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ELISA BONAPARTE

AFTER THE TESTIMONY OF HER CONTEMPORARIES

BY

JOSEPH TURQUAN

EDITED AND ANNOTATED FOR THE 21st CENTURY READER

BY

SUSANNAH ROWLES

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Today, Joseph Turquan's *Elisa Bonaparte* is an old and almost forgotten work. However, it deserves to be dug out of the rubble of the past for many reasons. Not only does *Elisa Bonaparte* open a window into 17-18 century France, show a glance of Napoleon's life, and sketch those closest to the Emperor, but it also showcases class struggles that have been relevant throughout time. For instance, the pressure young women have faced throughout time to marry early is evident when Elisa's mother forces her to wed a shallow general she does not love; additionally, the Bonaparte family shows both sides of the upper- and lower-class struggle, as the Bonaparte family is poor and low-class until Napoleon's ascension to glory; finally, this works shows the rifts and jealousy experienced in a family when one member becomes the possessor of great power.

Due to Turquan's writing style and the manner of resources available to him, the reader does not experience all this through the disengaged eye of the historian, but rather through the jealous, gossipy eye of the French court. Turquan, or the sources he drew from, portray Elisa as a selfish, uptight princess with no virtues, brushing off positive actions as springing solely from selfish motives. On the other hand, every choice Napoleon makes is that of a saint. This does not detract from the work as long as the reader understands that there is a bias that must be looked beyond, if interested in history, or simply enjoyed, if interpreted as gossip.

As the cover page indicates, this document was written by Joseph Turquan in French. Little information is available about Turquan today, although several of his other works have survived. Like *Elisa*, these works trend towards slightly gossipy works about French aristocracy. It is worth noting too, that this work was originally one of three books written by Turquan on Napoleon's sisters, the other two being *Pauline* and *Caroline*. These books were translated by W. R. H. Trowbridge in the early 1900s, and *Elisa* is now being edited and annotated again by me. This means that there are two or three different sets of endnotes. The sources are likely Turquan's original, and the comments not written by me were likely Trowbridge's, but as I cannot say for sure, all footnotes found in the document I worked off of are now prefaced with the designation of "OG," and the endnotes that are my addition are under the label "SR". In my effort to modernize, and, I admit, Americanize this document, I changed British words throughout the work to their American spellings (labour to labor, etc.) and removed the italics from some words

that mean in English what they do in French, such as “resume.” Finally, page headings and some pictures have been removed due to the difficulty in formatting them when not in book form. The reader is entitled to know about these changes, insignificant as they may be.

A tremendous thanks is also due to my excellent teacher and mentor, Gordon S. Jones, who, with his superior understanding of French, history, and everything else for that matter, reviewed my footnotes and translations to help make them as correct as possible.

--Susannah Rowles, Mount Liberty College, May 2020.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFATORY NOTE

The domestic life of Napoleon was a perpetual Retreat from Moscow,[1] which eventually led him as surely to his Waterloo as the fatal Russian campaign. He himself declared at Saint Helena[2] that Murat,[3] who was but the echo of his wife Caroline, was the principal cause of his being there. But let us give the fatal Caroline her due. Fortune merely selected her at random to destroy the darling of whom she had tired. In Caroline's position her brothers and sisters would, one and all, have acted precisely as she did. For the much-vaunted *esprit de famille* of the Bonapartes was a pitiful thing: it consisted of theatrically falling on one another's necks after they had succeeded in wrecking their own and their brother's careers.

That they were able to do him any injury at all, however, was due to the weakest as well as the most amiable trait in the character of Napoleon. In few men have the family affections been more strongly developed. A better son, a more devoted husband and father, and a more generous brother there never existed. But demi-gods have no business to indulge in family affections, and Napoleon, who attempted to be a law unto himself in this respect as he was in every other, was doomed to know the bitterness of affection lavished on people utterly unworthy of appreciating it.

His mother, by far the finest character of the family, never really recognized his worth till his star began to pale.

His unhappy son, to whom he gave the splendid title of King of Rome and consecrated the glory of his own career, was too young to sympathize with his aims—he was but five when they were parted forever.

Of his wives, both of whom were false to him, Josephine was far from worthy of the pity that has been so sentimentally bestowed on her at his expense. Remembering her infidelities, which he so nobly condoned over and over again, the wonder is not that she was finally divorced, but that she should have been divorced with honor, so to speak. As for Marie Louise,[4] whom he raised to a grander throne than her Hapsburg ancestors had ever sat upon, she deserted him with a light heart in his hour of need.

By all his brothers and sisters he was treated with the grossest ingratitude. Joseph, Louis, and Lucien had the presumption to be jealous of him. The two former, lost to all sense of honor and loyalty, did their best to thwart him on the thrones which they were glad enough to accept from him, and having thereby proved their incapacity as rulers attributed the failure of their administration to him. Lucien at least was consistent; he preferred to chew the cud of his paltry jealousy in obscurity to the honor of being the royal

vassal of so wonderful a brother. Jerome, the most insignificant and docile of the lot, chose the Retreat from Moscow as the time to display his unworthiness, in the ridiculous hope of saving his Westphalian kingdom, the preservation of which even one more foolish than himself might have known depended entirely on the triumph of the cause of Napoleon.

In this conspiracy of ingratitude and treachery, the sisters of the Emperor played conspicuous roles.

Caroline,[5] with a baseness that makes her resemble some monstrous queen of antiquity, betrayed husband, brother, and country alike to slake the thirst of her unprincipled ambitions.

Pauline, that Jerome in petticoats,[6] though she was entirely free from the unconscionable ambition that Napoleon's prodigious fortune had fired in the others, and really loved him—as much as she was capable of loving any one—nevertheless injured his prestige socially by her shameless life quite as effectually as if her influence had been political.

Elisa, it is true, prided herself on setting an example to her brothers and sisters in loyalty to Napoleon and in the manner of governing the States he entrusted to their care. But her loyalty, which she was ever urging the others to emulate, was only cunning in disguise, and donned its true colors in the twilight of the Imperial day. As for her vaunted capacity, the moment she was called upon to test it, it vanished like the bubble it was, and she had to descend ignominiously from her throne.

Of this strange family it is with the careers of the sisters of Napoleon alone that M. Turquan is concerned in this book. His object, he states in his preface, has been to paint their portraits in a manner which shall resemble them as closely as possible, without flattery or disfigurement. To obtain this result, he has dipped his brush freely in the paint on the palettes, so to speak, of contemporary memoirs, letters, and other documents. This is as it should be, for posterity has virtually agreed to accept the verdict passed upon the Imperial princesses by their own generation. Such as M. Turquan shows they appeared to their contemporaries, such they may be regarded today—women essentially vain, arrogant, frivolous, and selfish, "crowned courtesans" as M. Turquan aptly calls them, who lost their heads on the dazzling summits on which they were placed by Napoleon, to whom they owed everything, including their niches in history which they do not deserve, and to whose ruin they very largely contributed, failing in their incredible folly to perceive till too late that it meant their own as well.

W. R. H. TROWBRIDGE, LONDON, August 1908.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The sisters of Napoleon had a much greater influence than is generally believed on the march of events during the reign of their brother—a sinister, degenerating influence which did the Emperor immense harm among the serious and respectable who are shocked by things at which society only smiles—and which, more than his interminable wars, commenced to alienate the masses whom his wise government had at first rallied to him.

"Women," said Michelet,[7] "in the end ruin every party." The Imperial regime owes its fall partly to the sisters of Napoleon.

One of them, Caroline, was the direct and original cause of the disasters of the Empire. It was she, too, who in 1814 gave the *coup de grâce* to the Emperor and to France.

It is not, then, for the mere vulgar pleasure of displaying to the public the weaknesses and scandals of the lives of these crowned courtesans who were Napoleon's sisters that I have written this book, in which the frivolities of the princesses frequently efface the gravity of the historian; but rather to determine the measure of responsibility of each of them in the fall of the edifice constructed by the Man of the Ages.

"I should not like my sisters' portraits to be painted by a bad artist," said Napoleon one day to Madame d'Abrantès.

I am assuredly not the artist the Emperor would have dreamt of for his sisters—not, alas! in any sense.

I have endeavored to make my portraits of the Imperial princesses resemble them as nearly as possible. I have neither flattered nor disfigured them; but have merely tried to be truthful.

It is for the public to say if I have succeeded.

JOSEPH TURQUAN.

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CHAPTER I

Like all the children of M. Charles de Bonaparte, with the exception of Joseph, who was born at Calvi, Maria Anna came into the world at Ajaccio. The date of her birth was the 3rd of January, 1777. She was given the name of Maria Anna in memory of an elder sister who had died a few days after her baptism, which took place at the same time as that of the little Napoleon. The name of Elisa, by which she is generally known, she herself assumed later, because that which had been given her by her parents was, in her opinion, very ugly, and unsuited to the lofty rank to which the wonderful destiny of her brother had raised her.

Her infancy was not particularly interesting. The little Maria Anna was beaten from time to time, like all her brothers and sisters, corporal punishment being considered in Corsica in those days of great importance in the education of both boys and girls. It was not, however, always administered with justice, to judge from the following little anecdote.

Madame Bonaparte had an uncle who was a canon,[8] from whom she one day received a basket of figs and grapes. Such a gift, which had originally a sacred significance, was regarded in Corsica with peculiar respect. Madame Bonaparte, who was exceedingly devout, held the figs of her uncle in almost as high esteem as his hat or his cassock, and it came as easy to her to make the sign of the cross in eating them as it would have done had they been consecrated bread. Maria Anna and one of her little friends, however, happening to find themselves alone with the tempting basket, did not regard its contents in this manner. They tasted a fig, ate one and then another, till, in short, like the cherries of Madame de Sevigne,[9] all disappeared. When they had finished the figs they began upon the grapes, and when the basket was empty they took to their heels.

After they had gone, little Napoleon, chancing to pass through the room, noticed the empty basket, and stopped to contemplate it. He seemed to be asking himself what it could have contained, when his mother appeared. She, in her turn, observed the empty basket, and asked him severely what had become of the sacred fruit it had contained. The poor boy, unaware that his revered uncle had sent his mother any fruit, replied that he did not understand what she meant. She naturally supposed that he had eaten it, and in a tone half-fig, half-grape, so to speak, preached him an eloquent sermon on the enormity of lying, then, having seized him by the hair and thrashed him soundly, put him on bread and water for three days.

Maria Anna, finding it convenient that her brother should be punished for her sins and condemned

to fast because she had eaten too much, held her tongue. Nor did Napoleon, who did not doubt that he was expiating the gluttony of his sister and thought that she might at least have left him some of the fruit, say anything to inculpate her. At the end of his three days' fast, however, the little friend of Maria Anna, or Marianne, as she was called in French, returned to make inquiries as to what had transpired in regard to the disappearance of the avuncular canon's figs and grapes. Perhaps she even asked if he had sent another basket. Madame Letizia[10] chanced to overhear the little girls, and Marianne found to her cost that her mother's castigation was none the less severe for having been deferred, or rather for having been misapplied in the first instance. It did not, however, prevent the little Napoleon from keeping the stripes he had received.

"Even the good God, good God that He is," said his mother to him by way of consolation, "could not take them away from you."

