bertrand and the sappers scramble for safety - ropes snap - timbers crack - and two thousand souls are tipped headlong into the river, already clogged with men swept in from along the bank. Those safely on the west bank watch the holocaust with minds too numb to care. Léon gazes vacantly ahead, his eyelids so stiff that he cannot close them. Bertrand - his face and hands badly frost-bitten - stares in horror...

Napoleon hangs his head, then turns and rides to a waiting sledge. He dismounts... and embraces Eugène good bye. Larrey runs up - hands Napoleon a small glass bottle...

LARREY

In case you are caught by the
Cossacks, sire...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

False reports in Paris claim that
the Emperor was killed at the foot
of the walls of Moscow. Be assured
that his Majesty's health has never
been better.

... and the sledge pulls away into the night.

219 EXT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1818> - DAY

A dozen miserable British redcoats stand in the pouring rain, guarding the gate to the dilapidated farm buildings that constitute Longwood House.

A distant GUN BOOMS - and a face appears at the window, cautiously peeping out from behind the blinds. A second BOOM - and silently, eerily, eighty soldiers emerge from the shadows and move a hundred yards closer to take up their evening station.

220 INT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1818> - DAY

Napoleon turns away from the window, bored. His dog-eared maps are spread out over the billiard table, covered with coloured blocks of wood. He picks up a billiard ball, considers a moment, then sends it rolling across the table, scattering the blocks.

He wanders into the adjacent living room, where Montholon sits by the fire, playing cards with Albine. Fanny is reading Jane Austen while Bertrand scans a much-thumbed English newspaper. Napoleon sinks into his chair by the fire, and starts poking the flames.

NAPOLEON

Is there anything about me?

BERTRAND

I fear not, sire.

NAPOLEON

What are you reading?

BERTRAND

The Cricket, sire.

NAPOLEON

Didn't Lord Holland make any
speeches about me?

MONTHOLON

Perhaps in *The Times* sire? Bertrand
has the *Hampshire Evening Post*.

Napoleon grunts, starts poking the fire. A rat scuttles out.
Frederick the Great's alarm clock ticks loudly.

NAPOLEON

The field of battle was strewn with
corpses...

(the others look up)

We were alone, Bertrand and I, in
the profound solitude of a
beautiful moonlit night... do you
remember, Bertrand? On the Italian
campaign?

Bertrand seems to dimly remember something. He gets out his
notebook, as of habit...

NAPOLEON

Suddenly a dog leaped out from
under the coat of a corpse, came
running towards us, and then almost
immediately ran back to the corpse,
howling piteously. He licked his
master's face, ran back to us and
repeated this again and again, as
though seeking help and revenge at
the same time.

Now even Fanny is listening, for Napoleon is a master at
conjuring images...

NAPOLEON

I don't know whether it was the
mood of the moment, of the place,
of the time, or the action itself,
or what - but nothing I ever saw on
any other battlefield ever produced
such an effect on me. This man, I
said to myself, had friends, but
here he lies, abandoned by all
except his dog. What a lesson
nature was teaching us through an
animal. What a strange thing is
man. How mysterious are the
workings of his sensibility...

Napoleon looks up at Bertrand, seeking an explanation...

NAPOLEON

I have commanded campaigns that were to decide the fate of whole armies, and I felt no emotion. I have ordered advances that were bound to cost the lives of thousands, and my eyes remained dry. And yet suddenly there I was, shaken, turned inside out, by a dog... howling in pain.

Bertrand stopped writing long ago. A pause, then they hear a carriage arrive and British soldiers barking out orders.

221 EXT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1818> - DAY

Betsy is now 18, and has blossomed. She walks with Napoleon through the neglected garden, his mood overcast as the sky.

NAPOLEON

They all desert me in the end - Las Cases, Gourgaud, O'Meara -- and now you're forsaking me too, eh? Soon I shall have only rats for company...

BETSY

You know that is quite untrue, sir. My mother is obliged to return to England for reasons of health.

Napoleon reacts to her formality - what became of Betsy?

NAPOLEON

I was not being very serious, Miss Betsy. I have asked my mother to send me a young theologian, a decent cook, and the best doctor she can find, so I shall soon be in good company.

His mood switches as he gazes around him...

NAPOLEON

Tomorrow you will be sailing away for England... leaving me to die on this miserable rock. Look at those dreadful mountains - they are my prison walls! It won't be long now before you hear that the Emperor Napoleon is dead - murdered by the English and their hired assassin...

Betsy doesn't know whether to laugh or cry, but there is something in Napoleon's desolate look that prompts her to the latter. "I burst into tears, and sobbed, as though my heart would break.

He seemed much moved at my sorrow, and seeing the tears run fast down my cheeks, took his handkerchief from his pocket and wiped them away..."

NAPOLEON

Keep it, in remembrance of me. But we must find you something else....

BETSY

I want nothing more from you, sir... you have given me so many things...

NAPOLEON

Not some trinket to remember me by?

BETSY

How can I ever forget you!

NAPOLEON

Frederick the Great's alarm clock, perhaps?

Betsy laughs - and is in further need of his handkerchief.

BETSY

There's only one thing I'd like.

222 INT. NAPOLEON'S BEDROOM - ST HELENA - <1818> - DAY

Scissor blades snip with great delicacy at Napoleon's hair.

Marchand hands the lock to Napoleon - soft, like a child's. He puts it in a little silver locket and hands it to Betsy. She cannot speak.

NAPOLEON

Be true to my memory. And if some day you should see my wife and son...

Betsy suddenly flings her arms around him --

BETSY

Boney...!

"I thought then that my heart would break, and I now know that it did..."

223 EXT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1818> - DUSK

Napoleon stands at the window, waving to Betsy who leans out of her carriage, waving as it disappears past the sentry post and into the gathering dusk. Then he turns back inside.

224 EXT. MALMAISON – GARDENS [SPRING] – <1813> – DAY

It is early March, and the gardens at Malmaison are beginning to blossom. The stillness MIXES to other images of the gardens, each drawing closer to the large conservatory at the rear of the house. Through the window we can see Josephine at work, splicing rose stems...

225 INT. CONSERVATORY – MALMAISON – <1813> – DAY

An elderly artist – Pierre-Joseph REDOUTÉ – is at work nearby, colouring an exquisitely detailed drawing of a China rose in bud. The wolfhounds lie at Josephine's feet – until one of them rears up, barking. Josephine turns round – drops her rose in astonishment to see –

Napoleon standing in the doorway, arms folded, casually leaning against the door-frame. Then he opens his arms – and Josephine runs to him, throwing herself into his embrace.

JOSEPHINE

Sire, I was not warned! Why were you not announced?

NAPOLEON

We bribed our way past the guards.

JOSEPHINE

We...?

Napoleon steps aside to reveal – the empty doorway to the salon beyond.

NAPOLEON

Come along, where's your courage?

Slowly – first a hand – then an arm – finally an angelic face – the KING OF ROME, aged 3 – long blonde curls, blue eyes, and his father's smile. He is dressed in the blue-and-gold uniform of a drummer boy, with a small drum slung round his neck.

Josephine's reaction is at once generous, delirious, and painful. Yet also astonished.

JOSEPHINE

She... let you bring him...?

NAPOLEON

It cost me dear. Her father wanted Venice back. No use to me anyway... those Venetian merchants are worse shopkeepers than the English.

Josephine laughs – kneels down and opens her arms to the boy. The King of Rome moves towards her – but at the last moment loses his nerve and runs back to Napoleon, clutching his legs. Napoleon bends down and lifts him up in his arms, kissing him with Corsican passion.

NAPOLEON

Come come my boy, this will never do. A king must never be frightened – and certainly not by a woman – as good and true as Josephine...

Napoleon carries him to Josephine, noticing Redouté at work.

JOSEPHINE

Forgive me, sire – Monsieur Redouté... he is making a pictorial record of my roses.

Like most on first meeting Napoleon, the timid Redouté is seized with panic – bows – barely manages to utter "Your Majesty" before hurriedly returning to his work.

NAPOLEON

Who will be remembered in a thousand years time, I wonder... your roses, or my victories?

The mention of victory colours Josephine's reaction. Napoleon lightens the mood, kissing the King of Rome and presenting him to Josephine...

NAPOLEON

Doesn't he have my chest – my mouth – my eyes?!

JOSEPHINE

He is the very image of you, sire. And thank goodness he doesn't have the Hapsburg chin.

NAPOLEON

(laughing)

Bah! My son is no Austrian – he's a Frenchman –

(to the King of Rome)

... and don't you ever forget that!

226 INT. HARP ROOM – MALMAISON – <1813> – NIGHT

Hortense and Napoleon are on all fours, playing hide and seek with the King of Rome. There is much laughter, and whenever Napoleon catches the boy, he holds him as though never wanting to let him go, kissing him and ruffling his curls. The room is large but cosy, with a roaring fire.

Josephine sits on the sofa, watching them, her two wolfhounds curled beside her and her Spanish-speaking parrot on its perch. Although she tries to be gay, her mood is quiet and subdued. Presently she gets up and walks to her harp at the far end of the room. Napoleon turns to the King of Rome.

NAPOLEON

Perhaps Hortense will teach you how to dance...?

Hortense understands and takes over, allowing Napoleon to join Josephine. He takes her hands.

NAPOLEON

Ah, my Josephine – be happy for me.

JOSEPHINE

You know I am happy for you...

NAPOLEON

Then why so glum?

She suddenly turns to him --

JOSEPHINE

Why must you make war again, sire?

NAPOLEON

It is Prussia who threatens to make war on me, my sweet Josephine.

JOSEPHINE

But it could be so easily resolved.

NAPOLEON

Have you seen Talma's new production of Cinna? He's the only actor who truly understands how to play Corneille.....

JOSEPHINE

(with sudden passion)

Please, sire – just this once – you say I have an excellent heart... so allow me to speak it! A million men have died in Spain and Russia – when we read your Bulletin – "the 29th Bulletin of the Grand Army" – you could feel a wave of anguish the length and breadth of France... there is not a family that hasn't lost a son, a father, a brother...

Napoleon turns away and starts to walk towards Hortense and the King of Rome, Josephine following...

JOSEPHINE

Sire, you say that in politics there is no heart, only head... and yet you also say that the needs of the people are to be found in the heart of their ruler... so at least listen to your own heart if not mine... France is bleeding to death!

NAPOLEON

Come along, little King – time to drive back to Paris.

JOSEPHINE

And for what? For Poland? For Belgium? Do you really suppose that the people of France care more for the Poles and the Belgians than they do their own children?

Napoleon wavers. Finally, as though to a child...

NAPOLEON

When Europe makes war, it makes civil war. We are one people. One law, one code, one currency, one army – one Emperor. But my position is not like the other sovereigns of Europe –

(to the King of Rome)

Papa Francis spends all day in his greenhouse, but no one challenges his right to the Austrian crown. He can do what he likes. Spain, England, Prussia – all reigned over by incompetent fools, but no one thinks of usurping them. No one accuses them of ingratitude, since no one helped them win their crowns in the first place. But for me? Everything is different. There is not a man in my senate or a marshal in my army who does not claim credit for raising me high. But if I were to suffer a reversal of fortune, they would be the first to desert me. My power is therefore dependent on my glory, and my glory on my victories. My power would fail if I were not to support it with still more glory and still more victories. Conquest has made me what I am, and only conquest can maintain me.

Josephine turns away as the implication of his words sink in.

JOSEPHINE

Then we are lost, sire.

Napoleon turns back to the window, stares out at the dusk.

227 EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE - SPRING - <1813> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Peasants at work in the fields flock to the hedgerows to witness the Emperor at the head of his troops, marching east to war. Young recruits and the surviving old Grumblers from the Russian campaign trudge side by side, singing the "Marseilles", bursting with pride as they are cheered through village after village amid the blossoming spring countryside...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Soldiers! Prussia has broken her treaty and once again declared war on us! Better a declared enemy than a treacherous ally! The Russians menace us with threats of retribution, and England bribes them with gold...

228 EXT. EUROPE - SFX OVERVIEW - <1813> - DAY/NIGHT

Napoleon's voice trails into silence as we start to PULL BACK on an extended zoom (SFX), the vast army gradually diminishing into a ribbon of colour, a stream of energy slowly moving eastward, fed by tributaries of new recruits joining the flag...

Time speeds up as the French army moves east across the Rhine and into the heartland of Prussian Germany, while simultaneously, Allied armies are moving westward to confront them - the Prussians from Berlin, and vast hoards of Russians rippling westward across the Nieman and Vistula to join forces with the Prussians. The two opposing armies meet at Lützen in a bolt of almost electrical energy...

229 EXT. LUTZEN CAVALRY CHARGE - <1813> - DAY

Napoleon rides, sword drawn, at the head of the Cavalry of the Young Guard - suddenly he's the young Bonaparte again - the poet in action. Though fatter and heavier, his ability to fire enthusiasm has not waned, and the Young Guard follow him into battle with unswerving loyalty and zeal...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Well done, my soldiers! You have achieved all that I expected of you! Your spirit and courage have stood in the place of all we lacked. You have shed new lustre on the glory of my eagles!

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)

We will hurl these Tartars back across the Elbe! Let them remain in their frozen steppes, the abode of slavery, barbarism and corruption, where man is reduced to the level of the brute! You have deserved well of civilized Europe! Soldiers! France, Italy and Germany give you their thanks!

The cavalry charge puts the Russians to flight across the Elbe - but not before an iron ball has come within inches of its target. Napoleon looks down to see a piece of skin and hair torn from his horse's hock. He puts his scarf over the wound - then acknowledges the cries of Victory - "Long Live the Empire!" Among the old Grumblers: Léon, his missing fingers replaced with an iron hook that he waves in triumph as Napoleon rides by... "Vive l'Empereur!"

230 EXT. EUROPE - SFX OVERVIEW - <1813> - DAY/NIGHT

From far above, the heat peaks, then dissipates, the French army pursuing the vanquished Russians eastward across the Elbe - no more than a silver ribbon from this perspective. But now they and the Prussians suddenly turn back to face the French another burst of energy -

231 EXT. BAUTZEN & ODER - <1813> - DAY

- and another victory for Napoleon as he drives them back East across the River Oder...

232 EXT. EUROPE - SFX OVERVIEW - <1813> - DAY/NIGHT

There appears to be a brief lull in hostilities, although conflict is not confined to Germany. We are now so high that Spain has crept into our field of vision, where the French armies are gradually being driven north towards the Pyrenees and back into France...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My dearest Louise. Nothing could equal the courage, the goodwill, and the devotion that all these young soldiers show me - they are full of enthusiasm. Please write to your Father and tell him never to doubt my entire devotion. Urge him to listen to his own judgement and not Metternich...

There is again movement from the east as the Russian and Prussian Allies swarm westwards, converging on Napoleon's army at Dresden.

233 EXT. DRESDEN BATTLEFIELD - <1813> - DAY

Napoleon directs the battle in the pouring rain, barking out orders, tearing up and down the battlefield, exhorting his troops while Larrey and his medical team struggle to save the wounded from both sides. Napoleon's voice is strained...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

My dear Louise. After two days of continuous fighting, we have won a great victory at Dresden over the Russian and Prussian armies. 25,000 prisoners, 150 guns and 30 flags which I shall be sending you. How I long to be with you and the little King. I have sent my brother Joseph to bring you to Dresden, where I shall dictate peace terms with our enemies. He may have lost his Spanish crown but I trust not his sense of duty. Tell Talma to get us some actors for Dresden... and if you write to Papa Francis, tell him that my affairs are going well and I am in excellent health. Three kisses to my little boy. *Adio mio bene* from your very tired Napoleon.

Oudinot finally loses a leg, telling his distraught valet - "Why are you weeping? From now on you'll only have one boot to polish!"

234 EXT. MARCOLINI PALACE - GARDENS - <1813> - DAY

Napoleon flings open the doors to the baroque gardens of the Marcolini Palace - and runs to a carriage, being drawn not by horses but sheep...

The King of Rome steps out of his miniature carriage - and runs into the arms of his father, who swings him round in the air. He is now 4, with his mother's eyes, long, curly blonde hair, and his father's curiosity. Marie-Louise embraces Napoleon with genuine love and affection.

MARIE-LOUISE

Today was a great day for the little King.

NAPOLEON

How so, my son?

KING OF ROME

I ate all my spinach.

MARIE-LOUISE

Now there's a staggering piece of news for you!

MARIE-LOUISE (CONT'D)
 Madame Marchand persuaded him - she
 deserves the Legion of Honour!

The shy MADAME MARCHAND curtsies, flushed with pride.

235 INT. MARCOLINI PALACE - DRESDEN - <1813> - DAY

The King of Rome is sprawled on a magnificent carpet, dressed in a miniature uniform of the Imperial Guard. He is playing a game of boules with his father, moving around on his hands and knees. Marie-Louise is sitting at an easel, painting a portrait of her son and displaying remarkable talent. Several courtiers loiter in the background, among them Talleyrand, Joseph, Talma - and Count MONTHOLON.

KING OF ROME
 Papa, you're cheating!

NAPOLEON
 Why come here you insolent rascal!

... and he goes chasing after him on all-fours, growling like a tiger and finally catching him - bends him over on his knee and playfully spansks the boy while tickling him.

NAPOLEON
 Talma, tell me what I'm doing!

Talma is rather at a loss for an answer.

TALMA
 Dusting down his uniform, sire?

NAPOLEON
 I am spanking a king!

Much polite laughter, and the King of Rome wriggles free.

KING OF ROME
 Can't catch me now!

He stumbles off, Napoleon pursuing him on all fours. Gales of laughter -- then an announcement.

ROUSTAM
 Prince Clemens Wenzel Fürst von
 Metternich!

Talleyrand is one of the few who seem pleased at the arrival of the curly-haired Austrian Minister, who has evidently been on a long journey. Marie-Louise plainly doesn't trust him, and Joseph looks wary...

NAPOLEON
 Ah! There you are, Metternich. I
 thought it wouldn't take you long.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

(whispering to the King of Rome)

Papa Francis's foreign minister -
and the most devious man in Europe -
(to Metternich)

Well well, and about time too! But
if you wanted peace why didn't you
come to see me sooner?

Napoleon kisses the King of Rome and hands him to Madame Marchand, then walks to the double doors...

236 INT. GALLERY/GARDENS - DRESDEN - <1813> - DAY

... and into a long gallery overlooking the gardens.

NAPOLEON

We have already lost a month, and
your mediation thus far seems
positively hostile. I win two great
victories, my defeated enemies are
just releasing their situation, and
all of a sudden you slip into our
midst, offering to mediate and
complicating everything.

METTERNICH

Sire, I have not come to mediate.

NAPOLEON

Bah! You lie very well, Metternich.
You have almost become a statesman.
Without your pernicious inter-
ference, I might have made peace
with Russia and Prussia long ago.

METTERNICH

Sire, Austria can mediate no
longer.

NAPOLEON

I'm glad to hear it. I don't need
your help to break up their
alliance - they hate each other and
the English almost as much as they
hate me. But they will lose in the
end - they are fighting a war on
two fronts - against me, and
against their own people. Do you
know how many English volunteers I
have? How many Prussians, how many
Russians? Less than 40% of my army
is composed of Frenchmen - explain
that!

METTERNICH

No one doubts your magnetism, sire... nor that your enemies are chiefly allied in common panic for their own thrones. But you also are fighting on two fronts - the aristocracy... and a new middle class that has arisen below them...

NAPOLEON

Bah! Shopkeepers are not a class, my friend - they're a state of mind - as are their customers - characterised by greed, selfishness, and a singular lack of imagination!

METTERNICH

Perhaps sire, but these customers have money to spend - and the shopkeepers of England are only too eager to sell them the goods - cotton, silk - tea - coffee - sugar -- only your Majesty has forbidden such intercourse. Your Majesty has been untiring in his promotion of the pure sciences - but when it comes to the application of that knowledge, I'm afraid England rules the world.

Napoleon chews on this a moment, looking out of the window at his son, running round the garden with Marchand and Ali.

NAPOLEON

And when I think that, for a cup of coffee with more or less sugar in it, they would check the hand that would set free the world! Very well, let's come to the point. What do you want?

METTERNICH

It rests with Your Majesty to give the world peace.

NAPOLEON

Honour first, then peace. You cannot know what passes through a soldier's mind. A man like me does not count the lives of a million men - he counts the cause for which he is fighting. I have offered you the Balkans for your neutrality - will that satisfy you?

METTERNICH

Sire, why would your Majesty wish to fight his enemies alone?

METTERNICH (CONT'D)

Why not double the size of your army. You can, sire... our entire Austrian army is at your disposal.

NAPOLEON

Your neutrality is all I ask.

METTERNICH

Ah, Sire, Austria can remain neutral no longer. We must either be for you, or against you.

NAPOLEON

What are your terms?

Metternich looks at Talleyrand, who has silently limped up behind them... then hands Napoleon a document.

METTERNICH

We believe them to be very moderate.

Napoleon glances at it -- rage wells -- he tries to contain it -- fails -- and strikes a bust of Caesar with the rolled up document -- it crashes to the floor --

NAPOLEON

What you call peace is nothing but a pretext for the dismemberment of my empire!

(screaming)

If it cost me my throne, I will bury the world under its ruins!!

His scream echoes out into the gardens, where the King of Rome - trotting slowly past the window in his sheep-drawn carriage -- jumps out, listening intently.

NAPOLEON (O/S)

I will not surrender one inch of territory! I make peace on the basis of what is best for the people as a whole - do you hear me, Metternich - THE PEOPLE!!

Napoleon rages at Talleyrand and Metternich...

NAPOLEON

I will give you nothing because you have not defeated me! I will give Prussia nothing, because she has betrayed me! The Balkans cost me 300,000 men! Bertrand has built them roads and bridges - I have given them my Civil Code, my Constitution!

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

If you want it back, it will cost you 300,000 lives - because I will fight to defend every inch of it - and Poland - and Belgium! Do you know what is going to happen, Prince Metternich? Your fine Emperor Francis will not make war on me - because he is the father of my beloved Marie-Louise - and grandfather to my son!

The King of Rome suddenly appears in the doorway.

METTERNICH

Then you are lost, sire. That was my presentiment when I came here. Now, I am certain of it.

NAPOLEON

Was it my father-in-law who concocted this scheme - or you? Ah, Metternich - how much has England paid you to play such a part against me? And all to get back your vineyards... So it's war you want? Then you shall have it - I give you rendezvous in Vienna!!

Metternich turns and leaves as the King of Rome runs to Napoleon -

KING OF ROME

Let's go and beat Papa Francis!

237 EXT. BRIDGE & ELSTER RIVER - LEIPZIG - <1813> - DAY

... a flint is struck, a fuse is lit...

... for a brief second we see the French army in full retreat, trying to swarm across a great stone bridge into the city of Leipzig...

... then the image is torn apart by a massive explosion as the bridge -- and a thousand men -- are blown to bits, and 20,000 soldiers of the Grand Army find themselves stranded on the far side of the broad river Elster, with the Austrian and Prussian armies (led by Blücher) in full pursuit behind them. Murat looks on in horror as his cavalry is decimated, riders abandoning their horses and joining the hundreds of other soldiers diving into the fast-flowing river, to be dragged down by their heavy brass plate and drowned...

238 EXT. EUROPE - SFX OVERVIEW - <1813> - DAY/NIGHT

Pulling back HIGH, we see the turning point -- the French army slowly falling back, inexorably retreating westward across the Rhine. The Allies pause to regroup, but are soon on the move in dogged pursuit. We continue to close in, narrowing our field of view to the plains of Lorraine and Champagne. The fighting grows more intense, the flash-points more numerous -- eight battles in ten days...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I could see clearly enough the fatal hour coming. My star was growing paler. I felt the reins slipping from my fingers, and I could do nothing...

239 EXT. COURTYARD - TUILERIES - <1814> - DAY

Napoleon is about climb aboard his carriage to leave for the front. Joseph is behind him, once again in civilian clothes.

NAPOLEON

A year ago, all Europe marched with us! Today, all Europe marches against us... but especially against me! Here is the question in two words, brother Joseph. You are no longer King of Spain. What will you do? Will you, as a French prince, support my throne and display zeal for my cause by defending the city of Paris?

JOSEPH

Sire, if your Majesty would give me the authority instead of the Empress Marie-Louise...

NAPOLEON

I'm appointing you Lieutenant-General of France. The Empress is my Regent -- she is more intelligent and more trustworthy than all my Ministers put together. Remember that I am still the same man that I was at Wagram and Austerlitz -- that I will permit no intrigues in the state -- that there is no authority but mine, and that in the case of crisis, it is the Empress Regent in whom my trust resides. The Russians have declared that they want to march on Paris and burn down the city in revenge for Moscow... and I am asking you to defend her. Can't you bring yourself to do even this?

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

No? Then retire to a chateau 40 leagues from Paris - if I survive, you can live there quietly. You will be useless to me, to the family, to your daughters, to France, but you will be doing no harm and will not embarrass me. And if I die, you will be assassinated or arrested. Decide at once. Choose your path!

240 EXT. BRIENNE - GARDENS - <1814> - DAY

In the midst of a raging snowstorm, we are back in Brienne - Napoleon fighting in the grounds of his former school, the garden he once defended against an invasion of cadets now overrun by Blücher and the Germans. Napoleon calls out to a young cadet...

NAPOLEON

What are you doing there? Why aren't you firing??

BOY

I would fire as well as anybody, if I knew how to load my gun!

Napoleon demonstrates while calling after Eugène...

NAPOLEON

Eugene! Where's Murat?? He promised me 50,000 cavalry from Naples - where are they?? Where are the guns he promised?

A Prussian soldier spots Napoleon - takes aim - but suddenly there is Gourgaud to overwhelm him... a deed that goes by unnoticed by all.

It is only now that Napoleon gets his childhood bearings - the cherry tree is still there, beneath which he was lying when Bourrienne broke down his garden fence...

The fight in the snowstorm is interpolated with childhood memories of another fight, in which the young Bonaparte fought his celebrated battle in the snow...

241 INT. TENT - BRIENNE - <1814> - NIGHT

Napoleon awakes to find Marchand in the doorway.

MARCHAND

Sire, the Prince of the Moscow River wishes to see you...

Napoleon - who is fully clothed - is on his feet as Marshal Ney enters.

NAPOLEON

Well?

NEY

The King of Naples, sire.

NAPOLEON

Is he here??

NEY

Sire... he has defected.

NAPOLEON

Murat? Defected?!

Napoleon slumps down on his bed, head in his hands.

NEY

Metternich has promised him that he and Queen Caroline will be permitted to retain their kingdom of Naples... so long as they remain neutral.

NAPOLEON

He trusts the promises of Metternich over mine?! This... this wretch... this hairdresser whom I made a king! His conduct is vile, and as for Queen Caroline, it defies description! My own sister turned traitor! I have nothing but beggars in my family - what infamous treachery! I only hope that I live long enough to avenge myself - and France - for such an outrage, such horrible ingratitude!

NEY

And such disloyalty, sire... after all your Majesty has done for him.

NAPOLEON

(a beat, then)

Bah! Everyone has loved me and hated me. Everyone has taken me up, dropped me, and then taken me up again. Murat is brave enough on the battlefield, but weaker than a woman or a monk when out of sight of the enemy. Well... we shall just have to save France without him, that's all.

Napoleon walks out into the moonlit ruins of Brienne, romanticized by the recent fall of snow...