For though Madame Bonaparte punished Marianne, she did not admire her son perhaps so much as he deserved for the stoicism and generosity he had displayed in preferring to be beaten, innocent though he was, rather than betray the guilty party. The worthy woman did not doubt in unjustly whipping the boy that she was acting in accordance with the teaching of that amiable philosopher of her time, the Abbé Galiani, who declared that two things should especially be observed in educating children: to teach them to support injustice, and also to accustom them to being bored. It is true Galiani had his reasons for holding these views; for he was a Justice of the Peace in Paris, and as such should have known the value of justice; moreover, as abbé he preached, which should have enabled him to observe on the faces of those who listened to his sermons the dreadful effect of boredom.

But be this as it may, Napoleon never forgot this little episode of his childhood, and he recalled it later when First Consul, at a party which the little fig-eater, become Madame Baciocchi, gave in 1801 at the Château de Neuilly.

Marianne had the luck to be admitted to the seminary of Saint-Cyr before the age at which, according to the regulations of that educational institution, young girls were received. This was due to the influence of M. de Marboeuf.[11] It was on December 15, 1782, that M. Charles de Bonaparte received notice that this favor had been granted him. Recent money losses caused him to welcome such good news with satisfaction; for it meant a child the less to support, a consideration that in his

position was not to be despised, above all since the child in question appeared to possess an appetite not easily satisfied. Marianne's education was thus provided for, and her sojourn at Saint-Cyr, moreover, procured for her certain very acceptable material advantages. For on leaving the seminary the pupils were given a trousseau[12] and a marriage settlement of 3,000 livres.[13] Furthermore, the expense of the journey home to their parents was paid at the rate of a livre a league, which as Corsica was not next door to Saint-Cyr was another decided advantage. Unfortunately, these *pensionnaires* of Saint-Cyr, who in almost every instance belonged to families without fortune, were given an education little suited to the modest life that awaited most of them, which was a very great misfortune for their husbands, themselves, and the whole country. M. Theophile Lavalée, in his curious and learned *Histoire de la Maison Royale de Saint-Cyr,* has given some interesting information on the life of the pupils at that celebrated institution.

"The young ladies," he says, "could enter the seminary as early as their seventh and not later than their twelfth year. They remained there till they were twenty without ever leaving it, except in very rare and special instances, and could only receive visits from their relations during the weeks of the four great annual *fêtes.*[14] They rose at six, heard Mass at eight, and worked till noon, when they dined; after this they could amuse themselves till two, then they worked again till six, and retired at nine. They were divided, according to their ages, into four classes, and in each class, according to their proficiency, into five or six grades of eight or ten pupils, each having her own desk. Until their tenth year they were in the Red class, and in this they were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, catechism, and sacred history. At the age of eleven they passed into the Green class, and studied there the same subjects with the addition of music, general history, geography, and mythology. At the age of fourteen they passed into the Yellow class, where they were taught principally French literature, music, and the principles of religion; they also received some lessons in drawing and dancing. At seventeen they passed into the Blue class, where the instruction consisted chiefly of languages and music, and where their moral education was developed to perfection."[15]

As the mistresses were deficient in numbers, they were assisted in their tasks, according to the spirit and letter of the regulations, by the best pupils in the upper classes "Ten of the Blues or the Yellows were chosen and decorated with a flame-colored ribbon, who assisted the mistresses in the Red and the Green classes. Twenty others also were selected and decorated with a black ribbon. These were called the 'Filles de Madame de Maintenon,' and they assisted not only the mistresses in the classes but the Head Mistress

and those who had charge of the establishment generally."[16]

Marianne Bonaparte, unhappily, did not profit much from the lessons she received. Her spelling was as undisciplined as her Corsican nature, which was too Corsican perhaps. A request that she made to the municipality of Versailles to leave Saint-Cyr on September 1, 1792, is the proof of the former. While as to her character, the history of her life, which scarcely requires to be cited as an illustration, is proof of the latter. No, Marianne never had the least idea of aspiring to the "flame-colored ribbon"; if there were any such in her life she had even less right than at Saint-Cyr to pretend to them.

Napoleon, who was very fond of his sister, went to see her as often as the rules permitted him. He was in the habit of taking with him his former schoolfellow, at that time his intimate friend and afterward his confidential secretary, Fauvelet de Bourrienne. Marianne also had as visitors some friends of her father's belonging to the little Corsican colony in Paris, the Abbé Démétrius de Comnène and his sister, Madame Permon.

The establishment of Saint-Cyr being an aristocratic institution incurred the ill-will of the Revolution, and on August 16, 1792—a week after the fall of the monarchy—the National Assembly decreed its suppression. On the 1st of September, Napoleon, who had been a captain since the 6th of February previous, having obtained leave to return to Corsica, resolved to go and seek his sister at Saint-Cyr and take her with him to Ajaccio. This was very thoughtful of him, for the young Marianne had no relations in Paris, nor for that matter in France; the times were threatening, and the decree closing the school was on the point of being enforced.

Napoleon having obtained the authority of the municipality to remove his sister from this abode of peace, which some years later he was to convert into a school of war, returned with her to Paris. He had at the same time received 352 livres, which was allocated to his sister as an indemnity. On arriving in Paris they went to the Hotel des Patriotes Hollandais, where Napoleon had a room. The young girl, coming from the peaceful atmosphere of Saint-Cyr, entered the great city on a day of bloodshed and terror.[17] But, worthy sister of her brother, such things were not made to impress her too deeply. Napoleon obtained a passport for Ajaccio, and on the 10th the two set out for Corsica. On the 17th they arrived at their native city. Napoleon, with his fine new captain's uniform, and Marianne, in the somber costume of a *pensionnaire* of Saint-Cyr, were at once objects of general attention. She was nicknamed Mademoiselle de Saint-Louis, which was not displeasing to her awakening vanity.

In November of the same year there was some prospect of a marriage between the young

schoolgirl of fifteen and Truguet,[18] the Admiral in command of the Mediterranean cruising squadron, who made the acquaintance of Mademoiselle Bonaparte during a visit of twenty-five days he paid Ajaccio. Madame Letizia in particular expected an offer from the Admiral for her daughter's hand, and would willingly have accepted it, in spite of the great difference in age and tastes between him and the young *pensionnaire*.[19] The Admiral was gloomy, taciturn, and reserved, and according to La Revellière-Lépeaux, sensitive and obstinate.[20] It is true he was a very handsome and well-preserved man, but his good looks, considering his temperament was the opposite of hers, were hardly a guarantee of their future happiness. At this period, however, small attention was wasted on such details, and it was by no means rare, especially in Corsica, to see young girls become the brides of old men. The marriage might have taken place had it not been for the exigencies of politics, which the Admiral must later have blessed. For, however accustomed he might be as a sailor to tempests, domestic storms would scarcely have been to his liking, and the cross-grained, exacting character of Marianne leaves little doubt that such must have arisen. But Truguet was obliged to leave Corsica, and shortly afterwards civil war broke out in the island. The Bonapartes, who were members of the patriotic or French party, were hunted down by the partisans of Paoli,[21] and Madame Letizia,[22] forced to flee, deemed herself lucky to find a trading vessel at Calvi,[23] in which she and her children crossed to Toulon[24] without molestation from the English cruisers.

Marianne's life at Toulon and Marseilles with her mother and sisters was one of privation for which the education she had received at Saint-Cyr had little prepared her. But Madame Letizia had passed through worse times in Corsica. For lack of a better gift, she gave her daughter an example of patience and when in the end the Government granted Madame Bonaparte a small pension as a Corsican refugee in France which enabled her to provide, though modestly, for the daily needs of the family, anxiety as to tomorrow's means of subsistence ceased to torment the little household, who had pictured themselves driven to appeal as paupers at the office of the charity organization of Marseilles as the last means of obtaining their daily bread.

It is not known how General Bonaparte, who had himself been ever very poor, managed to procure money after the 13th Vendémiaire,[25] but he did so, and plenty of it too. Like the good son and brother he was he immediately sent some to his family, not a small amount as in the past, but quite a fortune.

"I have," he wrote Joseph, "sent the family 50,000 to 60,000 livres in silver, paper money, and

bills. Therefore, distress yourself no further.…”[26]

Madame Letizia and her daughters, being thus suddenly extricated from their humiliating struggle with poverty, made haste to quit the modest lodgings they had occupied and installed themselves comfortably on the first floor of an apartment in the Rue Paradis. They made acquaintances and Corsicans returning home or arriving in Marseilles did not fail to look them up. For Corsicans always paid court to the family of a general, since they never knew when they might have need of his influence for themselves or their relations or friends in the army. So in a short time the young Mesdemoiselles Bonaparte had a fresh wardrobe and a *salon*[27] that was much frequented.

“In this *salon*,” wrote a man who in his youth was often seen in it, “the conversation was always on heroism in war. The young ladies related such instances with due emphasis and knew the names of all the distinguished heroes. Elisa especially expressed herself with an energy unexpected in one of her sex.”[28]

Some natures are developed and refined by misfortune which otherwise would remain quite commonplace. This was not exactly the case with Marianne Bonaparte. In spite of her enthusiasm for noble deeds, her nature was cross-grained and disagreeable, nor does adversity appear to have refined it much, while in later years good fortune was scarcely more beneficial. She was not one of those who are influenced by circumstances. Because she was willful and imperious, it has been said of her indulgently that this sister of Napoleon was the same stamp of woman as her brother was man.[29]

It was, perhaps, owing to her unpleasant disposition that, notwithstanding the brilliant victories of the army in Italy which placed her brother in the foremost rank among the most exalted personages, and in spite of the splendid position of her family which followed as a natural consequence, her mother, who must have suffered much from this same disposition, hastened to bestow Marianne’s hand in marriage on M. Baciocchi,[30] a retired Corsican officer, who made her an offer at about this time. The name of Baciocchi, which in French signifies *baise-yeux*,[31] has an odd and harsh sound in that language. In Italian, however, it is pretty and melodious.

The marriage took place on May 1, 1797, at Marseilles.

Lucien was opposed to this marriage, and continually regretted the good match she might have made with Admiral Truguet at Ajaccio just after she left Saint-Cyr. That the Admiral had been allowed to escape her he regarded as a piece of bad management.

“Frankly,” he says in his Memoirs, “I should have liked him quite as well as this *bon et*

rebon[32] Baciocchi, who in spite of the excess of his *bonacite*[33] loves nothing save his violin, which to be sure he can scrape passably, but so constantly is he at it that he ends by getting on the nerves both of his innocent instrument and his hearers."[34]

Perhaps Lucien thus sought to excuse the aversion his sister manifested at all times for her domesticated husband, for though often at variance there existed among the Bonapartes, contradictory as it seems, an excellent *esprit de corps,* which in spite of their almost constant personal grievances, and even their treachery to one another, caused the brothers and sisters to unite when any and every outsider interfered with their individual and mutual interests. There never was a better brother than Napoleon; unfortunately his sisters were unworthy of his devotion.

To understand the characters of Napoleon's sisters one should read the Memoirs of Madame d'Abrantès,[35] their friend in childhood. "Madame Baciocchi," she says, "was never nice to her mother, but," she adds, "who was she ever nice to? I have never known anyone with a sharper tongue."[36]

Madame Bonaparte, then, gave her daughter's hand to the first who sought it.