242 EXT. FRANCE - SFX OVERVIEW - <1814> - DAY/NIGHT

... and we PULL BACK up to our lofty POV, where - from this height and within this time-frame - the patterns of energy oscillate back and forth - now a victory for Napoleon, now for the Allies...

But the trend is clear: French energy is rapidly diminishing, and the Allies are moving inexorably toward Paris. Then we swoop back in - the city of Paris looms large, but we follow a fragment of the French army that swings around Paris and heads south, into the great forest of Fontainebleau. Now we're hurtling back in -- tracking a Courier as he rides into the Palace courtyard, leaps from his horse and races up the curved stone stairs...

243 INT. STATE ROOM - FONTAINEBLEAU - <1814> - DAY

Napoleon paces up and down before a committee of Marshals and state officials, among them Joseph, Fouché, Talleyrand, Oudinot and Ney. Various maps and papers are spread about a large table. Talleyrand reads a document...

TALLEYRAND

"... the Allied Powers are agreed that the Emperor Napoleon is the sole obstacle to peace in Europe. All hostilities shall cease forthwith, providing only that the said Emperor Napoleon forfeit his throne."

NAPOLEON

I am the sole obstacle?

TALLEYRAND

That is correct, sire. The Allies have no quarrel with France.

NAPOLEON

Very well. I abdicate... in favour of my son. At least then the people will be guaranteed the rights and liberties I have won for them. The Empress Marie-Louise shall remain Regent until my son comes of age. As for myself, I shall be content to live on Elba...

He glances down at the map, showing Elba as a tiny island between Corsica and Italy. He shrugs at Joseph...

NAPOLEON

They say that on a clear day you
can even see Corsica...

Talleyrand offers Napoleon the document...

TALLEYRAND

Your Majesty is further required by
the Allies to recognize Louis XVIII
as the King of France.

Napoleon glances at it, then glares at the sheepish faces -

NAPOLEON

You've gone mad, all of you! For
twenty years we have fought to save
the Revolution - twenty years of
sacrifice - and now you are going
to stand aside and allow the
Bourbons to bring back the feudal
system? What happened to your
ideals? I'll tell you what
happened. I gave you titles, I made
you princes, I pampered your
vanity... but most of all, I made
you rich... and now you want to
retire to your great estates and
enjoy your-selves, playing with
your investments while the rabble
are returned to a life of misery
and servitude! You're no better
than the English!

JOSEPH

Sire, we have no choice. The Allies
have occupied Paris... we can count
on barely 10,000 men...

NAPOLEON

I could raise another 100,000 -
like that! I left you in command of
Paris, Joseph - and you surrendered
without a shot being fired! Your
dishonour will be written on the
face of every brave soldier! Men
will blush for you in the remotest
parts of Russia! On the battlefield
a man fights, my brother -he does
not surrender, and if he surrenders
he deserves to be shot. A soldier
should know how to die. Your
surrender of Paris was a crime!

JOSEPH

Sire, the Cossacks were threatening
to burn down the city!

NAPOLEON

I would have fought street by street, house by house with every man and boy I could find!

JOSEPH

And when they were all gone, sire?

NAPOLEON

I'd have raised an army of women and children!

TALLEYRAND

No, sire, you would not. You would have remembered your own coronation oath, and secured the happiness of the people, by giving them the peace they so ardently desire.

Talleyrand proffers the Act of Abdication.

NAPOLEON

Where is Alexander staying in Paris, Monsieur Prince of Benevento?

TALLEYRAND

The Tsar has graciously favoured me with that honour.

NAPOLEON

You're a thief, a liar and a coward, Talleyrand – you are a man without honour! You and Metternich – you have betrayed everyone! To you nothing is sacred – you would sell your own father! You deserve that I should smash you like glass, but I despise you too profoundly to put myself to the trouble! You are nothing but shit in silk stockings!

Napoleon strides out of the room, slamming the door behind him. The echoes subside. Talleyrand gives a half embarrassed, faintly disdainful smile.

TALLEYRAND

What a pity that such a great man should be so coarse.

FOUCHE

(smirking)

What else can one expect of a Corsican?

244 EXT. FONTAINEBLEAU - <1814> - NIGHT

Napoleon stares into the lake, flicking pebbles into the water and watching the ripples in the moonlight. He feels in his pocket and takes out the glass bottle Larrey gave him on leaving Russia. He opens it, tips a small amount of whitish-grey powder into his palm. Marchand comes running over -

MARCHAND

Your Majesty... King Joseph wishes to speak with you.

NAPOLEON

Where is Roustam? My mameluke - where is he?

MARCHAND

Sire, he has... chosen to remain in Paris.

NAPOLEON

Bourrienne, Meneval, Roustam... they'll all desert me in the end. Even you...

MARCHAND

Never, sire!

Marchand backs aside as Joseph approaches, distraught.

NAPOLEON

Well?

JOSEPH

I beg Your Majesty to accept my word that I did everything in my power to defend Paris, but under the circumstances it was impossible

NAPOLEON

Ah, Joseph. Where does honour end and the impossible begin? Every man has his own threshold of impossibility. For the timid, the impossible is a ghost - for cowards a refuge -- but in the mouth of power, that word is only a declaration of impotence. You have been little help to me, but you're a thoroughly good man... and as for Queen Julie, she's the best creature that ever existed. I know you'd have done anything in the world for me, but your qualities are those of a private citizen. You are gentle and kind, educated, witty, extremely agreeable - especially to the ladies.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

In the positions of power where I placed you, you did all you could. You had the best of intentions, and your short-comings were not your fault but mine, for pushing you out of your natural sphere... and for that I am truly sorry.

He gets up and embraces the tearful Joseph...

JOSEPH

Do you remember when we said goodbye to one another at Brienne? And I cried like a watercart, and you only shed one tear? Do you know what Papa said to me later? "Nabulio didn't show it, but he is just as sad as you."

They kiss, as of habit, Joseph weeping.

NAPOLEON

Do one last thing for me, Joseph. Be kind to Josephine. And do all you can to see that my son is not brought up as an Austrian aristocrat. I would sooner see him thrown into the Seine than fall into the hands of my enemies. The fate of Astyanax as a prisoner of the Greeks has always seemed to me the most unhappy in history.

WIDE: Standing before the great Palace of Fontainebleau, Napoleon and Joseph part company. Napoleon remains alone, staring into the still fountain. He takes out a gold coin, spins it - but misses, the coin plopping into the water.

Napoleon stares at the coin... then a howl of pain - a cry in the night --

245 INT. BEDROOM - FONTAINEBLEAU - <1814> - NIGHT

Napoleon staggers about, clutching his stomach before vomiting into an ornate, Egyptian bowl...

Marchand runs in, hurrying to Napoleon's side and steadying him back to his bed. Napoleon clenches his stomach...

NAPOLEON

Even death wants nothing to do with me. In every battle, bullets rained all around me - my clothes were full of them - but not one touched me. My boy... I am condemned to live!

246 EXT. RAMBOUILLET PALACE - <1814> - DAY

Marie-Louise and the King of Rome are being ushered into a waiting carriage, the little boy clinging to the railings -

KING OF ROME

I won't go to Vienna! I won't! I
won't! Papa Francis is Papa's
enemy!

Madame Marchand tries to coax him free, but the boy is as adamant as the young Bonaparte at Brienne...

KING OF ROME

I won't go to Vienna! Papa's not
here so I'm in charge!

Marie-Louise is as distraught as her son. So is Madame Marchand, who says a tearful farewell to Louis as the King of Rome is forcibly removed from the railings by an Imperial Guardsman and her ADC - an Austrian with a distinctive patch over one eye: Count NEIPPERG. The carriage pulls away, and CRANING UP we see it join a baggage train of fellow-escapees almost as long as the retreat from Moscow... all who can afford to are leaving Paris - before the Cossacks arrive...

247 INT. THRONE ROOM - FONTAINEBLEAU - <1814> - DAY

Napoleon stands with his back to us, gazing out of the window, hands clasped behind his back. A hushed assembly of ministers await his decision. Then, very quietly...

NAPOLEON

May I take my wife and son?

Silence. He turns to the room, where the other courtiers are gathered. Talleyrand limps forward.

TALLEYRAND

I am sure the Emperor of Austria
wishes to do everything conducive to
the happiness of his daughter - and
his grandson. Once the abdication
has taken effect, they will be at
liberty to join you, sire.

Napoleon turns slowly round, then walks towards the table, hands behind his back. All eyes are on the document that lies before him. We recognize Alexander's flowery signature. Talleyrand proffers Napoleon a gold feather pen.

NAPOLEON

The throne means nothing to me.
I was born a soldier, and I can
return to an ordinary life without
regret.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

Unlike the rest of you, I can live very well on 12 francs a day, spending 30 sous on my dinner, haunting libraries and taking cheap seats in the theatre. Twenty francs a month for rent. I'd have a very good time, and I would not keep company with anybody richer than I. I would have been no less happy as Monsieur Bonaparte than as the Emperor Napoleon. Working men can be just as happy as anybody else. Everything is relative. I desired to see France great and powerful but above all, I wanted her people to be happy. I would rather quit the throne than sign a shameful peace with the enemies of equality. The monarchs dread me because I am the people's King. I have tried to bring them happiness, and I have failed. I give my throne to my son.

TALLEYRAND

Sire, we have already discussed this matter.....

NAPOLEON

I give my throne to my son!

He picks up the pen, jabs it in the ink -

NAPOLEON

I may abdicate, but I yield nothing!

Napoleon scrawls a vigorous "N" across the page, alongside Alexander's rococo signature...

NAPOLEON

And if Louis XVIII has any sense, he will change only the sheets on my bed!

248 EXT. GREAT COURTYARD - FONTAINEBLEAU - <1814> - DAY

A tremendous cheer goes up from the Imperial Guard, gathered in the Great Courtyard... "Vive l'Empereur!!"

Napoleon slowly descends the curved stone staircase and stands before the survivors of his Guard. Many, like Léon with his iron hook, have fought by his side since the first Italian Campaign, and bear deep scars to prove it.

NAPOLEON

Soldiers of my Old Guard, I have come to say goodbye.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

For twenty years we have shared the path of honour, and you have never once ceased to be a pattern of steadfast loyalty...

249 EXT. REAR COURTYARD - FONTAINEBLEAU - <1814> - DAY

While Napoleon continues, his portable library is lifted into a carriage in a smaller courtyard, where his companions who are to join him in exile are assembled. They include Bertrand, his wife Fanny (pregnant), Louis Marchand, and Ali - now wearing the Mameluke uniform formerly worn by Roustam.

NAPOLEON (O/S)

With men like you our cause was not lost. But the war had become interminable - it would have meant civil war, and France would have been even more unhappy...

250 INT. COURTYARD POV - FONTAINEBLEAU - <1814> - DAY

Napoleon is pacing among his tearful Guard... his old Grumblers, with their long moustaches and greying hair - the veterans of Arcola and Egypt...

NAPOLEON

I have therefore sacrificed all our interests to the country I am leaving. You must continue to serve France. Her happiness will always be the object of my hopes! Goodbye, my children! I wish I could press you all to my heart... but at least I can kiss our flag!

Napoleon walks up to the Grenadier holding the flag of the Imperial Guard, embroidered in gold with their victories. Then he takes the flag and kisses it.

NAPOLEON

May this last embrace pass into your hearts as yours pass into mine!

A carriage pulls up, Bertrand holding open the door.

NAPOLEON

Don't forget me!

Léon shakes his head, tears streaming, unable to utter. Napoleon climbs into his carriage, brushing aside his own tears as he remarks dryly to Bertrand -

NAPOLEON

That's the way to talk to soldiers.

The carriage sweeps out of the courtyard...

251 INT. THRONE ROOM - TUILERIES PALACE - <1819> - DAY

... and the letter "N" on Napoleon's throne is hurriedly covered up by the white lily of the Bourbons...

The room is filled with the powdered aristocrats of the old regime, Talleyrand and Metternich among them, watching the fat, gout-ridden Louis XVIII as he mounts the three velvet steps to the throne of his ancestors. He pauses at the top, wiping his brow and looking around.

LOUIS XVIII

I'll say this much for the reptile -
he was a good tenant.

Louis XVIII flops into his throne, smiling genially at those who have come to pay court: not merely diplomats and aristocrats, but many of Napoleon's marshals, among them Ney... and an old face from the past: Paul Barras, now bewigged, whispering to Talleyrand...

BARRAS

He was the greatest criminal who
has ever appeared on this earth
since Adam - or even before!

252 EXT. HARBOUR - ST HELENA - <1819> - DAY

A British ship is docked at Jamestown - supplies are being unloaded - eagerly-awaited newspapers, fresh fruit... and four strangers, weary after their long voyage from Europe: a young Corsican doctor, a cook, an ancient priest and his young novice.

253 INT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1819> - DAY

Napoleon is standing by a wooden contraption, set up in the billiard room. Bertrand looks at it, puzzled, while Montholon smiles dryly at the Grand Marshal's bemusement. Albine, Fanny and several children are present, including young Arthur Napoleon.

NAPOLEON

Well, Grand Marshal, have you no
idea what it is?

BERTRAND

Some kind of war machine, Sire?
Might it be possible to use it for
getting down onto a rampart?

NAPOLEON

Good God, that's not very bright
for an engineer! Tell him,
Montholon - better still, let's
show him...

Napoleon directs Montholon to sit at one end...

NAPOLEON

A see-saw!

Napoleon is now so fat that Montholon's weight is not enough
to lift him off the floor and it takes young Arthur Napoleon
to provide additional bulk by leaping aboard.

NAPOLEON

If I can use it for half an hour
every day, that'll make me better.

Fanny Bertrand laughs, confiding to Bertrand...

FANNY

Someone really ought to make a
cartoon showing the Emperor on one
end, and all the crowned heads of
Europe at the other end, unable to
raise him off the ground.