Not only was this the usual custom in Corsica, but one can begin to understand the reasons for her rather hasty consent. There was, perhaps, also another reason. At this time Madame Bonaparte dared not count too much on the assistance of her son Napoleon. Since his marriage with Josephine de Beauharnais,[37] which had taken place against the wishes of his mother and in spite of the opposition of Lucien and Joseph, a certain coldness had existed between the conqueror of Italy and his family. Consequently his advice had not been sought in regard to the marriage of Marianne and M. Baciocchi.

Paschal Baciocchi was quite a decent fellow in his way, but he was very narrow-minded except on certain points, on which his views were rather too broad. He was a most accommodating husband, and his wife and her entire family rendered him full justice in this respect. He appears, however, to have been hopelessly insignificant. Lucien, as has been stated above, spoke of him as "that *bon et rebon* Baciocchi," and Metternich says in his Memoirs that "Napoleon would have preferred for a brother-in-law a man less destitute of intellectual ability."[38] But Baciocchi's lack of intellect in nowise mattered with Mademoiselle Bonaparte, who considered that she had sufficient for both.

When an armistice crowned the victories of the immortal campaign in Italy, General Bonaparte chose the Château de Monbello for his headquarters and his summer residence at the same time. He had invited his family to visit him here, the *château* being large enough to accommodate them all. The entire family accepted this invitation. Such a gathering afforded Napoleon the opportunity of introducing his

Creole[39] bride to his relations, and if the Bonapartes felt obliged to accept the young wife, whom they looked upon as an intruder, as one of themselves, the situation equally obliged the General to recognize Baciocchi, who had entered the family without his having been consulted on the subject. Lucien, moreover, was similarly placed, for he had married Christine Boyer, a niece of the inn-keeper at Saint-Maximin, who was as good as she was uneducated.[40] There was, therefore, on one side or another someone to be forgiven for having permitted his or her personal interest to ignore family considerations. But prosperity and success make one indulgent and conciliatory, and no occasion could have been more favorable than this family gathering in which to wipe out old scores and make the acquaintance of the new relations.

Madame Baciocchi was eager to enjoy to the full her brother's greatness, and she, as well as her husband, received a cordial welcome from Josephine. In his Memoirs Napoleon says, "Josephine behaved as she should have done to her husband's mother, showering attentions upon her and forestalling her wants, while at the same time she was equally thoughtful of my sisters; nor did she neglect Baciocchi. The principal object, in fact, of this family reunion was to effect a reconciliation between Elisa and myself, she having just married without consulting me."[41]

This explanation given by Napoleon of his sister's negligence is delightfully ingenuous. But if his consent had been unasked before the marriage, it was sought afterwards.

"Madame Mére, [sic]"[42] equally naively writes Baron Hippolyte Larrey, "seized the opportunity to obtain the tardy, or withheld, consent of Napoleon to the marriage of Elisa and Felix Baciocchi, their compatriot. The conqueror of Montenotte, of Castiglione, and of Arcola, besought by his mother, hastened to join his consent with hers to the marriage of his sister, who herself had quite forgotten to demand it. The wedding took place at Marseilles, as did also that of Madame Letizia's eldest son[43] to a Mademoiselle Clary."[44]

Only the civil ceremony, however, had taken place at Marseilles, for Madame Letizia, though she attended mass, was apparently not aware of the importance the Church attached to the religious ceremony, and it was at the Château de Monbello that the blessing of the Church was bestowed by an Italian priest on the lately wedded pair. It was, however, General Bonaparte who insisted on this, neither Madame Baciocchi nor her mother seeming to have been much interested in the matter.

At Monbello time passed quickly in a round of pleasures. There were frequent excursions to Milan, where, by the way, Madame Letizia would have liked to live, as well as visits to other places,

while every night there was a grand dinner or reception. Young Madame Baciocchi threw herself into this vortex of pleasure, and reveled in all the gaiety which the splendid position of her brother had secured for all the Bonapartes from this time forward.

The family gathering at Monbello broke up when Napoleon prepared to start for Passeriano in Friuli to meet the Austrian plenipotentiaries. Madame Letizia then returned to Marseilles with Madame Baciocchi, whence they proceeded to Ajaccio, as the former wished to rebuild her house, which had been burnt down during the civil war. In the meantime Baciocchi accompanied his brother-in-law, Lucien, who had been charged with an official mission to Spain.

"Madame Baciocchi," writes Lucien, "was determined to be rid of her husband."[45] And this after but a few months of marriage! Truly, a fine promise for the future.

CHAPTER II

The condition of the Bonaparte family had changed marvelously in a very short time. Apart from the glorious position that Napoleon had won by his incomparable genius, Lucien was no longer the insignificant clerk in the War Department that he had been at Saint-Maximin. While watching his brother's success he too had been fired with ambition. He had just been elected to the Conseil des Cinq-Cents,[46] and had taken a house in Paris—No. 1,225, Grand Rue Verte. This street is now Rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, and No. 1,225 was at the corner of the Rue Miromenil. On settling here he wrote at once to his mother and sister, Madame Baciocchi, offering them his hospitality.

Madame Baciocchi was delighted at the thought of leaving Ajaccio, where the familiar, and true, proverb was at the moment being verified, "that no man is a prophet in his own country." For at Ajaccio it was impossible to conceive that little Napoleon Bonaparte, whom nobody had believed to be more intelligent than other young men in the town of the same age, had in a short time so gloriously distinguished himself. A great deal of jealousy is always mixed with belittlement, and the mean and base, who are too often in the majority, look with envy upon the success of one with whom they have played in childhood. So at Ajaccio it pleased people to say, in order that they might not appear too impressed by so much glory, that the news which reached Corsica had been singularly exaggerated. Madame Baciocchi had consequently not received all the attention which she considered her brother's fame should have accorded her. Offended, she longed to return to Paris, of which she had only had a glimpse as she passed through it, and which drew her to it like a magnet. Paris no longer appeared to her too vast a stage on which to play a brilliant part, but, carried away by her thirst for power, she regarded it as the proper field for the display of her abilities, which she complacently over-rated. Her brother had conquered Italy, why should she not conquer the first place in Parisian society?

When she arrived in Paris with her mother she went to Lucien's in the Rue Verte. Napoleon was at the time in Egypt, and some anxiety was felt on his account, many people even going so far as to deem him totally lost. Josephine in the meantime was consoling herself for her temporary widowhood with a former lover, Hippolyte Charles, at Malmaison. But Lucien was far from wasting his time. Being of an insinuating nature, possessing sufficient skill to pass off a minimum of knowledge as a mine of learning, and a certain superficial facility in everything as talent, and believing himself irresistible with women, he had gained by sheer assurance a position among his colleagues in the Conseil des Cinq-Cents, whereby he turned his

brother's triumphs to his own account. His house was much frequented, and it was in his *salon* that his sister served the apprenticeship which converted her into a woman of the world.

An apprenticeship was, indeed, just what she needed, but unfortunately she always remained an apprentice. Her character was not sufficiently supple to make her a woman of the world in the fullest sense. Outwardly she certainly acquired the manners and ways of good society; she knew how to enter a *salon* and to receive her guests much as other people, but one was always aware of an effort beneath her amiability, and she could never acquire the *finesse*, the *nuances* which characterize those to the manner born. Though she had spent nine years at Saint-Cyr, the education she had received there had failed to remove completely the rough outer shell, so to speak, that enveloped less her manners than her whole character, which was hard, self-willed, unbending. She was not lacking in intelligence, but it was of a kind which a woman who herself possessed wit in abundance has described as the *pudeur de l'esprit*,[47] [48] Regarding everything from her own point of view, she had little consideration for others, and possessing little sympathy, she was incapable of elevation of soul. This, however, did not prevent her being serviceable when such a role suited her.

"Never did a woman," said the Duchesse d'Abrantès of her, "seem so utterly devoid of the charms of her sex; one would have said she wore a mask."[49]

She seemed, in fact, to have been born a drill sergeant, and with her brusque manner and her loud, sharp voice, she might have been taken for an unattractive boy dressed as a woman. While, to complete the portrait, Madame Baciocchi had a southern accent of which she seemed totally unconscious, an accent of which it is impossible to give an idea, and which would have rendered the most charming face displeasing. Notwithstanding, Lucien has said,

"Elisa's French is pure and without accent."[50]

At Ajaccio all these peculiarities might have passed unnoticed, but not in Paris. Madame Baciocchi was, therefore, far from being a superior woman. Personally she was neither pretty nor ugly, but ugly rather than pretty. Her complexion was very white, as is often the case with Corsicans, and she had a passable figure; as for the rest, "such things as arms and legs were attached to her body as they chanced."[51] In a word, with such an exterior, Madame Baciocchi was as insupportable as if she had been born a beauty. She had, too, more than one eccentricity, one of which was to pose as an educated woman and even a *savante*, she who could not spell properly! Her brother Lucien, who had a similar whim but greater ability and an ambition greater still, failed to perceive in her the fault they

shared in common. In 1801, he wrote thus to General Leclerc:—

"Elisa is altogether taken up with *savants*. Her house is a tribunal where authors come to be judged."[52]

The unfortunate frequenters of Lucien Bonaparte's *salon* were condemned to listen to long-winded tirades—and such tirades!—on this or that question of politics or philosophy, instead of the agreeable conversation of the usual Parisian *salon*, where wit, like a butterfly glancing from flower to flower, paused at one subject no longer than was necessary, and then passed on to the next in rapid, graceful flight. There was, however, no need to reply; in the first place this would have prolonged the boredom of the discussion, and in the second young Madame Baciocchi, in spite of her nineteen years—or perhaps on account of them—cut short every argument and always had the last word. She knew more about chemistry than Fourcroy or Chaptal, and more about physics than Berthollet, and it would have taken little for her to have found a flaw in the *Mécanique céleste*[53] of Laplace. In painting she was equally well informed, and David, Gérard, Prud'hon, Girodet, Isabey all made the grave mistake of not listening to her advice. As for Talleyrand,[54] how much he might have learned had be but deigned to receive instruction from one who could have given points to Machiavelli as well as to Pico della Mirandola *et quibusdam aliis!*[55] If she had some wit, she had a still better memory; but it sometimes chanced that both failed her, and when she had embarked on a long discourse the effort she made to speak well caused her to forget the point, which proved her knowledge consisted more in memory than in intelligence.

Still, since she was the sister of the glorious General Bonaparte, people gladly came to her *salon*, or rather to Lucien's, who had left the Rue Verte for the fine Hôtel de Brienne in the Rue Saint-Dominique, where one was obliged to submit to the literary pretensions of both the brother and the sister. It was at Lucien's that Madame Baciocchi made the acquaintance of M. de Fontanes. The poet, it seems, was pushing, and the pedantry of the young woman led her to accept kindly the spiritual madrigals[56] he dedicated to her. Perhaps also Elisa made advances to him, but in any case their bond of sympathy occasioned much gossip. "Lucien alone was for some time ignorant of it, and he was never one to pry."[57] Lucien's blindness, however, counted little either way: he was not her husband. While as for Baciocchi, as has been said already, he was *si bon!*

Suddenly the news reached Paris that Napoleon had arrived in France. Contrary to all expectations, he had managed to leave Egypt, and his carriage was tearing along the road to Paris at express speed. His mother and brothers—save Louis, who with Josephine had gone to Burgundy to

meet him and missed him—his sisters, all the family awaited him in the Rue de la Victoire. After the first greeting the General asked, "And Josephine?"