NAPOLEON

Very droll, Madame La Marshal. I
might have kept in better shape if
I'd had more exercise... but no
matter.

The line is ambiguous, suggesting that Napoleon harbours
desires for Fanny that have not been satisfied. She blushes
and turns to Bertrand. Outside, a carriage has pulled up, and
Napoleon hurries to the hole in the blind to see...

254 EXT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1819> - DAY

The Four passengers we saw disembarking in Jamestown harbour
now clamber down from a black caleche. The Priest is so old
and infirm that he has to be lifted down.

NAPOLEON

Who are these people?

BERTRAND

A gift from your Majesty's mother.

NAPOLEON

A gift?? Dear God!

255 INT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1819> - DAY

Napoleon interviews the young doctor AN TOMMARCHI (32) in his darkened ante-chamber...

NAPOLEON
You are Corsican?

ANTOMMARCHI
Yes, sir.

NAPOLEON
Have you ever been to France?

ANTOMMARCHI
No, only Italy. I studied medicine at the university of Pisa.

NAPOLEON
Did you go to Rome?

ANTOMMARCHI
Yes sir, where I saw your Mother.

NAPOLEON
(correcting him)
You saw Madame Mere. Was she well?

NAPOLEON
Indeed so, sir.

NAPOLEON
And the Princess Pauline?

ANTOMMARCHI
Yes, sir. She expressed an ardent desire to accompany me and share in your exile.

NAPOLEON
She would die on this rock as surely as I will. And my sister Caroline... does she still style herself the Queen of Naples?

ANTOMMARCHI
She mourns the death of her husband.

NAPOLEON
Murat was a fool and a coward. He betrayed me. But at least he showed courage when they shot him. If one is to believe the English newspapers, he even gave the command to fire himself. What I wouldn't give to do the same.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

Instead of which the English slowly murder me with their petty bureaucracy - death by a thousand cuts! And in England... you saw the British Prime Minister?

ANTOMMARCHI

Yes, sir. He did not believe the reports published by Dr. O'Meara - that you are sick and in need of medical assistance...

NAPOLEON

I need no doctor. I need a coffin.

ANTOMMARCHI

Nonsense, sir. I'm going to make you better - that's what I'm here for! I told Bertrand and Montholon I would restore you to your former health.

Antommarchi's tone is a little too chirpy.

NAPOLEON

Count Bertrand. Count Montholon.
You may go.

256 INT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1819> - DAY

Napoleon undresses, casting off his clothes and scattering them on the floor, as of old. Marchand picks them up, then helps Napoleon into his night shirt.

NAPOLEON

What can my mother have been thinking about?? I ask for a young theologian and she sends me a priest who has come to St Helena only to get himself buried here! I ask for a cook and the man cannot even boil an egg... I ask for a doctor and she sends me an impudent student in anatomy - a dissector of corpses! Did the boat bring no other mail?

MARCHAND

Count Montholon received a letter from his wife, sire, and I received one from my Mother.

NAPOLEON

Does she mention my son?

MARCHAND

No, sire. She knows that her letters will be read by your enemies.

NAPOLEON

Well, well... read it, read it. Any news is better than none.

Marchand takes out the letter from his pocket.

MARCHAND

My dear Son, It is very cold here in Vienna as it is winter but I am told it is summer on St Helena - but as it will be autumn with you by the time this reaches you, I shall be enjoying spring as you read these words. I pray to God that I may see you once more before I die. From your loving Mother Marchand. P.S. I enclose a lock of my hair to remember me by.

Marchand takes out a curl of fair, blonde hair.

MARCHAND

Your Majesty might remember that my mother's hair is black.

Napoleon looks at Marchand - then at the soft, blonde curl. He raises it to his lips, kisses it. Marchand is too affected - and too discreet - to remain watching, and backs out of the room.

Napoleon slumps on his camp bed, desolate and forlorn. He stares at the lock of hair - then gazes round at the ten portraits of his son, arranged like a little shrine around a plaster bust of the boy. He opens his travelling case and removes his Austerlitz spyglass. The lid contains a hidden locket. He takes out the lock of Josephine's hair... and two others.

Sitting down, he puts on his spectacles and gazes at the locks of hair in the palm of his hand. Sitting on his bed, slumped over that fat belly - he suddenly looks very old and tired. He hums a melody, out of tune... "Mais à revoir de Paris je ne dois plus prétendre..."

Marchand is bedding down for the night on a mattress across the door...

NAPOLEON

You shall marry, my son, and have children. And when they inquire about me, you will be able to tell them how you saw me die of misery on the rock of Saint Helena, struck down, but still standing!

257 INT. VILLA MULINI - ELBA - <1814> - DAY

A charming Italian villa overlooking the blue Mediterranean, decorated in Imperial style, albeit on a vastly reduced scale, with threadbare carpets and faded curtains. Letizia - still strong at 63, still wearing black, is playing cards with Napoleon and Pauline - now 34, and beautiful as ever.

LETIZIA

Nabulione, you're cheating again!

NAPOLEON

You're rich - you can afford to lose, but I'm poorer than Job and must win.

They exchange pinches of snuff from an enamel box bearing Isabey's portrait of the King of Rome and continue the game.

NAPOLEON

What barbarity, to deprive a man of his family - his wife and son!

LETIZIA

You have us, Nabulio.

NAPOLEON

Bertrand says Metternich has instructed my wife's aide-de-camp to use every means in his power to distract her. Josephine would have come to Elba. She begged me to let her come...

LETIZIA

Only so she could dip her hand back into the bag again.

NAPOLEON

Don't speak of her like that! She's made more sacrifices than all the rest of my family put together! Besides, there's nothing left in the bag...

PAULINE

So I suppose keeping you company on a savage, smelly little island with nothing to do is not a sacrifice? Elba's worse than Corsica!

NAPOLEON

There's plenty to do - building roads, planting trees - I shall even give Elba her first Constitution -- and if the Allies had kept their promise and paid me my million a month, I would have built them a new harbour by now. As it is, I don't even have enough to pay my own soldiers and sailors...

PAULINE

My husband may have been a fool, but at least he was wealthy...

Pauline takes off a fabulous Borghese diamond necklace...

PAULINE

... and as for Mama, she's even richer than Joseph. She never spends a sou!

LETIZIA

I never know when one of you kings and queens isn't going to come begging at my door. It was always a principle in my family never to spend anything - save it for the rainy days to come.

It suddenly starts to pour with rain - a flash Mediterranean shower... Napoleon bursts out laughing -- then sees Marchand in the doorway.

258 EXT. VILLA MULINI - ELBA - <1814> - DAY

Napoleon hurries to the terrace -- sees a woman and her son sheltering in a small arbour in the lower garden. Marie-Louise and the King of Rome...

Napoleon runs down the steps to the lower garden. The shower stops as suddenly as it began, and as he reaches the arbour, Marie steps out, wearing a tulle veil... she lifts it to reveal...

Marie Walewska, as sweet, as pretty, and as in love with Napoleon as ever. With her is a 5-year old boy in miniature uniform - ALEXANDRE.

NAPOLEON

My little patriot... Welcome to my palace!

They embrace, watched by Pauline from the garden above. Marie presents the boy...

MARIE

My son, sire... Count Alexandre
Walewski. Do you not recognize him?

The boy has curly blonde hair and bears a striking
resemblance to the King of Rome. Napoleon lifts him up --

NAPOLEON

A little bird tells me that you
never mention my name in your
prayers.

ALEXANDRE

That's true, sire.

NAPOLEON

(to Marie Walewska)
Surely he says his prayers?

ALEXANDRE

Oh, indeed I do, sire. But I don't
say your name... I don't say
Napoleon... I say Papa Emperor!

Napoleon tweaks his ear, grinning at Marie-Louise...

NAPOLEON

He'll make a good diplomat, that
one. He has wit... but does he have
luck?

Later, and Napoleon plays hide-and-seek with Alexandre,
Pauline, Marchand, Ali, and Marie Walewska. Napoleon catches
Alexandre and they roll about on the grass.

259 INT. BEDROOM - I MULINI - ELBA - <1814> - DAY

Marie lies in Napoleon's arms after making love. Outside,
Marchand and Ali stand guard. Of all Napoleon's
relationships, this is perhaps the most blissful.

MARIE

That so many should have betrayed
you, sire - it's unthinkable...

NAPOLEON

You don't know men. Do they know,
do they fully understand even
themselves? Had I continued
prosperous, most of those who have
abandoned me would probably never
have suspected their own treachery.
In any case, I have been more
deserted than betrayed. In the end,
people are motivated by two levers
only: fear and self-interest.

MARIE

Is love not a motivation?

NAPOLEON

Ivy clings to the first tree it meets. That, in a few words, is the story of love. What is love? The realization of weakness that sooner or later pervades the solitary man - a sense both of his weakness and of his immortality. The soul finds support in another, is doubled, is fortified - you see? Fear and self-interest...

MARIE

I have no self-interest other than my country and my son, and of fear I know nothing. It is you that I love, sire, and we have come to be with you.

NAPOLEON

My little Polish wife, the people call you... but you are not my wife in the eyes of the Church. The Empress Marie-Louise...

MARIE

I do not ask that you put her aside, sire... I do not ask anything. You have already provided us with more than enough. Let us take a small house somewhere... away from the town, away from you... but near enough so that I can come at once whenever you might need me.

Napoleon kisses her... the tenderest kiss we have yet seen.

NAPOLEON

This island is no more than a big village, Marie. The Elbans would be scandalized. I have always sacrificed my happiness for the people. Always.

260 EXT. I MULINI - ELBA - <1814> - DAY

Napoleon stands in the road, waving to a tearful Marie Walewska and her son. He opens a little silver locket containing a lock of hair, inscribed:

MARIE

When you have ceased to love me,
never forget that I will love you
always.

He snaps it shut, turns to Bertrand.

NAPOLEON

Come, Bertrand - we have work to
do. I may have lost my happiness -
but I will never lose a moment!

261 EXT. BEACH - ELBA - <1814> - DAY

Olive trees border the shore, where Napoleon is standing with Bertrand, talking to a group of local fishermen in Italian. They have just landed their catch, and there is much good humour. As they walk away, Napoleon slips a couple of dead fish into the Grand Marshal's pocket.

NAPOLEON

Make a note of that, Bertrand - I
wish my Minister of Agriculture to
draw me up a report on the fishing
trade. How many boats, how many men
engage..... Hurry up Bertrand or
you'll forget what I said... what's
the matter?

In putting his hand in his pocket for a pencil, Bertrand has discovered the slimy surprise. Napoleon roars with laughter, as do the fisherman. And Bertrand suffers, as is his role.

A uniformed member of Napoleon's Elban guard runs up with a newspaper. Napoleon reads it, moving away. He sits down on a rock, stunned. Bertrand hurries over...

BERTRAND

Your Majesty... what news?

Napoleon gazes out at the ocean.

NAPOLEON

They say on a fine day you can see
Corsica. Have you seen her?

BERTRAND

I believe once, your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

My Josephine is dead.

Bertrand looks as stunned as the Emperor.

NAPOLEON

A sudden fever and...

(blows out imaginary
candle)

She died at Malmaison - her room was
full of roses - Eugène held her hand.

Napoleon looks completely bewildered.

262 INT. STABLES - I MULINI - ELBA - <1814> - DAY

A shaft of light as a stable door opens and Napoleon enters,
rather drunk. He has come to visit his horses, stroking each
in turn and rubbing noses with them.

NAPOLEON

Ah, my beauties!

The first to be greeted is Tauris, the silver-grey Persian
that carried him throughout the 1812 Russian Campaign...

NAPOLEON

Tauris... Do you know what my
Josephine did? She gave a party at
Malmaison... in hour of your former
master... Alexander... Tsar of all
the Russias... She went out into
the garden... picked an armful of
flowers... caught a chill... pffut.

He moves on to a grey Arab...

NAPOLEON

Wagram...

(gives him a lump of
sugar)

Te voilà, mon cousin! I really
loved her, although I had no
respect for her - she was far too
great a liar...

Now it is Roitelet's turn. This is the black Arab that lost a
tuft of skin and hair from its mane. He kisses it...

NAPOLEON

Roitelet...

(nuzzles noses)

Josephine had something, I don't
quite know what, that really
attracted me.

-- and strokes the rump of a pure white from Normandy, the
horse he rode at Austerlitz...

NAPOLEON

Ah, Coco! She was a real woman, my
Josephine...

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

shall I tell you what she had? The sweetest little backside in the world! My poor, poor Josephine... but she's happy now, she's asleep. We can't hurt each other any more.

263 INT. I MULINI - ELBA - <1815> - NIGHT

It is a warm Mediterranean evening - the doors to the garden are wide open to the sound of crickets and the moonlit sea beyond. Charts and maps are strewn about the floor. Napoleon sits at the piano, while Letizia and Pauline play cards.

Only the ticking of Frederick's alarm clock intrudes on the tension. Pauline giggles. Then Napoleon starts to pick out the opening fourteen notes of Haydn's "Surprise" Symphony #94 - slowly, using one finger.

PAULINE

The English newspapers call you the Reptile of Elba, "on a par with the King of Haiti, who reigns over monkeys and negroes..."

LETIZIA

Napulione doesn't need to hear such things, Pauline...

PAULINE

... and that you are suffering from unmentionable diseases - and having an incestuous affair -- with me!

Pauline laughs, Letizia rebukes her in Italian, crossing herself - and Napoleon keeps playing those 14 notes...

NAPOLEON

What do the French newspapers say?

PAULINE

What Fouché tells them to print, of course. Some things never change.

NAPOLEON

Between the lines... what is the mood of the nation as a whole?

LETIZIA

Four million Frenchmen are to be forced to return their land to the former nobility... the people have lost the right to vote... the Marseillaise is forbidden...

PAULINE

Otherwise things are just fine -
Paris is full of English goodies -
everything's cheaper... and all is
dull and mediocre without you.