Bitter and constrained smiles prepared him for something unpleasant.

"So that which I heard in Egypt was true, then?" he said.

At once he was informed of his wife's indiscretion during his absence. No detail was spared him of the intrigue in which Josephine had indulged at Malmaison[58] whilst he, Bonaparte, was in Egypt exposed to bullets and pestilence; and they added that her manner of consoling herself while he was winning laurels at the Pyramids and Aboukir had furnished Paris with plenty of material for scandal. Madame Baciocchi was no less eager than the others to disparage the absent woman.

But Josephine, who, knowing only too well she had every reason to expect accusations would be made against her, had gone to meet her husband in order to justify herself in advance, returned. The scenes that followed the meeting between the couple are well known, as is also Bonaparte's unexpected pardon of his wife. Madame Baciocchi, who did not like Josephine, could not conceive how her brother had forgiven her. "She took no pains," says Madame d'Abrantès, "to hide her feelings and let her disdainful enmity be apparent to all." Naturally after this Josephine could not endure her. There was henceforth secret war between the two sisters-in-law, in which neither let slip the chance of being disagreeable to the other. Madame Baciocchi was pitiless, and Josephine, who was not always good-natured, generally gave tit for tat. An opportunity of revenging herself on Elisa was not long in coming, and Josephine was not slow to follow it up. It was now, by the way, when her brother became First Consul, that Marianne renounced her name as decidedly too ugly, and adopted that of Elisa, which she preferred.

The following incident will explain Josephine's revenge.

After the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire,[59] in which he had taken an important part, Lucien, in recognition of his services, had been appointed by Napoleon Minister of the Interior. But a very profitable speculation, which can scarcely be described as honest, that he had made in wheat decided the First Consul to deprive him of his portfolio. Napoleon did not take this step without much regret, and the dismay felt by the Bonapartes in general over this event was profound. Elisa especially felt her brother's disgrace keenly. Apart from her real attachment to Lucien, whom she closely resembled in

temperament and whose literary and artistic tendencies she shared, she realized the advantage his disgrace would give the Beauharnais over the Bonapartes.

On the evening of the day on which Lucien lost his appointment she was at the Tuileries,[60] an interesting study to the observer of human nature and the philosopher alike. Stanislas Girardin,[61] who was both, happening to be present on this occasion, thus describes the impressions he received:—

"I went in the evening," he says, "to Madame Bonaparte's, whom I found sitting in a large armchair. I made her a very deep bow, which she acknowledged coldly. I regarded her carefully. She affected a reflective air the better to conceal from all her satisfaction. Her daughter (Hortense), less clever in the art of dissimulation, on the other hand, made no pretense to hide her joy. She sat opposite her mother, and her gaiety formed a striking contrast to the deep sadness of Madame Baciocchi's expression. Hortense had such a fine nature that her lack of feeling grieved me. The company, in which there were very few women, was composed of Mesdames Lecourbe, Chauvelin, and Clary; there were several generals, among others Lannes, Murat, Lecourbe, with their aides-de-camp. The Conseil d'État was represented by Réal, Champagny, and Miot; while there might also have been observed Dubois, the Prefect of Police, Alexandre de la Rochefoucauld, Chauvelin, Jaucourt, and Chaptal, who was radiant with triumph.[62] In a corner of the *salon* a game of *reversi* was in progress. Everybody appeared more or less embarrassed. The men spoke little or not at all. The remarks of the women were never followed up, and conversation languished. I approached Madame Baciocchi and said a few polite nothings to her. She told me with effusion, in a tone I shall never forget, since it proved her to be a tender friend, that she had wept all the day before, all night, all today, and that she was even now on the point of bursting into tears.

"'I came back from Plessis,' she said, 'day before yesterday with Lucien. On his arrival he left me to go to the Tuileries. He was there barely an hour; and on his return he told me of his approaching departure, and that of my husband. Picture my grief on learning that all those I love are leaving me at the same moment! I do not know how to conceal my feelings; I am on the point of crying again.'

"'Try to calm yourself, Madame,' I remonstrated; 'your tears would cause certain persons too much satisfaction.'"

"Madame Baciocchi made a fresh effort to compose herself, but finding it impossible, she tried to leave the room unobserved. Madame Bonaparte, however, who did not take her eyes off her,

left her armchair and brought her back, affecting a sympathetic air, pressing her hand, *kissing* her, and doubtless overjoyed to discover on her cheeks the traces of tears."[63]

Girardin, however, was deceived as to the sincerity of Elisa's sensibility. It is true she wept. She had reason to regret that her favorite brother Lucien was shelved, as we should say today; but this was scarcely a matter for tears to one who piqued herself on having a character molded on the antique.

"Picture my grief," she had said to Girardin. Grief she certainly felt, but as one knows how selfish she was, one may be permitted to think that she felt Lucien's disgrace touched her personally. Had she not a throne in her brother's *salon,* and would it not now collapse? But there was another thing even more humiliating. The fall of Lucien meant the rise of the Beauharnais and their partisans. Was not this proved by Hortense's unfeigned joy, by Josephine's hypocritical kiss? It was this that was really the cause of Madame Baciocchi's grief; her tears were less those of regret than of humiliation and rage!

Lucien, moreover, was scarcely to be pitied. Like the good brother he always was, Napoleon had consoled him with the post of Ambassador to Madrid, a post that Lucien, whose chief virtue was certainly not honesty, knew how to turn to as good an account as his portfolio of Minister of the Interior.

Madame Baciocchi, who had presumed to meddle in politics, had urged the First Consul to nominate M. Miot as Lucien's successor.[64] But General Bonaparte, who had reserved a confidential mission to Corsica for him, paid no attention to his sister's recommendation. It was at this juncture, possibly as a result of this rebuff, that her health declined. Her malady was difficult to diagnose, as is always the case when the mind rather than the body is affected. The doctors prescribed a course of the waters at Barége [sic], and she accordingly went to the Pyrenees; but she was not much pleased with her cure, and on her return stopped at Carcassonne to consult Dr. Barthez, who had a great reputation not only in the South of France but among members of the medical profession generally. M. de Barante, father of the writer,[65] was then Prefect of the Aude, and he kindly offered the hospitality of the prefecture to the sister of the First Consul, which she accepted.

"She was," says the historian of the Dukes of Burgundy, "suffering terribly from an affection of the stomach. My father being ill at the time himself, could not do the honors of the Prefecture, so I presented her his excuses and offered my services. Madame Baciocchi received me graciously. The sisters of the First Consul were still very simple persons. They traveled without a suite, and I found

her in a wretched inn lying on a mattress placed on the floor so that she might escape the bugs. She rose and dressed while I waited in an adjoining room; then after a conversation which soon ceased to be formal, she took my arm for a stroll through the town. She seemed quite pleased to have met me, for she had been greatly bored traveling, and at some watering resort, of which I have forgotten the name, from which she had just come, she had not met a soul she knew. I gave her the latest news, for during the last three or four days she had received neither letters nor papers. Since she lived in the literary society of her brother Lucien and was intimate with M. de Fontanes, her interest and conversation were naturally in that direction. We talked of the latest plays and books, and I gave her the latest edition of the *Jardins* of Delille,[66] which I had just received. It was in all a two days' *tête-à-tête.* At parting she begged me to call upon her when I next came to Paris."[67]

M. de Barante, still quite a youth, went to Paris, and recalling Madame Baciocchi's request when at Carcassonne, hastened to pay her a visit. In the meantime the power of the First Consul had rapidly increased, and the Bonapartes had all naturally gained in importance.

"I found Madame Baciocchi," says M. de Barante, "more of a *grande dame* than when we had sauntered together through the streets of Carcassonne. However, she received me graciously enough. But I was not twenty, and only seeking in society and the *salons* friendship or wit, I could not be bored with official receptions. So I went but two or three times to Madame Baciocchi's, and I have never seen her since."[68]

CHAPTER III

As has been stated, chief among the eccentricities of Elisa was her pretension to literary ability; but her pretension was characterized by a degree of absurdity of which it is impossible to form an idea today. Still more inconceivable, however, is the fact that this absurdity was particularly pleasing to one who as a man of letters and a poet was noted for his good taste. This was M. de Fontanes, "whom everybody knew without understanding."[69] Madame Baciocchi, aware that the respect felt for him caused her to be treated seriously by men of intelligence, was at her best with Fontanes. The Duchesse d'Abrantès, who was one of those who failed to understand the devotion of this man of sensibility and taste, who, detesting blue-stockings, female politicians, and philosophers, had every reason for avoiding Madame Baciocchi, and instead became so intimate with her, was surprised at his infatuation.[70]

Fontanes, however, undoubtedly influenced her more than she did him, though it flattered her to consider she inspired his thoughts and actions, and was, in short, his Egeria.[71] Elisa certainly gained much from this intimacy; Fontanes advised and directed her as far as possible, but she was not the most docile of pupils, and he could not always save her from her absurdities. Immersed in literature, she not only wrote a novel, a fact unknown to Napoleon until he was at St. Helena, which speaks little for the effect it produced, but conceived the idea of forming a literary club composed exclusively of women. Possibly she had in view golden opportunities for exercising power and practicing the word of command which would fit her for the throne that she already saw looming in the distance. In any case, she resolved that only such women—of intelligence, be it understood—were to be admitted to this club, as possessed the good taste to desire her for its president.

She was soon inundated with demands for admission. As she was the sister of the First Consul, people complacently endured her whims in the hope doubtless of someday profiting more substantially from them than from her more or less interesting lectures. Members having been recruited, a date was fixed for the first meeting, at which the constitution of the club was to be discussed, as well as the style and color of the costume to be worn by the members.

So important a meeting might well have been stormy. Madame Baciocchi, assuming an air of authority, seated herself in the presidential chair—it was second nature to members of her family upon beholding any seat raised above the crowd to hasten to sit in it—and presided majestically without perceiving that she resembled the leader of a gathering of lunatics. Disregarding the liberty of discussion,

and never dreaming that her ideas would not be unanimously accepted, she had selected the costume of the members in advance, and appeared in it in order that the merits of the said costume, as well as those of the president, might at the same time be better appreciated.

"A muslin veil embroidered in silk of every color and edged with gold was wound round her head, on which rested a wreath of laurel *à la* Petrarch and Dante. She wore a long sleeveless tunic and a skirt with a short train, and over her shoulders was an immense shawl arranged like a mantle. It was a costume suggestive of the Jew, the Greek, the Roman, in fact of everything except good French taste."[72] And common sense, might have added the witty chronicler, who has so ridiculed the literary masquerade of this *soi-disant*[73] blue-stocking.[74]

After this one can understand the sort of conquest that Madame Baciocchi made of M. de Fontanes. Surely such eccentricities as hers, coupled with her absurd efforts in prose and verse, could not fail to amuse the most serious poet-philosopher. For she must have been droll enough with her literary and amorous caprices. As for that *bon et rebon* Baciocchi, he accommodated himself to whatever pleased his wife so thoroughly that had he shared her literary pretensions he might have written a treatise on the art of accommodating oneself to circumstances. "He endured," says Mademoiselle Avrillon, "all that his wife made him suffer without complaining, or rather, he sought consolation elsewhere."