We have been moving in on Napoleon all the while... then a
distant, familiar laugh...

264 INT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1819> - NIGHT

... and he suddenly sits up on St Helena, as though dreaming.
Napoleon has been dozing by the fire... but now he hears the
laugh again, coming from the garden.

265 EXT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1819> - NIGHT

Napoleon makes his way to the back of Longwood - a jungle of
weeds and tangled undergrowth. Then the laugh again -
Josephine's laugh - and there she suddenly is, emerging from
the shadows - as young as when Bonaparte first met her at
Barras' party, wearing the same guillotine ribbon round her
neck. She seems to be saying something...

NAPOLEON

Josephine...!

... but she doesn't hear. He calls out again, louder - and
now Bertrand comes running up...

NAPOLEON

Can you see her?

BERTRAND

Where, your Majesty?

Napoleon looks about, but she's gone.

NAPOLEON

She told me... that we were about
to see each other again. Are you
sure you didn't see her?

BERTRAND

No, your Majesty...

NAPOLEON

But she was there... she spoke to
me... she said that nothing would
ever come between us ever again...
She assured me of that...

Bertrand - now joined by Marchand - leads Napoleon gently
back to the house.

266 EXT. GARDEN - I MULINI - ELBA - <1815> - NIGHT

A still, moonlit, Mediterranean night. Napoleon leans against an olive-tree, gazing out across the little harbour, where several ships ride at anchor. His mother joins him... slowly puts her arm round him, sensing his thoughts.

NAPOLEON

The Bourbons have learned nothing -
and forgotten nothing.

Letizia kisses him, handing him her jewels...

LETIZIA

From your hand I received them,
Nabulione. Such things were never
of any importance to me.

She embraces him in true Corsican style.

NAPOLEON

I shall arrive in Paris in three
weeks time - the King of Rome's
birthday... and without a single
shot being fired.

LETIZIA

As Paoli used to say, Better to die
with a sword in one's hand than in
a shameful retirement. Coraggio!

MUSIC stirs...

267 EXT. LONGWOOD HOUSE - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Dawn, and Longwood is veiled in mist. Napoleon is humming as a pebble strikes a window pane.

NAPOLEON

Ali, ho Allah! Come on lazy bones --
five o'clock! Look, old Mr Sun is
up!

Napoleon is standing outside the house, chucking pebbles at Ali's window. He is dressed in a white nankeen coat, red Morocco slippers, a broad-brimmed straw hat, and is holding a spade. He flings another pebble, and Ali's bleary face appears at the pane.

NAPOLEON

Come on, come on, there's work to be
done! Mamzelle Marchand! - get up!

The inmates of Longwood stagger out into the early dawn...

NAPOLEON

I have decided to make a garden!

268 EXT. BEACH - CAP D'ANTIBES - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] A crash of waves - the prow of a ship - feet striking sand - the tricolour flag is hoisted -- and Napoleon is once again on French soil.

269 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Doors open, tent-flaps are flung back, and from all directions Napoleon's meagre household flock to his side, armed with shovels and rakes, eager to carry out his command... Montholon, Bertrand, Marchand, Ali, Pierron (the cook), Noverraz (bodyguard), Antommarchi... even the old Priest.

270 INT. BEDROOM - TUILERIES - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] The fat, gouty old Louis XVIII is asleep in Napoleon's former bed when he is awoken with the news -

FOUCHÉ

Your Majesty - Bonaparte has escaped from Elba and has landed at Antibes!

LOUIS XVIII (DEAF)

Where??

FOUCHÉ

The South of France, your Majesty - the usurper is back!

271 EXT. TRACK - ALPINE PASS - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Napoleon, riding Tauris, leads his scant army of a thousand along a snowy Alpine pass, so narrow that they must walk in single file...

272 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] In a sudden burst of the old energy, Napoleon supervises the clearing of the jungle of weeds at the back of Longwood. Bertrand trundles a wheelbarrow - Ali and Montholon cut back the undergrowth - and the young Bertrand children get in everyone's way...

273 INT. BALLROOM - SCHONBRUNN PALACE - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] At the Congress of Vienna, a sumptuous masked ball is brought to an abrupt halt - "The Corsican tyrant has escaped from Elba and is marching on Paris!"

The news brings a look of horror to all but Marie-Louise, though we note that she is now on the arm of the ADC with the black patch: Count Neipperg. Among the guests removing their masks and revealing themselves are Talleyrand, Metternich, the King of Prussia, the Emperor Francis, Tsar Alexander of Russia... and the Duke of Wellington.

274 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Napoleon assists in the work, pulling up the weeds and preparing the soil...

275 EXT. TRACK - ALPINE PASS - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] As Napoleon advances through the high Alps, men and boys flock to his side, swelling the tide...

276 INT. THRONE ROOM - TUILERIES - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Ney stands before the anxious Louis XVIII -

NEY

Sire, I shall bring him back to you - in an iron cage!

LOUIS XVIII

There's no need for that, Marshal Ney. Just bring him back.

277 INT. ANTECHAMBER - SCHONBRUNN - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] In an antechamber, Metternich orchestrates a commitment between the four Allied Powers. Each in turn signs a document... then Metternich turns to the Duke of Wellington, offering him the pen. He signs boldly beneath Alexander's flowery signature: "Wellington".

278 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Ramparts have been thrown up to protect the garden from the sun, the wind - and the ever watchful eye of the British sentries. Within the ramparts, Napoleon commands his troops, distributing earth for the flowers and bushes...

279 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MIDI - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Ney gallops south at the head of a large division...

280 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - ALPS FOOTHILLS - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] As they descend into the lowlands of France, Napoleon calls a halt and looks through his spyglass. On the horizon: a plume of dust...

281 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] The noon sun beats down - Napoleon mops his brow with his Madras handkerchief while Old Toby acts as foreman, barking out orders...

282 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - ALPS FOOTHILLS - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Up ahead: a division of King Louis' Royal Dragoons - 2,000 men wearing white royalist cockades, armed with muskets, bayonets fixed. Napoleon dismounts, walks forward, opens his old grey coat and bares his breast.

NAPOLEON

If you want to kill your Emperor,
here I am.

The order is given: "Fire!" No one moves. Then a cry -

LÉON

Vive l'Empereur!

Léon waves his iron hook -- and the cry is taken up in a great wave of cheering. Out come the tricolour ribbons, replacing the white cockades that are trampled under foot. Someone starts singing the forbidden Marseillaise...

Ney rides forward, dismounts, walks up to Napoleon, then kneels before him like the Prodigal son. Napoleon lifts him up -- embraces him. The spark becomes a wave...

283 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Chinese gardeners, Indian coolies, French servants, English volunteers from the King's 53rd Infantry - all have been dragooned into willing service - shifting earth and planting trees: peaches, oranges, and in front of Napoleon's bedroom: a cherry tree.

284 INT. NAPOLEON'S BEDROOM - TUILERIES - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Louis XVIII is packing as fast as he can, but can't seem to find his bedroom slippers...

LOUIS XVIII

I was particularly fond of those
slippers - they had worn just
nicely into the shape of my feet...

285 INT. NAPOLEON'S OFFICE - TUILERIES - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] In Napoleon's office, a team of embroiderers hurriedly unstitch the lilies they had sewn over the bees barely nine months earlier, while a formal portrait of Louis XVIII is replaced with David's romantic vision of Bonaparte crossing the Alps...

286 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] The garden is finally taking shape - bushes transplanted, flowering shrubs along the borders. It bears a familiar similarity to the garden at Brienne. Napoleon sows the seeds himself, scattering them to the wind...

287 EXT. LES INVALIDES - PARIS - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Napoleon has reached Paris and is riding across the Seine below Les Invalides towards the Tuileries Palace, a huge crowd swarming behind him: "Vive l'Empereur!"

288 EXT. COURTYARD - TUILERIES - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Napoleon enters the courtyard, crowded with familiar palace staff who press round him -

NAPOLEON

My children, you're suffocating me!

... and there, standing in the doorway, is Hortense, still dressed in black, eyes brimming as she runs to embrace him.

289 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] Napoleon takes a turf from Bertrand's hands, fits it into place on the bank under the cherry tree, and carefully presses it down. Young Arthur Napoleon hands him a watering can...

290 INT. STAIRCASE - TUILERIES - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] The last of the white lilies are speedily removed as Napoleon walks up the familiar staircase with Hortense:

"I went in front of him, moving backwards, one step away, gazing at him with profound emotion, my eyes swimming in tears, and in the delirious state I was in, all I could keep saying was "It's you! It's you! It's finally you!" As for my father, he walked slowly up the stairs, his eyes shut, his hands outstretched like a blind man's, his happiness showing only in his smile. As he reached the landing, he was suddenly uplifted by a thousand arms...

291 INT. NAPOLEON'S STUDY - TUILERIES - <1815> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER]... and carried in triumph into his rooms."

The kneeling seamstresses curtsy, the prettiest one giving him a radiant smile - "Welcome home, your Majesty" - before backing out with the others.

Finally alone with Hortense, Napoleon takes a deep breath - and a long sigh. Outside, crowds are massing below the balcony window. Hortense opens the glass doors to the tumultuous cries of "Vive L'Empereur! Vive Napoléon!"

He is about to step out when he spots a pair of royal slippers at the foot of the curtain. He picks them up, smiles, hands them to Hortense, then moves out to acknowledge the ecstatic cries of the crowd...

NAPOLEON

What we have just achieved is your doing - the people's doing. All I did was listen.

The response is as rapturous as any we have witnessed.

292 EXT. NEW GARDEN - ST HELENA - <1820> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER]... and on St Helena, Napoleon surveys his finished garden. Order has replaced chaos, and his army stands to attention as he awards them gold Napoleons in place of medals. An English Soldier calls out -

SOLDIER

Three cheers for Boney!

The cry is taken up by all. Napoleon smiles graciously, takes a generous pinch of snuff, then turns and walks inside, closing the door behind him.

293 EXT. GARDENS - MALMAISON - <1815> - DAY

It is the second week in June, and the gardens are abloom with roses. Napoleon walks by the edge of the lake with Hortense, still dressed in black.

NAPOLEON

I still cannot believe that she isn't here somewhere. Malmaison without Josephine - impossible. I keep thinking that any moment I'm going to see her, coming round the corner with an armful of roses. Every spot recalls her to me!

HORTENSE

She is here, sire. She is with you. She once said, "Bonaparte may leave me, but I shall never leave him."

A beat, then Napoleon laughs.

NAPOLEON

She's right. They're still sending me her bills. That was the only thing we ever really quarrelled about – her debts. How I used to scold her!

HORTENSE

We were always trying to stop her being so generous...

NAPOLEON

I could have bought six Rembrandts for the Louvre with the amount she spent on gloves and shoes alone – but ah, what a woman! She had more glamour, more charm than anyone else I have ever known. She was a woman to her fingertips – in every sense of the word – so quick, so gay, and yet so... so kind... so kind...

(slyly)

Of course you know I only married her because she told me she was going to inherit a vast fortune in Martinique?

HORTENSE

(laughing)

And she thought the Bonapartes owned the finest olive-groves on Corsica.

(beat)

My mother had but one regret. That she had only ever shared your days of good fortune. Eugène and I were with her when she died. Do you know what her last words were?

Bonaparte... Elba... and then she murmured... "the King of Rome..."

Napoleon is so moved that he has to turn away, trying to bluff emotions --

NAPOLEON

Metternich has him under lock and key in Vienna – they're trying to turn him into an Austrian!

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

When I have won this war, I shall march to Vienna and take back my son - and my wife - and Italy! I only wish Eugène were riding with me.

HORTENSE

He had no choice, sire...

NAPOLEON

I just wish I had him by my side, that's all. And Berthier - Oudinot - Massena - they've all deserted me. I don't blame them, but I shall miss them all the same. I'd even forgive that traitor Murat if he came forward and offered to ride with me.

(brightly)

But heigh ho. Let them stay at home. Give me my Old Guard, my little conscripts, my long boots and my name, and with luck on my side I can defeat England without them. On Wednesday I shall split the enemy in two - on Thursday I shall rout the Prussians - on Friday I shall roll up Wellington - on Saturday I shall enter Brussels... and on Sunday I shall be back in Paris with a big box of Belgian chocolates!

Hortense braves a damp smile and embraces him.

HORTENSE

Did you hear what Wellington called you, sire?

(feigning hauteur)

"The greatest soldier of the age. But, mark, you, the fellow is no gentlemen."

NAPOLEON

(delighted)

Hah!

294 EXT. LONGWOOD DRIVE - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY

The gloomy bungalow of Longwood, shrouded in mist. Ali stands outside the front door, holding Napoleon's black Arab horse, Roitelet.

295 EXT. NAPOLEON'S HQ - WATERLOO - <1815> - DAY

Napoleon paces furiously, screaming at a young Officer -

NAPOLEON

Where the devil is Soult? What happened to Grouchy??

296 INT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY

Slowly - very slowly - Napoleon emerges from his bedroom door, supported by Marchand and Bertrand, and shuffles through the billiard room...

297 EXT. NAPOLEON'S HQ - WATERLOO - <1815> - DAY

Napoleon paces back and forth, spyglass in hand -

NAPOLEON

Has Ney gone completely mad?
Sending in cavalry without the
support of infantry?? I should have
him shot!

Through the smoke and haze we can dimly make out the French cavalry, charging up the far slope of the valley - only to be mown down by tiers of British muskets suddenly appearing over the brow of the ridge...

298 INT. LONGWOOD HOUSE - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY

... Napoleon is still moving slowly through the billiard room towards the conservatory...

299 EXT. NAPOLEON'S HQ - WATERLOO - <1815> - DAY

Napoleon wedges his spyglass in his eye to see: a dark mass on the horizon, moving towards us...

NAPOLEON

Are you all blind?? That's not
Grouchy - that's Blücher and his
Prussians!