The happy couple lived with Lucien in his house in the Rue Saint-Dominique. Here Elisa received her more or less cultured friends and posed as a woman of taste, who though not deigning to write herself, perhaps because her attempts had proved her incapacity, nevertheless enjoyed the society of men of letters, of philosophers and artists. It was her ambition to play the role that Madame Geoffrin[75] had played in the eighteenth century, and which Madame Récamier[76] knew so well how to assume and perfect to her own and her friends' mutual profit. But Madame Baciocchi had only one point in common with these two justly celebrated women: like them she completely effaced her husband.

One naturally met Fontanes in her *salon,* and also his friend Chateaubriand, whose literary fame since the publication of his *Génie de Christianisme*[77] surrounded him like a halo. Another friend of Fontanes, Boufliers, a former literary light of the old *régime,* was also seen there, as well as the poet Arnault, most poetical when writing prose, and Esménard and Andrieux, not to speak of Lucien himself, who since the rise of his brother and family seemed to have been bitten by a literary tarantula. There were, besides, several men of letters whose names were unknown save as they appeared on the

list of those the State encouraged, thanks to the patronage of Lucien or his sister. Indeed, Elisa showed herself so considerate of the persons she admitted to her *salon*, that one day, when it became necessary to limit the number, she resolved, on the advice of Arnault, to reduce her literary circle by three-quarters!

Like Napoleon and Lucien, Madame Baciocchi had a mania for tragedy. It was impossible to enter her *salon* without hearing long citations of passages from Racine, or rather, from Corneille, who was her favorite author. For heroism, noble sentiments, duty performed in the face of a thousand dangers, the sublime appealed to her—though she did not practice them, be it understood. She would have found it more ridiculous than sublime to have made the least sacrifice of her likes and caprices, above all where it concerned her poor devil of a husband.

Lucien, who prided himself on his elocution, and if he did not desire a throne had at least no objection to a pedestal, had built a Théâtre in his fine new house at Neuilly.[78] Here tragedies were performed. One day *Alzire*[79] was acted, and Lucien played the part of Zamore, while Elisa took that of Alzire. The costumes were those of the period, the actors and actresses wearing flesh-colored tights. But Napoleon was anything but pleased when he beheld his brother and sister performing in such a manner, and he remonstrated vehemently with Lucien.

"What!" he said, "when my first duty is to reestablish public decency, must my brother and sister appear almost naked[80] on a mountebank stage! It is outrageous!"[81]

The performance was not very successful, for Lucien, at all events, was certainly not a comedian.

There was a Théâtre also at Malmaison, where *Alzire* was performed by the same actors; but if the costumes did not conform to the fashion in Peru in the sixteenth century, they were at least in conformity with Parisian conventionality. At the close of the performance Napoleon could not refrain from observing, within the hearing of more than one person—

"I trust this rendering of *Alzire* may be regarded as a parody."[82]

Madame Baciocchi, who overheard him, was much annoyed, but she continued all the same to act her tragic parts and to affect the woman of culture. This mania excited her brother's contempt also on another occasion. In her sharp, consequential voice Elisa was speaking of Rotrou's *Wenceslas.* Napoleon, who had recently heard Talma lecture on an act of this very piece, declared Wenceslas to have been an old fool, Ladislas a bad son and brother, and the play itself still worse. Then he began to

praise Corneille.

"The *Cid, Horace, Cinna*," he said, "those are the sort of plays I like."

"Yes, yes," assented Elisa rather disdainfully, forgetting her love of the heroic and sublime; "yes, but…" and she recited some lines of Voltaire learnt by heart, in which the philosopher of Ferney makes an unjust and mean attack on the plays of Corneille.

Napoleon did not approve of this manner of treating his favorite.

"I should have made him a prince," he replied; and one can well believe it, seeing he was capable of making his sister Elisa a princess!

Madame Baciocchi's criticism annoyed him, and as she had the disagreeable faculty of embittering a discussion, the subject soon became irritating. Napoleon finished it by rising impatiently and saying as he departed—

"This is beyond endurance! You are a caricature of the Duchesse du Maine!"[83]

The comparison was apt. The Duchesse du Maine, that fantastic little creature who has been justly described as one of the most *bizarre* productions of the eighteenth century, had in fact the same stubborn, domineering spirit as Elisa, though she laid down the law in a less authoritative and rude manner. The Duchesse du Maine took after the great Condé,[84] her ancestor. Elisa took after her brother, the great Napoleon, whose feminine caricature she was quite as much as she was that of the Duchesse du Maine.

Though deeply offended by the contempt of her brother, Madame Baciocchi was too wise to show her anger; and it was owing to her influence in favor of Fontanes that the First Consul decided to appoint that academician President of the Corps Legislatif.[85] "This choice," says Madame de Remusat, "appeared strange to some, but in view of the future Napoleon planned for the Corps Legislatif he could scarcely have given it any other president than a man of letters."[86]

But if Madame Baciocchi succeeded in making her friend President of the Corps Législatif, she did not forget her husband, though it is true she remembered him in order to get rid of him. She succeeded about this time in getting him appointed colonel of a dragoon[87] regiment. The honest fellow knew better than contradict his wife, so he let her do as she pleased; besides, he was something of a soldier already. Had he not formerly been a captain? He therefore joined his regiment without protest, and consoled himself with the thought of the leisure the service would afford him in which to play his violin.

CHAPTER IV

Madame Baciocchi once passed a summer at Lucien's country house at Plessis-Chamant to act as hostess for her brother in company with the Marquise de Santa-Cruz. Madame de Santa-Cruz was a young woman whom Lucien had met while Ambassador at Madrid, and whom he had brought back with him from Spain as a sort of lady companion to while away the dullness of the long journey. At Plessis-Chamant, Lucien entertained a great deal, his guests consisting principally of military, political, and literary people. There were plenty of distractions of the kind then in vogue; one was to mystify certain of the company.

"Since it was known that the Desportes were not on good terms, Lucien found pleasure in assigning the husband and his young wife the same bedroom, which obliged M. Desportes to sleep in a chair. To vary this sort of fun, they slipped a fox into Fontanes' bed, and put jalap[88] into the soup of a little musician nicknamed 'Flutteau-Miaow,' because of his skill in playing the flute and imitating the midnight cat."[89]

Another amusement was to frighten half to death a poor child, who had the misfortune to be a coward, by appearing in his room in the middle of the night entirely draped in white and carrying a lantern. Madame Junot, who was a frequent guest at Plessis-Chamant, relates this last cruel pastime with a relish that one would hardly have expected of a woman of her kind nature.[90]

They also took pleasure in acting and watching one another act tragedies. Madame Baciocchi, who directed this little court somewhat on the lines of that of Rambouillet,[91] delighted to devise and participate in all these amusements as well as to receive the homage of the guests, who treated her as if she were a queen. Their homage, however, was not entirely disinterested; more than one ambition lurked beneath all this nonsense. Nevertheless, the time passed pleasantly enough for Madame Baciocchi. The officers paid court to her, the politicians and diplomatists flattered her, and the poets dedicated their verses to her. One day the poet Casti dedicated a madrigal to her, which was discovered the following morning stuck in the mirror of the mantel-piece of the *salon.* Elisa was charmed with this madrigal, which played upon the words *bacio* and *occhi*,[92] in honor of the eyes of Madame Baciocchi, who, says Meneval very gallantly, had very beautiful ones.[93]

The sisters of the First Consul seeing a future without bounds opening to his ambition, and consequently to their own, endeavored—with the exception of Pauline, whose sole ambition at the moment

was to please her actor-lover, Lafon, of the Comédie Française—to create a following of devoted admirers for themselves as their brother had done. This gave them a certain importance which Napoleon had to take into account when they urged him to grant some favor he was loath to accord.

Madame Baciocchi, on her side, devoted all her energies to forming a connection with authors, financiers, and politicians. But being naturally cold and selfish, she failed to win the sympathy of those she wished to subjugate. The following is a case in point:

Desiring to become acquainted with M. de la Harpe, Madame Baciocchi one day requested Madame Récamier to invite them both to dine. Astonished by this familiarity, which her own acquaintance with Madame Baciocchi scarcely warranted, Madame Récamier did as she was asked. But, she writes, "it seemed as if the members of the First Consul's family had begun to assume the manners of princes, and appeared to consider that they honored those who entertained them."[94] There were only eight at table, Madame Récamier and her mother, Madame Bernard, Madame de Staë, Madame Baciocchi, M. de la Harpe, the Comte Louis de Narbonne, and M. Mathieu de Montmorency. Madame Récamier played the part of hostess to perfection, as usual, and conversation was flowing with all the animated grace one would expect from such table companions, when suddenly a note was handed Madame Bernard. She glanced at it as soon as she could do so unobserved, ran her eye over the contents, uttered a cry, and fell back senseless.

They hastened to her side, and did everything to restore her to life. Madame Récamier tore the fatal letter from her mother's hands and devoured its contents, which were to the effect that M. Bernard had been arrested and imprisoned in the Temple. All present were filled with dismay save Madame Baciocchi, who appeared constrained and bored. For in her eyes the grief of Madame Récamier and Madame Bernard, as well as the sympathy of their friends, was in a measure a reproach to the government of the First Consul, and consequently an indirect reflection on her as his sister.

Madame Récamier in her musical voice, pathetically broken with sobs, said to her—

"Madame, that same Providence which has made you a witness of the misfortune which has befallen us, wishes without doubt to constitute you my savior. It is imperative I should see the First Consul this very day, without fail, and I count on you, Madame, to obtain this interview for me."

As this was very natural on her part, she was completely astonished when Madame Baciocchi replied in a constrained manner—

"It strikes me you would do well to consult Fouché[95] in the first instance, that you may learn exactly how matters stand. Then if it be necessary for you to see my brother, you can come and tell me, and we will see what can be done."

She seemed in nowise to feel the embarrassment of leaving a house to which she had invited herself to dine at a moment when a unique, almost providential, occasion presented itself to her of discharging her indebtedness, and which she did not appear in any hurry to take advantage of. She should have gone at once to her powerful brother and demanded from him the instant release of the father of the friend she was so anxious to make, but instead of saying "I am going to my brother and will bring you myself M. Bernard's pardon," she said, "I am going to the Théâtre; you go to Fouché and then come to me with the result."

It was odious. She alone of them all failed to perceive her want of feeling and lack of breeding. While she went to the play Madame Récamier sought the Minister of Police.

"It is a very serious matter," said Fouché, "but see the First Consul this very evening, and make certain the accusation is not filed, otherwise M. Bernard is lost."

Overwhelmed with fear, Madame Récamier flew to the Théâtre-Français, and reached the box where Elisa was sitting with her sister Pauline. Madame Baciocchi was not sufficiently mistress of herself to refrain from a movement of impatience. At such a moment Madame Récamier passed it by, but later she recalled it when describing this episode in her life.

"I come, Madame," she said, "to claim the fulfillment of your promise. It is necessary I should speak with the First Consul this very night, or my father is a lost man."

"Very well," coldly replied Madame Baciocchi, "let us wait till the tragedy is finished; when the curtain falls I am at your service."

At this moment Pauline, who had no eyes save for her lover, the actor Lafon, who was then on the stage, suddenly cried—

"Have you ever seen Lafon before as Achilles?" And without waiting for an answer she went on, "But only see, Madame, how quaintly he has put on his helmet! *Pardi*,[96] it is all awry! How silly!"

All this foolish chatter must have been a veritable agony to Madame Récamier. But General Bernadotte[97] chanced also to be in the box. He shrugged his shoulders on hearing the absurdities of Pauline, and rising, said to Madame Baciocchi—

"Madame Récamier appears to be in great trouble; if she will permit me I will escort her

home, and myself go to the First Consul."

"The very thing," replied Madame Baciocchi hastily, who saw with pleasure the brother-in-law of Joseph undertaking the assault of General Bonaparte. "You are in luck, Madame," she added, turning towards Madame Récamier; "place yourself absolutely in General Bernadotte's hands; no one is in a better position to serve you."[98]

That same evening Bernadotte went to the First Consul and obtained his assurance that the charge against M. Bernard should not be pressed.

Jealous of her popularity, the sisters of the Emperor also wished to be popular. Pardons were granted on their recommendation. Elisa, who had dared to protest against the execution of the Duc d'Enghien (it was the noblest action she ever performed), was the leader in this campaign of clemency. Being on friendly terms with her sisters, which was not often the case, "she informed the wives of the condemned that they might appeal to them. They drove them to Saint-Cloud in their own carriages that they might solicit the pardon of their husbands in person. This maneuver, of which the Emperor had been previously informed, was somewhat less spontaneous than the Empress's, because it appeared to have been too cleverly preconcerted. Nevertheless it had the effect of saving the lives of a certain number of persons, which was, after all, the only thing that really mattered."[99]

CHAPTER V

From the moment the Empire was proclaimed the sisters of Napoleon became more and more jealous of their sister-in-law, the Empress Josephine. On the very day of the proclamation there was a large family dinner at Saint-Cloud, when for the first time Napoleon and Josephine were addressed as "Your Majesty." To the sisters of the Emperor it seemed as if the sound of this title applied to their brother's wife made their ears tingle. All three regarded it as a crushing blow. But when Hortense, the daughter of their enemy, was addressed as "Your Highness," and given the rank of princess, they, who were neither Highnesses nor princesses, found it impossible to conceal their jealousy.

Madame Baciocchi, more mistress of herself than her sister Caroline, who began to weep, "comported herself in a brusque, domineering manner, and treated the ladies of the palace with a marked hauteur."[100] This seemed to afford her comfort, but not for long. The next day the three sisters complained to the Emperor that he was doing nothing for them, and that the situation of inferiority in which they found themselves was a sore humiliation. The Emperor's reply is celebrated.

"Truly, Mesdames," he said, "considering your pretensions, one might suppose we inherited the crown from the late king, our father."

But with his usual generosity, where members of his family were concerned, he granted his sisters the title of "princess," and the decree by which they were created "Imperial Highnesses" was duly registered in the *Moniteur.*[101]

This, however, was far from satisfying them. The First Consul had been Emperor barely a few months before his sisters each desired a crown, and began to persecute him to procure them one. As usual, the Emperor ended by yielding to their importunity. Madame Baciocchi, who had now become the Princess Elisa, was the first to be provided with a State.

On March 18, 1805, Napoleon appeared in the Senate, and announced with great ceremony that the State Council of the Republic of Italy had come to offer him the "iron crown,"[102] and that he had accepted it. At the same time he announced that he had given the State of Piombino[103] to the Princess Elisa, his sister, and desired her to be recognized as hereditary Princess of Piombino. Napoleon gave as his reasons that this State was badly governed, and that it was to the interest of France to put an end to such a condition of affairs, for he wished it to be understood that, in entrusting

this principality to his sister, he was acting, not from feelings of mere brotherly affection, but from motives of good and prudent policy, equally for the interests of the people and for the glory of the Crown.

The Imperial decree ordained that the children of the Princess Elisa should succeed their mother, that the Emperor of the French should invest them with their rights, and that they could not contract marriages without his consent. The title of Prince of Piombino was also conferred on M. Baciocchi, who at the same time was given the command of the troops charged with the defense of the coasts and communications between the Isle of Elba and Corsica.

Fouché had been no stranger to the determination of Napoleon to grant to his sister the sovereignty of Piombino. He thus sought to build up an influence and support outside and beyond the Imperial favor he enjoyed, and to attach Elisa to himself by ties of gratitude in case of need. As to Napoleon, he had another motive than that of rendering the people of the State of Piombino happy by sending his sister to govern them; he had even a further reason than the happiness of Elisa herself, whose ambition, now that she had become a reigning sovereign, began to be satisfied. For, above all, he desired to cut short certain love episodes, more or less scandalous, in which his sister had figured in Paris. In these intrigues Fouché had found the way, through quite personal services, to assure himself of the gratitude of the Princess.

"On entering the ministry," he says, "chance offered me means to conciliate Elisa; twice in succession I gave two men their liberty, Hin… and Les…, in whom she was very much interested, and who, with the shortest possible gap between them, became indispensable to her tender fancy. One in his character of farmer of the revenue was pursued by the Emperor with determination; the other, more obscure, had engulfed himself in a shocking affair. It was not without some difficulty I managed in the end to hush up everything."[104]

Elisa was naturally intoxicated with happiness to possess a crown, but after a short time she was unable to prevent herself from discovering that it was "very small for her head." She complained of this to her brother, who, unable to refuse anything to a member of his family, promised her to enlarge it in the near future. During a visit to Italy, which he made this same year, a deputation from the Principality of Lucca came to him at Bologna and begged him to take their country under his exalted keeping by annexing it to the French Empire.

The Emperor had no inclination to accept the offer of the delegates from Lucca, but he gave

them a Constitution and the Princess Elisa to watch its working. His sister, who had accompanied him on his trip to Italy, was overjoyed to receive the sovereignty of the State of Lucca, which she joined to that of Piombino, the governance of which had been assigned her by a decree of the Senate three months before.

But these two principalities did not yet suffice to satisfy the mounting ambition of the former pupil of Saint-Cyr, and the Emperor later on threw her a larger morsel to keep her quiet. In 1808 he gave her the Grand Duchy of Tuscany.[105]

It is only fair to her to state that she seconded, to the best of her ability, her brother's policy; but her ill-regulated passions and absolute lack of moral sense did great harm to the government and the person of the Emperor. She also zealously seconded his family schemes. In 1807 she did her best to influence Lucien, who thought himself independent because, instead of being under the thumb of his brother, he was under the thumb of his wife, to cease opposing Napoleon. Under date of the 20th June she wrote him as follows:

"My Dear Lucien,—

"I have received your letter. Permit my friendship some reflections on the actual state of affairs. I trust you will not be vexed by my remarks, for my fondness for you and yours could never change.

"You were made certain proposals a year ago which you should have found suitable, and which for the sake of your wife's happiness and that of your family you should have accepted on the spot. Today you refuse them afresh; do you not see, dear friend, that the only way to prevent adoptions is to leave His Majesty the undisputed right to control his family? By remaining near Napoleon, or by receiving a throne from him, you will be useful to him. He will provide for your daughters, and so long as he finds in his own family the possibility of executing his political projects, which mean everything to him, he will not select strangers. One must not treat the master of the world as an equal, for though Nature made us all children of the same father, his wondrous actions have made us his subjects. However sovereign we may be, we owe everything to him. We should be proud to acknowledge it, and it seems to me that our sole glory should be in proving ourselves by our manner of governing worthy of him and of our family.

"Therefore, reconsider the proposals that have been made you. Mamma and all of us ought to

be happy to be as one in politics. Dear Lucien, do this for us who love you, for the people my brother will give you to rule and whose hope you will become.

"Farewell, and believe that, whatever you decide on, my affection for you will always remain the same. Give my love to your wife and your dear family. The Chevalier Angelino, who has been to see me, spoke a great deal of you and yours. My little girl is a dear,[106] and I shall be so glad when she can play with your children.

"Your sister and friend,

"ELISA."[107]

This letter is very interesting from more than one point of view. First of all it proves the intense *esprit de famille* of the Bonapartes, which existed to the end in spite of many failings and treachery; moreover it proves how fond Elisa was of politics and power, how completely she shared the opinions of Napoleon, since she endeavored to second them by writing to Lucien of her own accord to abandon his resistance, or at least to stop quarreling and sulking. In this respect, however, it may be remarked here that Elisa did not always herself conform to the wise principles she sought to instill into her brother. Finally, this letter is a proof that in his family itself, as General de Ricard has written, Napoleon was regarded as a superhuman being.

The Princess of Lucca and Piombino, however, being eager to taste the sweets of sovereignty, went to take possession of her estates. She at once took her *métier*[108] of ruler very seriously. Like his haughty wife, Prince Baciocchi also took his unlooked-for elevation very seriously. To pass from colonel of the 26th regiment of the line to second in command of the principality of Lucca and Piombino, of which his wife was the commander-in-chief, was something to be proud of. And he was, if General Pouget is to be believed, who, when he was appointed colonel to the regiment that Prince Baciocchi had just left, saw him in the first stage of the intoxication of power.

"I made it my duty," he says, "to call and offer him my respects, and inquire if he had any messages or commands for his former regiment. He was at table with his aide-de-camp, and received me very coldly, said little, and acted generally like an ill-bred prince, giving me no messages from him to any of his former officers. In leaving him, I reflected on the effect of pride and rank suddenly acquired."[109]

The Emperor did not like to discuss, or rather that anyone should discuss, the orders he gave.

He wished to be obeyed unquestioningly. Eugene, in this respect, as Viceroy[110] of Italy, was the most compliant of vassals, a model of docility. But with Elisa, whom Napoleon knew he would not find equally adaptable, he had almost no correspondence, allowing her to govern her principality as she pleased, as if it were a sort of tributary dependency of which she was the absolute sovereign.

Talleyrand called her, not without mocking irony, the "Semiramis[111] of Lucca." She began by making her husband a sort of minister of war and commander-in-chief at one and the same time. She had her court and her chamberlains, among others M. de Lucchesini, former Prussian Ambassador to Paris under the Consulate. As for herself, mounted on horseback and affecting a military pose and manners, she inspected reviews of her little army. Following Napoleon's example, she commenced large public buildings and performed the duties of a highway commissioner.[112] Furthermore, since the duties of sovereigns towards their people embrace all spheres of activity and human understanding, she began to study the constitutions of empires. In this branch of her researches she received valuable assistance from Lespérut, a former private secretary of Marshal Berthier. With him she made laws, drew up a constitution, and organized a system of government.

To judge from the letters the princess wrote to the Emperor, which are preserved in the National Archives, her clergy gave her at first much trouble. But imperious and domineering, she made everybody, priests and monks as well as the others, toe the mark by a shake of the finger or a glance of the eye. She could talk about administration like a veritable prefect.

"If the public debt," she wrote under date of June 7, 1806, "the pensions and charges imposed on my States are not diminished, they will absorb more than half the revenues. Never in France, under the rule of your predecessors, did the debt exceed the quarter, while under your Empire it is barely a sixth, of the proceeds."

When Napoleon, who promoted sovereigns as he did generals, raised her to the dignity of Grand Duchess of Tuscany, Elisa was able to perform on a larger stage and to afford the world a more exalted idea of her abilities. Her title of Grand Duchess made her almost a queen, but she reigned more than an actual one. Like her brothers and sisters, she had a mania for imitating the manners and poses and aping the gestures of Napoleon, thinking, perhaps, that she was at the same time borrowing his genius.