Napoleon turns on Soult, acting as his Chief of Staff in place of Berthier -

NAPOLEON

You assured me that Grouchy had
routed the Prussians! Why were my
orders not obeyed??

SOULT

Sire, all is not lost...

NAPOLEON

Did I say it was??

NEY

Wellington's centre is beginning to
tire... one more push and we could
break through the English lines...
only I beg you to support me with
more troops!

NAPOLEON

Troops? Where do you expect me to
find them? Do you expect me to make
them?

SOULT

The Guard, sire – you still have
the Imperial Guard – and when our
soldiers see the Guard ride out...

NAPOLEON

The Guard are my children!

The scream echoes about the ruined walls...

300 INT. LONGWOOD HOUSE - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY

... as Napoleon shuffles through the conservatory towards the
open doors...

301 EXT. NAPOLEON'S HQ - WATERLOO - <1815> - DAY

Napoleon turns as a young English Captain is dragged in,
badly wounded...

AIDE

Sire, an English spy!

Napoleon, impatient, barely looks at him...

NAPOLEON

Dress his wounds -- Colonel
Levavasseur, spread the word that
the Prussians are in fact Grouchy's
corps coming to our aid – Captain
Lefevre, order General Lobau to
engage his 3rd infantry in support
of Pajol's 5th lancers and advance
on Wellington's right... go!

Ney storms out, followed by Sault. Napoleon pauses, then
feels in his pocket – takes out an oval portrait of his son.

302 EXT. LONGWOOD HOUSE - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY

Napoleon has finally reached the front door to Longwood,
flanked by Marchand and Bertrand. Ali is standing in the
drive, holding Roitelet's reins. Napoleon hesitates...

303 EXT. QUATRE BRAS CROSSROADS - WATERLOO - <1815> - DAY

Through his spyglass, Napoleon sees hand to hand fighting along the crest of the ridge across the valley, defended by Wellington and the British. He is at a crossroads, flanked by Ney and the few who dare to brave the shot and shell raining down from the Prussians...

NEY

Seize the moment, Sire! Our men are losing heart - but if they were to see you ride out - if you were to lead the Guard into battle, sire - then the sacred flame will be rekindled in their hearts!

Napoleon wavers - looks behind at the Imperial Guard.

The front ranks comprise the Old Guard - the same proud grenadiers who bade him a tearful farewell at Fontainebleau - only their eyes now glisten with the desire for glory...

Napoleon looks in the other direction - the dark Prussian cloud is almost upon them...

NEY

Sire, I beg of you - now is the moment - fortune is a woman, sire... seize the decisive moment... now!

Napoleon stares at him - wavers - turns and looks once again at the ranks of the Old Guard, zealously rattling their shakos on their bayonets... among them Léon. There is brief eye contact between the two. Léon shouts "Long live our Emperor" and the cry is taken up by the whole corps...

Napoleon looks back at Ney - again across the valley - again the Prussians - again the Guard...

304 EXT. LONGWOOD HOUSE - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY

Napoleon strokes Roitelet, patting the missing tuft of hair.

NAPOLEON

Perhaps tomorrow.

Then he turns, mounts the steps, and the door closes behind him while Ali leads Roitelet back to the stable.

305 EXT. QUATRE BRAS CROSSROADS - WATERLOO - <1815> - DAY

Napoleon stares at the oval portrait of the King of Rome. Oblivious to the artillery onslaught around him, he kisses his son... then turns and cries out -

NAPOLEON

He who loves me will follow me!

306 EXT. VALLEY & SLOPES — WATERLOO — <1815> — DUSK

With a great surge, the Guard's cavalry sweep forward, Napoleon at their helm... down the slope and out across the valley towards the British...

The sight of the Guard has an electric effect on the exhausted French infantry, who now rally on all sides as Napoleon's quiet VOICE LAPS OVER...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

This 15th day of April 1821, at
Longwood House on the Island of St
Helena...

Napoleon urges Ney to charge on with the cavalry, then turns to take command of the support infantry...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

This is my Testament, or Act of my
last Will. It is my wish that my
body may rest on the banks of the
Seine, in the midst of the French
people whom I have always loved...

As the Cavalry Guard storm up the far slope, a thousand British muskets appear over the brow, tearing into the Guard at point blank range and slaughtering their front lines.

Napoleon rides to a small ridge, urging the infantry on — then puts his glass to his eye:

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I die in the Apostolical Roman
faith, in whose bosom I was born
more than fifty years ago...

The Guard's second wave of cavalry are met with 30 British cannon, demolishing both horse and rider alike...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I ask my son never to forget that
he was born a French prince, and
never to allow himself to become an
instrument in the hands of the old
monarchies who oppress the nations
of Europe...

And now a cry from the east — Napoleon swings round to see: the Prussians closing in on his right flank...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

He must never fight against France,
or injure her in any manner.

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)

I ask him to adopt and always
remember my own motto: "Everything
for the people"...

Wave after wave are flung back on the ranks behind as the
Guard fall beneath the murderous volley of musket and gun ..

Suddenly there are cries of "They're falling back!" "Look!
The Guard is falling back!"

NAPOLEON (V/O)

When my son becomes Emperor, all
his efforts must tend to a reign of
peace. One cannot do the same
things twice in one century. I was
obliged to subdue Europe by force.
Today, people must be persuaded...

Napoleon grasps his spyglass to his eye: the remnants of the
Guard are being forced back down the slope by volley after
volley of musket fire...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Humanity is moving towards an
inevitable change. To retard this
evolution is to waste strength in a
futile struggle. To favour it is to
strengthen the hopes and
aspirations of all...

The soldiers and staff within view of Napoleon all turn to
him - a sea of faces in desperate search of hope...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I saved the Revolution at the point
of death. I washed away its crimes
and held it up to the world. I have
sown new ideas in the soil of
France and Europe that can only
grow and cannot be reversed...

Napoleon's look of utter dismay is enough to trigger a
catastrophic spark of panic - a collapse of morale - the fear
spreads, fanning out across the field in a great wave of wild
despair...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Yet no matter what my son learns,
he will profit little from it if in
his innermost heart he lacks the
sacred flame - the fundamental love
of good which alone inspires great
deeds.

Napoleon is himself swept back, but succeeds in holding his
ground.

As the French fall back in panic, the Old Guard form a 10-deep square around Napoleon to shield him from the murderous fire of the English, now swarming down the slopes in victorious pursuit of the French...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I bequeath to my son my saddles,
my spurs, my sword which I wore at
Austerlitz, my dagger, my two pairs
of duelling pistols and my gold
dressing-case, which I used on the
mornings of Marengo, Austerlitz,
Jena, Eylau, Friedland, Wagram,
Moscow, Waterloo...

With shell fire and ball flying all about him, Napoleon rides up and down within the square, baring himself before the onslaught while the Guard are decimated about him. As each falls, he turns and gazes up at Napoleon, uttering "Long live the Emperor!" with his dying breath...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I bequeath 200,000 gold francs to
be distributed among those who
suffered amputation or were
severely wounded at Waterloo, and
who may be still living.

... and suddenly there is Larrey, badly wounded in the arm, struggling to drag an old Grumbler onto a stretcher. It is Léon, his leg shattered...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I bequeath to Jean-Dominique
Larrey, Surgeon-in-Chief of the
Grand Army, the sum of 100,000 gold
francs. He looks upon every sick or
wounded man as one of his own
family, and is the most virtuous
man I have ever known.

Napoleon looks down at Leon as Larrey sets to work, then spontaneously dismounts, takes the Legion of Honour from a dead officer and pins it to Léon's blood-soaked jacket. Then the fallen Emperor rides away into the darkness.

307 EXT. MALMAISON - PARIS - <1815> - DAY

Napoleon embraces his family farewell in the driveway at Malmaison... Letizia, Joseph, Pauline, Hortense, Eugene - even Lucien and Jerome.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

I thank my good and most excellent
mother, my brothers Joseph, Lucien,
Jerome, Pauline, Caroline;

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)
 Julie, Hortense and Eugène, for the
 interest they have continued to
 feel for me.

As Napoleon climbs into the waiting carriage with Bertrand,
 Hortense runs up, pressing her diamond and emerald necklace
 into his hand. The family wave... the image breaking up...

308 EXT. ATLANTIC SHORELINE - <1815> - DAY

... into WAVES pounding on a bleak, Atlantic shoreline where
 Napoleon embraces Joseph goodbye...

NAPOLEON (V/O)
 I die before my time, murdered by
 the English crown and its hired
 assassin. May the English people
 one day learn the truth about me...

309 INT. BEDROOM - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY/NIGHT

The windows are shuttered against the daylight. Marchand is
 seated at Napoleon's feet, wrapping them in hot towels.
 Napoleon is ashen, his skin the colour of old ivory. He
 writes with considerable difficulty, squinting through
 spectacles...

NAPOLEON (V/O)
 I bequeath to my valet, Louis
 Marchand, 400,000 francs. The
 services he has rendered me are
 those of a friend. It is my wish
 that he should marry the widow,
 sister, or daughter of an officer
 of my old Guard...

Napoleon lays the pen aside, exhausted. He watches Marchand a
 moment - then, suddenly remembering --

NAPOLEON
 And my poor Chinese - and Old Toby -
 do not let them be forgotten either
 - let them have as many gold
 napoleons as you think fit - I must
 take leave of them also.

(lies back)

Ah... I've become so fond of my bed
 that I would not exchange it for
 all the thrones in Europe! What a
 change! How I have fallen! When I
 was Napoleon my activity knew no
 bounds, my mind never slept! But
 now, look at me -- I even have to
 make an effort to raise my own
 eyelids.

He turns to Bertrand...

NAPOLEON

In spite of all the lies about me,
I have no fear whatever about my
fame. Posterity will do me justice -
the truth will be known, and the
good I have done will be compared
with the faults I have committed. I
am not uneasy as to the result. Had
I succeeded, I should have died
with the reputation of the greatest
man that has ever lived. As it is,
because I failed, I shall merely be
considered - an extraordinary man.

Bertrand smiles, trying to hold back his tears. Then Napoleon is gripped by a violent spasm in his stomach - Marchand tries to put water to his lips.

NAPOLEON

The work of my enemies is done,
Louis... The mainspring is broken.
Bring me my coat - the one given to
me by the people of Lyons when I
became First Consul...

Marchand fetches it and gives it to Napoleon.

NAPOLEON

Wouldn't fit me now. Look at me -
I'm as fat and round as a china
pig!

Before Marchand can stop him, Napoleon rips the lining from the back of the coat -- and produces the diamond and emerald necklace Hortense gave him, stitched into the lining.

NAPOLEON

Come here.

Marchand approaches - closer -- kneels down... and Napoleon places the diamond necklace around his neck.

NAPOLEON

Kind Hortense gave this to me,
thinking I might need it.

MARCHAND

But... but you promised to give it
to the Grand Marshal's wife...

NAPOLEON

Bah! She should have come to see me
more often. She wanted to live
apart in her own cottage - she cut
herself off from me...

MARCHAND

Only to be with her children, sire.

NAPOLEON

I estimate its value at 200,000 francs. I give it to you. It is the only object of value of which I can dispose. I shall allow you to await the good fortune that I am planning for you in my will. You shall have a title, and you will never have to serve another master for the rest of your life.

Napoleon tweaks his ear - Marchand's face is streaming.

310 EXT. LONGWOOD - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAWN

A new dawn at Longwood... and Bertrand arrives for work in his musty, threadbare uniform, showing his pass to the British sentries before entering the Longwood compound. Antommarchi races past him, evidently late.

BERTRAND (V/O)

To Mr Joseph Bonaparte Esq, living at Trenton, New Jersey, United States of America. London, September 10th, 1821. My Prince, I write to you for the first time since the awful misfortune which has been added to the sorrows of your family.

311 INT. NAPOLEON'S BEDROOM - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY

Napoleon sits at the window, gazing out as Marchand opens the shutters to admit the new day. Napoleon smiles benignly.

NAPOLEON

Good morning, sun... good morning, my old friend...

Bertrand has entered to relieve Count Montholon, dozing in a chair, a "*History of the Punic Wars*" open on his lap. They exchange the night news in whispers...

BERTRAND (V/O)

Your Highness is acquainted with the events of the long years of his cruel exile, and the unkind treatment which aggravated the influences of a deadly climate...

While Bertrand continues, we see him greet Napoleon with his accustomed bow... an exchange of pleasantries... "How is the Grand Marshal today?" "How is the Grand Marshal's wife?" "Did your Majesty sleep well?"

BERTRAND (V/O)

In the first years he used to walk while dictating, but latterly his strength would not admit even of this. He remained sitting nearly all day, and discontinued almost all occupation. His health declined sensibly every month.

Antommarchi hurries in, and Napoleon rounds on him --

NAPOLEON

Where have you been?? You stroll in here as though you were paying me a 30-sous visit! You are here in my service and at my orders! If Larrey were here he wouldn't leave the head of my bed - he would sleep there - on that carpet! When I send for you it is because I need you. You ought to be here, feeling my pulse, not the wife of the Grand Marshal!

Antommarchi looks to Bertrand, but only receives a helpless gesture. Napoleon bears his wrist: Antommarchi takes his pulse...

NAPOLEON

I suppose a general should always listen to ascertain how his army is maneuvering. Well, what does it indicate?

ANTOMMARCHI

That you're going to get better!

NAPOLEON

Naturally! I feel a repugnance at everything - everything inspires me with disgust - but still I'm going to get better. Come doctor, don't try to deceive me. I can die.

He brushes him away, turning on Marchand (with Bertrand and Antommarchi still in the room)...

NAPOLEON

It's high time that the Grand Marshal had Antommarchi appointed first lackey to Madame Bertrand. Antommarchi is nothing but a great rogue, a rascal, a good-for-nothing. In fact he has the *cazzo* of a valet!

Marchand looks to Bertrand, who merely chuckles -

BERTRAND

... the *cazzo* of a valet... most drole, your Majesty.

NAPOLEON

Very well, let him spend all his time with his whores - *qu'il les foute par devant, par derriere, par la bouche et les oreilles* - but get rid of that man for me - he is stupid, ignorant, pretentious, and utterly devoid of any sense of honour. I wish Dr. Arnott to attend me in future. Discuss the matter with Montholon. I'll have no more of Antommarchi. I have made my will, and in it I've left him twenty francs to buy himself a length of rope with which to hang himself. He is devoid of honour! If Larrey were here... ah, I am a most unhappy man!

Later, and it is now dark. Bertrand sits with the Emperor, finishing a book ("Paul et Virginie") while Antommarchi feels his pulse.

NAPOLEON

What nonsense people write! What is the point of that man - that hermit who lived all alone? A fine kind of happiness that is! It's very boring to live by oneself.

BERTRAND

I fear your Majesty knows this only too well, even though he lives surrounded by friends.

Napoleon looks at him a beat, smiles, tossing the book aside.

NAPOLEON

Bah! Supposing the hermit fell ill? Who would look after him? He cooked his own dinner - what did he eat?? The whole thing is absurd, and the gives people false ideas!

BERTRAND (V/0)

He ceased to digest and his debility increased. Shivering fits came on, and hot towels applied to the feet gave him some relief. He never took off his dressing gown. His stomach rejected food, and at the end of the year he lived upon only soups and jellies.

BERTRAND (V/O) (CONT'D)

The remedies and tonics which were tried produced no relief. His body grew weaker every day, but his mind retained its strength...

Later still, and Napoleon is talking to the ancient Abbe Buonavita. The priest is almost stone deaf, and it is Marchand and Ali who listen to his every word...

NAPOLEON

As a child I felt the need to believe in God, and I believed. But as soon as I began to know, to reason, my faith became jarred and uncertain. Perhaps one day I shall regain blind faith - please God I may! I certainly don't resist faith, I demand nothing better. I imagine that it must give a great and true happiness. The absence of religious faith has never influenced me in any way whatever - and yet I have never doubted God. For if my reason does not suffice to understand Him, yet my inner feeling accepts him. And my nerves are in sympathy with that feeling.

(adding with a smile)

Wanting to be an atheist does not necessarily make you one.

312 INT. NAPOLEON'S BEDROOM - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAY

Another day - pouring rain - Napoleon is being tended by a Scottish Doctor, Dr. ARNOTT (50), Antommarchi standing by.

NAPOLEON

You see, Doctor? Your pills are still taking effect, and my organism is easy to handle. As with my body, as with my mind. Nothing is to be got from it by force, but only through kindness and good treatment.

DR. ARNOTT

I don't think that my pills could have acted upon Your Majesty's motions today.

NAPOLEON

Do you know why it is raining at the moment?

DR. ARNOTT

No?

NAPOLEON

Because five hundred years ago there was a tiny breeze somewhere in Europe. You say that enemas have no effect on the upper regions of the body. But why not?

DR. ARNOTT

I don't say that they have no such effect, but it can only be very slight.

NAPOLEON

No, no, one must be precise. You have said that enemas produce no effect on the upper regions of the body, yet in nature every-thing is linked together. The wind of today will, in one hundred years' time, cause a ship to sink off the coast of China. By this I mean to say that those who would know what the weather will be like through analyzing what it has been in the past are quite mistaken...

Bertrand and Marchand support Napoleon as he takes a few paces of exercise...

BERTRAND (V/O)

(overlapped)

He liked reading and conversation. He did not dictate much, although he did so from time to time up to the last days of his life. He felt that his end was approaching, and he frequently recited the passage from Zaire which finishes with the line: "I cannot hope to see Paris again..."

... and we faintly hear Napoleon...

NAPOLEON

Mais à revoir de Paris je ne dois plus prétendre...

(rallying)

But you will see Paris again - soon - and the day will come when you will again hear Paris shouting, "Vive l'Empereur!"

BERTRAND (V/O)

Nevertheless the hope of leaving that dreadful rock often presented itself to his imagination.

BERTRAND (V/O) (CONT'D)

Some newspaper articles and reports of a change in the British government excited our expectations...

Bertrand is sitting with Napoleon in the darkened room, pouring over a map of the United States...

BERTRAND (V/O)

Sometimes we fancied that we were on the eve of starting for America. We read travel books, we made plans, we arrived at your house, we wandered over that immense country, where alone we might hope to enjoy liberty...

NAPOLEON

It would suit me very well to live in America. First I would have to restore my health. Then I'd spend six months traveling about the country - 1,300 miles of territory to be explored would take me quite some time. Among other places I would pay a visit to Louisiana - after all it was I who gave it to them. A journey of two thousand miles over such country would be very pleasant. Upon our arrival in New York, I would send a messenger to my brother Joseph. It seems that his house is situated on the banks of a river, at Trenton, 25 miles from Philadelphia and fifty from New York...

BERTRAND (V/O)

(overlapped)

Vain hopes! Vain projects! Which only made us doubly feel our misfortunes. They could not have been born with more serenity and courage, I might almost add gaiety. His strong mind and powerful character were perhaps even more remarkable than on that larger theatre where he eclipsed all that is brightest in ancient and modern history. He often seemed to forget what he had been. I was never tired of admiring his philosophy and courage, the good sense and fortitude which raised him above misfortune...

The illness is more pronounced -- Marchand, Ali and the huge Novarrez have to physically lift Napoleon from the bed in order to let Bertrand change the sheets while Antommarchi stands by...

NAPOLEON

Where you at Milan, doctor, when I assumed the iron crown of Italy?

ANTOMMARCHI

No...

NAPOLEON

And when I went to Venice?

ANTOMMARCHI

No...

(adding off a look from
Bertrand)

... your Majesty.

Napoleon is lowered onto the clean sheets. He lies back with a sigh, gazing up at Doepler's painting of his triumphal entry into Venice in 1807...

NAPOLEON

Venice had put all her gondolas on the water... nothing was seen on all sides but fringes, plumes and silks... all that was lovely and elegant had gathered... never had the Adriatic witnessed such a gorgeous sight. Ah, doctor... how I suffer!

BERTRAND (V/O)

If the conversation took a melancholy turn, he soon changed it. He liked to talk of Corsica, of his old uncle Lucien, of his family, of his youth, of you...

Bertrand, Marchand, Montholon and Antommarchi form Napoleon's audience, clustered round his tin bath, with Bertrand writing down every word. Ali tops up the level with scalding water while Napoleon holds forth...

NAPOLEON

Joseph - King Jose! What a farce! It was a very great blunder on my part to make him a king, especially in Spain. In Madrid he thought of nothing but skirts. Brother Lucien was no better, just a social climber posing as a revolutionary. As for Louis - what a dunce! I made him King of Holland and all he thought about was cheese.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

Jerome was just plain lazy,
 Caroline gave herself to Metternich
 ... and then there's Pauline. Ah,
 Pauline. She once posed as Venus
 for a statue by Canova. Naked. When
 I rebuked her, and asked her how
 she could have done such a thing,
 she said "Why ever not? He had a
 perfectly good fire in his studio."
 Oh, the human species is very
 strange!

Marchand and Ali dry Napoleon, Dr. Arnott is now in
 attendance as well as Antommarchi.

NAPOLEON

Waterloo was a defeat not only for
 me but the people of England! They
 have become the most unfortunate in
 Europe and are now barely able to
 subsist. The English soldiery are
 very badly treated. They would be
 the equal of the French if they
 were well trained and well treated,
 but they're too severely handled.
 Your soldiers are made to cry out
 under the lash.

DR. ARNOTT

I only see the men when they're in
 hospital... where they are treated
 very kindly.

Marchand and Ali help Napoleon into his dressing-gown then
 conduct him back to bed, Bertrand scribbling down his every
 word as the Emperor sounds off at Dr. Arnott...

NAPOLEON

Oh, you only take their pulse so as
 to know how many more strokes of
 the cat they can stand. That's the
 reason why they hate you. One of
 these days John Bull will turn
 against the English ruling classes
 and he will hang the lot! The
 ruling classes are the same
 everywhere, puffed up so long as
 they're at the head of affairs, but
 cowardly as soon as there is danger
 anywhere near them. What cowardice,
 to keep an unarmed man imprisoned
 on this rock - without a competent
 doctor - without even a nurse!

BERTRAND

Madame Bertrand would make an
 excellent nurse, Your Majesty.

BERTRAND (CONT'D)

She is quite admirable, and she very much wants to do it. She would nurse you night and day...

NAPOLEON

To nurse me would exhaust her. For six years she has not played the part she should have played. At least she might have kept me company of an evening.

BERTRAND

Well, she is anxious to make amends.

Napoleon looks at Bertrand - almost as though looking through him - then turns to Dr. Arnott, handing him a glass.

NAPOLEON

These medicines you have been giving me are too strong. I am not accustomed to violence - my organism is revolted by extreme measures. It needs delicate things. It is not unlike the elephant, which may be led by a string, but not by a rope.

DR. ARNOTT

These medicines are very mild, they're the sort of thing one gives a child.

NAPOLEON

It is no use trying to drive me. I won't take any medicine this evening.

DR. ARNOTT

A little barley syrup will ease digestion.

At Dr. Arnott's signal, Montholon mixes a small amount of barley syrup cordial with water and hands it to Napoleon.

NAPOLEON

Is barley syrup made from barley?

MONTHOLON

I believe it is made from the milk of almonds, sire.

Napoleon absorbs this a moment, then turns back to Dr. Arnott. Bertrand comes in from the garden, carrying freshly-picked flowers while trying to suppress his emotions.

NAPOLEON

Do many people ask you for news of me?

DR. ARNOTT

No, although everyone knows that I am seeing you.

NAPOLEON

Where did you study medicine?

DR. ARNOTT

At Edinburgh.

NAPOLEON

You must have a lot of money?

DR. ARNOTT

Very little.

NAPOLEON

Oh, all Scotsmen are misers!

(polite laughter)

Tomorrow is Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter - but you are all heretics and will go to hell! Ah well, Dr. Arnott, there are good people in every kind of religion.

Bertrand arranges the flowers with Marchand's help.

NAPOLEON

I've written a great deal, but I find it very tiring. I no longer have the strength to write. I'm so weak that it would not take a cannonball to kill me. A single atom would be enough.

Bertrand waits till Marchand and Dr. Arnott have left the room, then draws closer...

BERTRAND

I am sorry, at a time when it is obvious that your Majesty is far from well, to broach the subject of my personal troubles, but I am broken-hearted that your Majesty should have seen fit to treat me so harshly.

NAPOLEON

No, no, I don't know what you mean Bertrand. You'll have to explain yourself. I'm sick in bed and I don't talk much. You haven't anything to complain about.

BERTRAND

Your Majesty has withdrawn the confidence which you formally reposed in me. I have lost almost without regret the high rank, the fortune, and the honours to which you raised me. But this new misfortune overwhelms me. It was not so long ago that Your Majesty said that my conduct had been irreproachable. How can I, in so short a time, have fallen from grace?

NAPOLEON

But I don't know what you're trying to say, Bertrand. I'm very nice to you. I haven't anything against you. Marchand is the one person whose care I find most pleasant, because it is that to which I have been accustomed. That's all I can say.

BERTRAND

My poor wife - if the climate is not sufficient to kill her, she will surely die of a broken heart! You have forgiven so many of your enemies -- will you not forgive your old friends? No doubt Madame Bertrand has been in the wrong, but has she not most cruelly expiated those wrongs? Is she not very unhappy? Has she not been the victim of the most atrocious slander?

NAPOLEON

But I have nothing with which to reproach Madame Bertrand. She is a most admirable woman. I'm simply not accustomed to seeing her, that's all.

BERTRAND

She would have cared for you with such deep affection. She is sincerely fond of you, your Majesty - more so than you think. Will you see her tomorrow, if only for a moment?

NAPOLEON

But I have already told you that I find Marchand's care the most agreeable because it is what I have become accustomed to.

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

I gave you to understand precisely what I meant. It would be exactly the same with my mother, had she not been used to looking after me. Nevertheless, I will see Madame Bertrand before I die.

BERTRAND

But things haven't yet reached that point, Your Majesty! We will keep you with us! You often used to say that you were a father, so forgive us as you would forgive your own children. Are we not your friends?

The Grand Marshal is unable to restrain his tears.

BERTRAND (V/O)

To his last moments he was kind and affectionate to us all...

313 EXT. LONGWOOD HOUSE - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAWN

Thick mist envelops the compound. Bertrand emerges through it, hurrying towards the house, clutching a piece of paper.

314 INT. LONGWOOD - BEDROOM - ST HELENA - <1821> - DAWN

Marchand is again on duty, helping Napoleon to shave. He can barely hold the razor, but resists all offers of help. He holds Marchand's wrist a moment - smiles... "Wilkinson - Birmingham - England" -- then suddenly vomits. He sinks back, half shaved. Marchand wipes his face.

Bertrand enters the room, unusually excited.

BERTRAND

Sire, good news! Do you remember when we were in Egypt?

NAPOLEON

Do I remember?

BERTRAND

When you made it my duty to find out what all those symbols meant? Those hieroglyphs?

NAPOLEON

On the statues of Ramses ...

BERTRAND

Yes, sire. Well, a team of French and British scientists have finally been able to decode the hieroglyphs from the stone we found at Rosetta.

NAPOLEON
French and British you say?
(nodding)
True scientists have only one
nationality. So, what did Ramses
have to say?

Bertrand shows him a drawing of the hieroglyph with the
translation beneath.

BERTRAND
"To speak of the dead is for the
dead to live again."

Napoleon studies it, smiling to himself.

NAPOLEON
To speak of the dead is for the
dead to live again ...