Scarcely had she arrived in Florence when she made it one of her first cares to form a court in

imitation of that of her powerful brother. All the descendants of the noble families in the country, rich persons, or those merely occupying a good position, even women for their beauty alone, received invitations, if not commands, to appear at the budding court. They did not require much pressing, and courtiers soon flocked around the new sovereign. This was one way of creating a following, and practiced with discretion and dignity it would certainly have produced, and that rapidly, good results. But she did not proceed altogether on these lines, and the day the Princess Elisa was obliged to descend from her throne she complained with bitter mortification of the ingratitude of her subjects.

Her court was mounted on a grand scale. Maids of honor, chamberlains, equerries, pages, almoners, chaplains, nothing was lacking to it. This gilded *valetaille*[113] was, so to speak, the pick of the basket; which, however, did not prevent Elisa from choosing as her reader the former mistress of Generals Marescot, Moreau, Ney, etc., Madame Ida Saint-Elme, an adventuress who afterwards published eight volumes of curious memoirs. Each possessed a great name or a great title, or at least a great pride in self-abasement. The creation of this court, which owed its existence to vanity, proved, nevertheless, a powerful political instrument, thanks to the eagerness of all who boasted noble blood in Tuscany to fill the antechambers of the palace of the new sovereign. Elisa recognized the usefulness of this instrument, but she did not know how to draw all the advantage from it she might have done.

When the personnel of her court was selected and appointed it was necessary, as at the Tuileries, to regulate its etiquette. This is an important matter in every court. There were endless discussions on the manner of doing this thing and that, inside and outside the palace, a private reception, a public ceremony, a review, a ball, a mass. All these frivolities seriously occupied the court of the Grand Duchess. The well-to-do portion of the population was interested from sheer curiosity in these important trivialities, and the gradual blending of sense and sentiment little by little seemed to accustom people to the blare of *fêtes* and concerts, which contrasted strangely with the clash of arms that resounded from end to end of shuddering Europe, a menacing and certain premonition of the shocks which were once more to shake the Old World. But these *fêtes* did not in the least prevent Elisa from paying great attention to the army and the administration.

She did what she could to make herself popular. To appear as amiable as possible, she only spoke Italian when conversing with those persons of her court who were not French, which she considered a delicate flattery not unpleasing to her subjects. Furthermore, she ordered that public

decrees, instead of being announced only in French, should be made in both languages. She paid, too, no regard to expense and scattered gold with open hands. Napoleon had made over to her two millions a year of the four millions which Tuscany contributed to the Empire. So, more in love with power than with her lovers, assured as to the future, voluntarily blinding herself to certain dark clouds which commenced to loom on the horizon, and wishing to enjoy her throne, she set to work heart and soul to govern her states, holding reviews at which she paraded on horseback in front of the troops, brow-beating her generals, retiring or appointing them according to her fancy, and displaying in everything a martial air. She even had a squadron of cavalry as a bodyguard.

But her ways, which resembled those of a Prussian corporal, seemed strange to the Florentines, who have ever preferred to cultivate the arts of peace to those of war. The Princess Elisa, however, who had posed at Paris as a lover and patron of literature, had an excellent opportunity here to testify her interest in the universities of Pisa and Florence, formerly so celebrated and which on her coming had already begun to decline, and continued to still more under her regime. But now that she had ascended a throne she did not appear to deem literature worthy to occupy her precious time; and politics, as so often happens, benefited at the expense of letters.

Clerical matters especially engaged her attention, and she wished to completely subdue the recalcitrant Italian priesthood.

"It is time," she wrote the Emperor, "that the temporal power should be kept within proper bounds and cease to swing the censer." She certainly will not be imposed upon. "Vain outcries may intimidate ordinary people, but the menaces of fanaticism have always been the accompaniment of weakness, and I shall not even bother your Majesty with the dangers with which it would like to force my submission to its will."[114]

Elisa must have tingled with pleasure to the roots of her hair when writing the Emperor these sonorous phrases by which she affirmed her power over the clergy, and which placed her in her own esteem above everybody. She was, besides, fully aware of her importance.

"I await your orders, sire, and whatever they may be I shall obey them with that firmness and prudence which shall always characterize my conduct." Again, she writes, "Sire, I have received your letter of the 17th May. My prudence and firmness have removed every obstacle. The national guard is submissive; the clergy remain in possession of the birth, death, and marriage certificates; I do not

expel either monks or nuns. Those of the same orders are united and I assign houses for the others. The drain of my treasury will in consequence be very considerable, but I have reduced fanaticism to silence, the people are contented, prejudices are respected, opposition is destroyed, and your orders are executed."

But, though she affected to despise the people whom she declared "contented," and who on the contrary were crushed with taxes and almost reduced to despair, she could not prevent herself from fearing them. This her letter, June 3, 1809, to the Emperor proves.

"The religious orders," she wrote, "are submissive, but I am very dissatisfied with the secular, clergy. The people are superstitious, tranquil, and cowardly. I have brought sixty carabineers here from Piombino to strengthen the palace guard, which was next to nothing. However, I am not in the least uneasy."[115]

But say what she might, she was afraid of the people whom she called cowardly, and who, in spite of her, refused to be contented. Of this there is clear proof in the same letter, from which it seems there was a conspiracy against her.

"The plan was to disorganize the whole administration; already the principal officials had resigned, the Secretary of State had dared to refuse to countersign the decrees of the prince, and the priests promised these fanatics the palm of martyrdom. Exile and prison should have sufficed to cool their fervor, but I informed your Majesty on the 29th May of their repentance and of the pardon I granted them. I was content with making sufficient examples."[116]

A few days later, on the 7th of June, she adds:—

"The archbishop has completely submitted. I have exacted from him a public profession of loyalty and the command, of which I send you a copy, has sufficed to calm the consciences and to overcome the resistance of the secular clergy."[117]

CHAPTER VI

As for Baciocchi, he continued as usual to find everything perfect. Under the Consulate, at the same time his wife changed her name from Marianne to Elisa, he had been obliged to relinquish his name of Paschal. It was good enough for a Marianne, they might have lain side by side in a lottery; but to cut a figure by the side of an Elisa it was necessary to have a less common name. Moreover, the name of Paschal was as ridiculous in Italy as that of Jocrisse[118] or Paillasse[119] in France. So after much hesitation his wife decided on Felix for him as being pretty and more suitable, whatever might be said to the contrary, to the name he had borne at the time of his marriage. For ought he not to be *happy*[120] as the husband of Elisa

As general commanding the 29th Military Division at Florence, Baciocchi was under the immediate supervision of his wife. He obeyed her in all she required and shut his eyes to the rest. The whims of his superior were no concern of his. To speak the truth, Prince Felix Baciocchi had very little to do. He had no anxiety in regard to the administration of the Government or of his military division. All that was his wife's business. He limited himself, idler that he was, to enjoy life *à la dolce far niente.*[121] From time to time he appended his signature to some document at his aide-de-camp's request; people also came to solicit his favor, as in France they addressed themselves to Josephine in order to obtain a boon from the Emperor. Baciocchi was easily approached, and it flattered him to be addressed.

"I will mention it to the Grand Duchess," he invariably replied: "I will recommend your affair to her."

For the rest, this husband of a queen was in a thoroughly false position. He felt that as brother-in-law of the puissant Emperor of the French abilities were expected of him that he did not possess, and that his Grand Eagle of the Legion of Honor[122] did not help him to play the least little eagle in life. He realized as well as his wife that she was the more gifted of the two; therefore not to risk seeing his high rank humiliated by his incapacity, which was no less great, he did nothing, thinking wisely that this was the best thing he could do.

He did not reside with his wife, which set a bad example, or at all events created a bad impression in Florence. But this arrangement accorded more freedom to both husband and wife. He lived in a charming house in the Via Pergola, and had, like his wife, his little court, which, like hers,

was almost exclusively composed of officers. One knows how loose morals were among all classes in society at this epoch. The court of Napoleon, which was their standard, had not a reputation for prudery; the army for its part had never aspired to such, and a lady chronicler of the times, Madame Ida Saint-Elme, still less so. She spoke thus of the court of Prince Felix Baciocchi:—

"Here there was still more liberty than at the official court of the Grand Duchess. There was a mixture of the military tone of the Empire and the light gallantry of another period; the war-like and jovial humor of the times made one excuse in some degree its license and suggestiveness of the Parc-aux-Cerfs."[123] [124]

If the Grand Duchess of Tuscany had her lovers, Prince Felix had his mistresses. This appears to have been part of the show, so to speak, and Elisa was most particular that her husband should represent her worthily in every respect. But she had small need to coach him on this point. He was kind and generous to his favorites and paid them like a prince. This pleased his wife, and as Elisa was so accustomed to command it was she herself, perhaps, who selected her husband's mistresses; for the understanding between them seems to have been too perfect for it to be otherwise. It was, as has been said, an ideal establishment. Besides, knowing that they could not live happily together unless they lived apart and ready to grant each other certain little mutual concessions, far removed from prejudices, they had ended by convincing themselves that honor, duty, morality, and the conventions were only suitable to ordinary mortals.

But as no sacrifice is too costly to good sovereigns where it concerns the welfare of their subjects, Elisa was frequently as careful of her reputation as she was careless of her honor. As an instance in point, every evening this model pair went together to the theater to exhibit to all Florence the touching spectacle of a happy family. Majestically seated in her box, the Grand Duchess of Tuscany received with dignity the delicate attentions of her august spouse; while their little daughter, the charming Napoleone Elisa,[125] sat between them and lent to their evening intimacy a touching something, difficult to define, which called forth feelings of sympathy and respect for a family so tenderly united.

The play over, the prince conducted the princess to her carriage, and having gallantly kissed her hand, wished her "*felicissima notte*," and retired. Elisa then returned to her palace and endeavored to procure for herself the good night her husband had so graciously wished her, while he, in his house in the Via Pergola, sought to pass a night not less agreeable than the one he had bespoken for his wife.

The Grand Duchess of Tuscany, in going each evening to the theater with her husband,[126] put in practice the second half of those convenient principles—if one can call them principles—which she had cynically formulated in a couple of lines to an indiscreet friend, “Live for yourself, follow your tastes and hide them, and do not invite the public to share your confidences.”[127]

She followed the first part of this philosophy of life conscientiously, as one will readily admit, but she did not know how to practice the concealment she advocated. The public were not blind to the fact that she often went on expeditions on horseback with the Baron Cerami, whose name to French ears, the Italian *c* being pronounced *ch,* has a very intimate significance that was quite piquant under the circumstances.[128] The baron was a very handsome man, brilliant, cultured, witty, attached to the prince, and even more so, it was reported, to the princess.

During the heat of summer the Grand Duchess established her general headquarters, or rather her court, at Pisa.

It has been seen how well Elisa and her husband got on together, which seems to prove yet once again that to live happily together nothing is wanting but a good understanding. The Grand Duchess also showed herself a very complacent sister to Napoleon, or at all events as regards his policy. In 1810, at the moment when Pope Pius VII. was about to be transferred to Fontainebleau,[129] there was a certain effervescence among the clergy of Florence a few ecclesiastics even openly displayed their displeasure. But Elisa, accustomed to the obedience and discipline she imposed on her troops and on her court, energetically muzzled the malcontents, and immediately had one of their leaders, the Canon Muzzi, deported to the Isle of Elba.[130] In reporting this to her powerful brother, on December 20, 1810, she said, “His great age prevented my showing greater severity.”