He nods, followed by a long sigh. Then he looks up at
Bertrand, shielding his eyes as if from the sun.

NAPOLEON
Bertrand? It is you, isn't it?

BERTRAND
Why yes, sire.

NAPOLEON
How is your family, Bertrand?

BERTRAND
Very well, Sire.

NAPOLEON
What is the weather like?

BERTRAND
Very fine.

NAPOLEON
Is there any sun?

BERTRAND
Yes, a little.

NAPOLEON
What time is it?

BERTRAND
Eight o'clock.

Napoleon turns to Dr. Arnott...

NAPOLEON
May I have some coffee?

DR. ARNOTT

No, sire... it will aggravate the stomach.

NAPOLEON

Is barley syrup made from barley?

DR. ARNOTT

Sire, it is made from the milk of almonds.

NAPOLEON

Do they make fruit syrups out of cherries?

DR. ARNOTT

Yes.

NAPOLEON

From apples?

DR. ARNOTT

Yes.

NAPOLEON

From pears?

DR. ARNOTT

No.

NAPOLEON

From almonds? Oh yes, of course - barley syrup.

(to Bertrand)

Where is Gourgaud?

BERTRAND

In Paris.

NAPOLEON

Why did he leave?

BERTRAND

Because he was ill.

NAPOLEON

Have I just been given a drink?

BERTRAND

Yes, Sire.

NAPOLEON

Was it water mixed with wine?

BERTRAND

No, it was lemonade.

NAPOLEON

Give me some wine and water.

Marchand hands him a glass and he drinks.

NAPOLEON

Oh, that was good. It hasn't been blessed, has it?

MARCHAND

(smiling)

No, sire.

NAPOLEON

And O'Meara, is he here?

BERTRAND

He has left, sire.

NAPOLEON

How very odd. I thought that he was still feeling Madame Bertrand's pulse. Who sent him away?

BERTRAND

The Governor.

NAPOLEON

Because he grew too fond of us?

BERTRAND

Yes, Sire.

NAPOLEON

So he won't be coming back?

BERTRAND

No, Sire.

NAPOLEON

And Miss Betsy, where is she?

BERTRAND

She too has left.

NAPOLEON

What! She left?

(to Marchand)

When was that, Louis?

MARCHAND

Two years ago, sire.

NAPOLEON

How very odd. She really has gone then?

MARCHAND

Yes, sire. She has gone... but we are still here...

Napoleon turns back to Bertrand...

NAPOLEON

Give me my little piece of china.

Bertrand passes him his chamber pot between the sheets. Napoleon looks blankly at Marchand...

NAPOLEON

What is the name of my son?

MARCHAND

Napoleon...

NAPOLEON

Napoleon. You will look after me till the end, won't you? And close my eyes for me? You have shared my exile – you have shown me every kindness. You will be faithful to my memory – you will do nothing to injure it...

(to Bertrand, strongly)

When I am dead, you will place the altar at my head in the room where I shall lie in state, is that clear?

BERTRAND

Yes... your Majesty...

NAPOLEON

Mass will be said, and you will see to it that all the customary ceremonies of the church will be performed. I'm not afraid of dying. The only thing I'm afraid of is that the British will keep my body and bury me in Westminster Abbey as a trophy.

May I not have a little coffee?

DR. ARNOTT

No, sire...

NAPOLEON

Just a spoonful? Please??

Bertrand is on the verge of tears...

BERTRAND (V/O)

What thoughts sprang to my mind at the sight of so great a change - when I looked at this man, formerly so terrifying, who had commanded so proudly, so absolutely, now reduced to begging for a spoonful of coffee, asking permission, obedient as a child, asking permission again and again without obtaining it. Repeatedly asking permission, and always unsuccessfully, yet without any signs of bad temper. At other periods of his illness he had sent his doctors to the Devil and had done as he pleased. But now he was docile as a child. That was what the great Napoleon had become my Prince: a humble and unhappy child.

Napoleon is now on his death-bed, with Bertrand, Montholon and Marchand standing by. Fanny Bertrand is finally admitted to the bedroom. Napoleon's deterioration (gradual to us but sudden to her) is so great that her hand shoots to her mouth. He beckons Fanny closer.

NAPOLEON

The name of Bertrand is linked with mine forever. For as long as I live, he shall live...

He sinks back on the pillow, Fanny trembling, Bertrand watching, trying to keep a grip. As Bertrand continues O/S, the room slowly fills with his other companions, servants and their families...

BERTRAND (V/O)

His memory declined during the last few days. He looked at us with the penetrating glance which you know so well...

Montholon moves closer to the bed.

BERTRAND (V/O)

We tried to dissimulate, but he was so used to reading our faces that no doubt he frequently discovered our anxiety. He felt too clearly the gradual decline of his faculties not to be aware of his state...

Suddenly Napoleon sits up...

NAPOLEON

Lannes! Massena! Victory is ours! Quick! Forward! We have them...!

NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

(sinks back)

I am the watch that does not know
itself. Bertrand... I must piss.
My little piece of china - leave
it there.

The little room is now filled with faces, transfixed at the impossible. Young Arthur Napoleon faints.

NAPOLEON

There is no more oil in the lamp,
my friends...

(closing his eyes)

Happiness lies in sleep.

BERTRAND (V/O)

For the last two hours he neither
spoke nor moved; the only sound was
his difficult breathing, which
gradually but regularly decreased.

Later, and Marchand, Montholon, Bertrand and Antommarchi keep vigil. It is late afternoon, the sun fading. Napoleon closes his eyes, murmuring...

NAPOLEON

France... Army... Head of the
Army... Joseph... Josephine...

His hands falls limp... a gasp from his few companions - then they burst into tears in each other arms...

BERTRAND (V/O)

And so he died, surrounded only by
a few servants, the man who had
dictated laws to the world, and
whose life should have been
preserved for the sake of the
happiness and glory of our
sorrowing people.

On the floor by Napoleon's bed is a piece of paper. Marchand picks it up and hands it to Bertrand, then moves towards Napoleon...

BERTRAND (V/O)

We found the enclosed by His
Majesty's death bed, and believe it
to be his last thoughts. "A new
Prometheus, I am nailed to a rock
to be gnawed by a vulture..."

NAPOLEON (V/O)

(overlapping powerfully)

... Yes, I have stolen the fire of
Heaven and made a gift of it to
France.

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)

The fire has returned to its
source, and I am here. Nothing to
my son... but my name...

TIGHT: Marchand's fingers gently close Napoleon's eyes as the words "my name" recede into silence...

MIXING TO:

315 EXT. OCEAN - DAY

A monochrome ocean - then a black dot -- a ship...

316 EXT. ST HELENA - HARBOUR - DAY

In a thin drizzle, soldiers disembark at Jamestown...

317 EXT. JAMESTOWN HILL - ST HELENA - DAY

The marching feet of British Soldiers tramping up the steep, muddy road from Jamestown to the Longwood plateau...

318 EXT. GERANIUM VALLEY - ST HELENA - <1840> - NIGHT

Torrential RAIN. By the light of spluttering oil-lamps, the lid of a coffin is slowly winched open to reveal...

Napoleon, dressed in his dark green uniform and wearing the Legion of Honour, lying as though asleep.

TITLE:

20 Years Later

Napoleon has not aged a day, though his surviving companions are now grown old: Marchand, Gourgaud, Novarrez, Ali... and Bertrand, 70 and doubled with age. All eyes are rooted on the Emperor... before even Bertrand has to turn away.

[MUSIC creeps in] It takes 43 stalwart British Soldiers to lift the two-ton coffin onto a massive ox-cart...

319 EXT. ST HELENA MONTAGE - <1840> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER]... and 26 horses to haul the cart down the steep muddy track to Jamestown's tiny harbour. The coffin is covered with a velvet pall, sprinkled with golden bees and etched in ermine. Bertrand, Marchand, Gourgaud and Ali trudge either side, each holding a corner tassel. The cortege is now escorted with full British military honours.

As the great catafalque is rowed out across the harbour, the shore batteries boom, answered by a volley from every British ship in sight.

The longboat reaches the French frigate *La Belle Poule*, where the coffin is winched aboard on a huge pulley.

A sudden shaft of sunlight spreads across the horizon as Napoleon finally sets sail...

320 EXT. OCEAN - <1840> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] *La Belle Poule* sails north, across the equator.

321 EXT. DECK - LA BELLE POULE - <1840> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] The Emperor's companions are on deck, guarding the huge catafalque. Then a voice - Land Ahoy! - and the coast of France looms through the haze, MUSIC swelling...

322 EXT. RIVER SEINE- <1840> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] The coffin is transferred to a barge, draped in black velvet. Slowly it enters the Seine and proceeds up river, its flags stiff with ice. Hundreds of peasants, working-men and children line the snowy banks, standing with heads bowed as the sarcophagus glides silently by aboard the black-hulled barge...

323 EXT. SEINE & CORBEVOIE - <1840> - NIGHT

[MUSIC OVER] At Courbevoie, on the outskirts of Paris, hundreds of camp fires have been lit on both banks of the Seine. Here the ghosts of the Grande Armée have gathered, the "moustaches" of Austerlitz and Russia, gun on shoulder, stoic, frozen, to watch over "the Old One": Grenadiers, Dragoons, Lancers, Mamelukes - and Léon, now a grey-whiskered Grumbler of 70, wearing his iron hook and wood-wormed leg as proudly as his threadbare uniform, "magnificent in his loyalty and his poverty".

As the great catafalque comes to rest against the landing stage, Léon takes up a handful of bedding straw with his iron hook, lights it from the embers of the fire as he did on the eve of Austerlitz... the wave spreads until the freezing night air is filled with a thousand flaming torches and the cries of "Vive l'Empereur!"

324 EXT. CHAMPS ELYSEES - PARIS - <1840> - DAY

[MUSIC OVER] And on the coldest day within living memory, over a million people gather on the streets of Paris to witness the Emperor's return. The immense catafalque - a circle of Victories bearing the coffin on a shield of gold and drawn by sixteen black-plumed horses - passes slowly beneath the Arc de Triomphe and down the Champs Elysees.

Guns thunder, church bells peal -- the crowd goes wild.

But best of all, as grand as the epic itself and enough to reduce gaping idiots to silence, is the sight of the Old Guard trudging behind the catafalque through a sudden flurry of snow. Proudly wearing the faded uniforms that a younger generation knows only from paintings, they are led by Surgeon Larrey, with Léon close behind, "marching with set jaws and fixed eyes, with no thought but for their god"...

Even the English dignitaries, watching from the balcony of the British Embassy, are briefly humbled...

... and among the crowd we spot a woman in black - a Mrs Elizabeth Abell, formerly Betsy Balcombe. In a gloved hand she clutches the little locket of hair...

The crowd stand to attention, saluting Bertrand, Marchand, Gourgaud and the long column of old soldiers as they trudge pass... then a cry of "Vive Napoleon!" is taken up... someone dares to sing the forbidden Marseillaise...

... and soon a million lungs are singing, shouting, screaming their acclaim with a sad and frantic love, arms outstretched and tears streaming as the towering catafalque glides slowly by, bearing the Emperor on his shield...

325 EXT. SEINE & LES INVALIDES - PARIS - <1840> - DAY

The catafalque is barely visible through the snow as it passes over the River Seine and into Les Invalides...

326 INT. LES INVALIDES - PARIS - <1840> - DAY

... where it is placed beneath the great dome. The huge church, filled with the aristocracy, echoes the pomp and ceremony of the Coronation. Old Marshal Soult is helped from his wheel-chair by Grouchy and Oudinot. He hobbles forward, prostrating himself before the coffin while Prince Joinville marches up to his father, the Bourbon King Louis-Philippe, and salutes him.

PRINCE

Sire, I bring you the body of the Emperor Napoleon.

KING

In the name of France, I receive him.

A fanfare sounds, drums roll as the King turns to Bertrand, flanked by Marchand, Gourgaud and Las Cases.

KING

General Bertrand, I command you to
place the Emperor's sword and hat
upon his coffin.

Prince Joinville presents Bertrand with the magnificent sword of Austerlitz. But Bertrand is so utterly overcome that he breaks down. Marchand consoles the sobbing Grand Marshal, allowing Gourgaud the honour of placing the sword on the coffin, followed by the battered black hat. A fanfare of MUSIC - voices soar - and Soult flops back into his wheelchair.

SOULT

(to Grouchy)

Now let's go home and die.

As the MUSIC swells, we PULL slowly up inside the dome of Les Invalides...

327 INT. LES INVALIDES - PARIS - <PRESENT DAY> - DAY

... the image gradually MIXING through to the present day. The huge sarcophagus is now encased in red marble, resting on a plinth in the centre of a great circular well.

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Historical fact, which is so often invoked, and to which everyone so readily appeals, is often a mere word: it cannot be ascertained when events actually occur in the heat of contrary passions; and if, later on, there is a consensus, this is only because there is no one left to contradict them. But if this is so, what is this historical truth in nearly every case? An agreed-upon fiction...

Doors open - light spills across the floor - and the first of the day's tourists flood in, along with an excited party of school children. Some exhibit a healthy disrespect and lark about, but there's one boy who dimly reminds of the young Napoleone...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

Yet who can read the bottom of my thoughts, my true intentions? And yet everybody will take hold of that order, measure it by his own yardstick, make it conform to his individual way of thinking. And everybody will be so confident of his own version!

NAPOLEON (V/O) (CONT'D)

The lesser mortals will hear of it from privileged mouths, and they will be so confident in turn! And then will come the flood of memories, the paintings, the diaries, the anecdotes, the drawing-room reminiscences... but in all that, what truth will there be?

The boy is drawn to the circular rail, Napoleon confiding with a sardonic smile...

NAPOLEON (V/O)

And yet, my friends, that is history.

The background chatter gradually fading as the boy gazes down at the little Corsican in his long stone home.

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