The clement princess added that she had taken measures to prevent and repress at need all manifestations of discontent, and that the Emperor could rely upon her absolutely.

Meanwhile, not knowing if she would always be able to count on the protection of the Emperor, she sought to remain on good terms with all the great dignitaries of the Empire. For one never knows what may happen, and persons less important than oneself often prove of use. Consequently she cultivated such, and in making them presents she studied their individual weaknesses. Remembering what an epicure Cambacérés was, she sent him blackbirds from Corsica and delicacies of every description.

On the other hand, like a well-advised sovereign, she had ideas of aggrandizement for her States. No one could foresee the future, she mused, but who could tell, what favorable circumstances might present themselves, which, instead of waiting for, it would be a wise policy to provoke. Corsica,[131] for instance, which lay just opposite Leghorn, could, without inconvenience, be joined to her crown.

Cherishing this idea, but revealing it to none, she sent from Lucca, in 1811, a magnificent high-altar[132] to the Cathedral of Ajaccio. It was to pave the way and bid in advance for the favor of her fellow countrymen whom she dreamed of making her subjects. People have been pleased to see in this gift made by the Grand Duchess of Tuscany to her native town the desire to prove that in her grandeur she did not forget her humble origin. But to consider it in this light is strangely to misunderstand the character of the princess. A disinterested sentiment would not take root in a nature so hard and selfish; ambition and egotism were her sole motives, and the gift to the Cathedral of Ajaccio was an investment from which she hoped one day to reap heavy interest. Events, however, caused the downfall of this little combination. For the times began to get out of joint, the nations were drained dry of blood and money, and the French Empire visibly declined.

The Grand Duchess Elisa, helpless to counteract the events which threatened to completely alter once again the map of Europe, could only await the coming evils. This she was doing with a resignation due rather to necessity than to inclination, when the disgrace of Fouché, who had incurred the Emperor's displeasure, brought that former Minister of Police to Florence. Appointed to replace General Junot, who had become insane, as Governor-General of the Illyrian Provinces,[133] he had been forced to retreat before the Austrian invasion, and gradually to abandon these possessions. Sent as Governor to Rome, the troubled state of affairs in the peninsula had prevented his reaching that city; he was forced to halt in Florence, and there, at the court of Elisa, he awaited the issue of events, participating in intrigues, of which he held the threads more or less entangled by a thousand different interests, unraveling or tangling them to suit his own interests and directing everything to his own advantage. All this, however, did not hinder him from posing to some as a person who had never acted save in the interests of his country.

In this critical state of affairs which affected everybody, the Grand Duchess of Tuscany had disbanded her theatrical *troupe* and sent her bodyguard of cavalry to the army; absorbed in affairs of state,

she had recourse to the ripe experience of M. Fouché, and sought, or perhaps at first only listened to, his advice. It was he who from this moment, so he affirms in his Memoirs, became her political pilot. She did not hide from him the misgivings she entertained as to the solidity of the edifice her brother had constructed. She said openly that the Emperor should have reflected before he persisted in a struggle, the result of which she foresaw only too clearly, and she added naively that she would not have believed it possible her brother would have forgotten he was not merely placing his own position in jeopardy, but likewise the establishments of the members of his family. As far as she was concerned, the misfortunes of her country and of her brother, from whom all her greatness proceeded, affected her infinitely less than the dread of being dispossessed of all that her brother had given her!

Fouché was too clever not to discover under these complaints the thoughts which were seething in the brain of the haughty and unscrupulous princess. He divined her fears, made her speak of them, saw how greatly she was attached to this power which had been the height of her ambition, and did not fail to remark the great grief with which she expected to see it finally escape from her grasp. So he set himself shamelessly to encourage her in this train of thought. He even took the liberty of blaming the Emperor, her brother, in her hearing. He said that at Dresden he had given him the most disinterested advice, having only in view his happiness and the welfare of France, adding that he had not concealed from him that he was staking his crown against all Europe in order to gain some barren victories, but that he would end by succumbing in the struggle. Nor did he hide from Elisa that the Emperor, blinded by an excessive pride, had not even honored him by taking his advice into consideration. It was this, possibly, which Fouché found it most difficult to pardon in Napoleon, for the wounds of self-love never heal. And now, were not these prophecies about to be fulfilled? France was invaded, the fall of the Emperor could be but a question of weeks, perchance of days, of hours.

Elisa permitted herself to admit all this. Her dignity no longer rebelled against hearing such statements made in her presence, nor did her heart rebel either when Fouché, throwing aside all disguise, dared accost her with these outrageous words:

"Madame, there is but one way to save ourselves; it is to finish the Emperor on the spot!"[134]

But Fouché knew well to whom he was speaking; it was not to the sister, but to the ambitious and unscrupulous sovereign. Alas! what perfidy was this family not capable of!

And in the midst of circumstances so mournful for France, the princess chose this time, above all

others, to be interested in frivolities! In a letter to her mother she asked for an account of the balls being given in Paris; as the following few lines, extracts from a letter which Madame Mère wrote her, under date of March 11, 1814, will testify:

"I regret not being in a position to satisfy your inquiries respecting the balls which the Emperor gave during the Carnival. I was not present. My health, in addition to my age, debarred me. Furthermore, the journals afford a fuller account than any I could give you.…"[135]

At this moment France had been invaded for two months and a half,[136] the whole Imperial edifice was crumbling away in the blood of her last defenders and in the somber glory of their last heroic efforts, while the Princess Elisa, who had always posed as a political character, but had never dreamt of being a patriot, asked for details of balls! … Critical situations make petty minds reel, just as they cause selfish hearts to faint.

The former Minister of Police continued to give Elisa perfidious advice. Moreover, from Florence he directed in a measure the policy of Murat,[137] insomuch that the Kingdom of Naples and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany marched side by side, but not in the path of honor and duty. Murat, desirous to extend the limits of his little kingdom that he might have a better frame for the greatness of his ambition, found the occasion favorable for beginning a campaign. It is in times of great crises that intriguers best manage their personal affairs. He took possession of Rome and sent troops into Tuscany under the command of the Neapolitan General Minutolo, to seize in his name the states of his sister-in-law. He even went so far as to name one of his officers, General Joseph Lecchi, as governor!

Elisa found this proceeding rather violent; she could not forgive Murat for despoiling her thus cavalierly of all she most valued in this world. As to the people of Tuscany, who, according to several historians, loved the Grand Duchess Elisa, they did not on this occasion show her any sign of their attachment. On the contrary, they hailed the Neapolitan troops with acclamations, and fraternized with them, while the younger portion of the population, rejoicing at the imminent fall of the Grand Duchess, presented themselves in crowds before the Prefecture. The Prefect had the reputation of being very strict in regard to the question of conscription; to each conscript who presented himself to offer a valid reason for exemption, he invariably replied without even investigating his claims, "Suitable for marching." Conscription was the burden which weighed most heavily on these people; a change of rulers, above all the downfall of the Imperial sway, made them hope for the suppression of

this imposition of blood. Hence these young men, whom the hope of escaping military service rendered witty, repaired to the Prefecture and wrote in large letters on the door of the official who was packing his trunks, “Suitable for marching.”

Distracted though she was by the terrible predicament in which she found herself, Elisa would, nevertheless, gladly have offered resistance, but how? She sought the advice of her friend Fouché. But he gave her to understand that in face of the general movement which was drawing her people towards the people of the other states of the Peninsula, she had nothing left to do but to retreat to Lucca or Leghorn.[138] She could only resign herself to Fate. Yet it was hard to leave her capital, the beautiful city of Florence, where it had been so sweet to reign! Like Horace,[139] she could say in her turn: “*Linquenda tellus et domus!*”[140] Like Mazarin,[141] given over by his physicians and contemplating with a tortured eye all the treasures to which he must bid an eternal farewell, she roamed through the galleries of the Pitti Palace and repeated in despair, “Alas! must I leave all this?”

However, at last, as she could not do otherwise, she determined to go, and departed for Lucca, derided by her populace and forgotten by her favorites. Particularly was she cut to the quick to see herself deserted by M. Cerami, which enabled her to prove the truth of the well-known fact that of those who pay court to sovereigns and likewise to women, be they sovereigns or not, it is invariably those who have obtained the most who forget the most quickly. The fall from power taught her an important lesson in philosophy, and possibly she learned to know men better when she ceased to rule them than when she was on a throne.

CHAPTER VII

While she was preparing for departure she sent her husband orders to prepare for the military evacuation of the country, and to lead out the army and to carry away as many supplies as possible from the arsenals and fortresses, in short, to save everything he could. Prince Felix Baciocchi obeyed this order as he was accustomed to obey all others. He shut himself up in the citadel of Florence, put the forts of the city in a state of defense, as well as that of Volterra, appointed as commanders the officers who inspired him with the most confidence, and awaited the moment of capitulation. This moment was not long delayed, and in his turn Prince Felix was reduced to the necessity of leaving Florence, accompanied, like his wife before him, by the ridicule of the populace.

It was remembered that he had changed his name of Paschal, ridiculous in Italy, to that of Felix, signifying "happy." His good subjects of Florence saw a chance to play upon the words Felix and Paschal, and the husband of the Grand Duchess, as he left the city, heard the street Arabs and roughs bellow into his ears, "When he was Felix we were unhappy, now he becomes again Paschal we shall be happy!"[142][143]

The fall of a sovereign sometimes gives birth to a complicated sentiment on the part of the people, even when they are responsible for the downfall, a sentiment which arises from generosity and is made up of regret and sympathy. This was not the case, however, in the present instance, and the double departure was enveloped in a cloud of ridicule.

Nevertheless, the Grand Duchess, as devoid of political understanding as she was of the moral sense, dreamed of ways by which she could come to terms with Murat, whose fortune now seemed to her more assured than that of Napoleon. Fouché, who had accompanied her in her flight, held more firmly than ever the various threads of intrigue. He was the rallying-point of all the treasons in Italy. Murat, Elisa, Eugene, all these political weathercocks received from him their orders, and executed them according to the audacity or prudence of their temperaments, only endeavoring, so to speak, to pull their own chestnuts out of the fire.

At Lucca, Fouché made known to the Grand Duchess that Murat had signed a treaty of alliance with Austria; he did not conceal from her that this power as well as England was very suspicious of the good faith of the King of Naples. The Italian people for their part possessed no confidence in this former Marshal of the Empire and brother-in-law of Napoleon. They accused him of intriguing with France, of deceiving the Italians. In the midst of all these coils, of these contrary interests and conjugal difficulties,

Murat, as the result of the base advice he had followed, fell ill of grief. His soul was not formed for treason; he had not the heart of his wife, and Caroline had the heart of a man. But Murat had no character; if he had possessed it he would never have yielded to the willful perfidy of his queen, never would he have played the traitor. He had the misfortune to be ruled by his wife, and like the majority of men who share this weakness, he did not fail to expiate his fault: he had lost his dignity, thanks to which he lost his honor while waiting to lose his life.

He determined to send his generals orders to treat with Fouché on the subject of the evacuation of Tuscany. On his side Fouché had received from the Emperor the necessary powers to treat regarding the evacuation of the same province by the French troops who still remained there. These were concentrated for the most part at Leghorn; there were also several battalions at Pisa, five leagues from Leghorn. A few skirmishes took place between these and the Neapolitan soldiery. At length a treaty was signed, in virtue of which the French troops were to abandon Tuscany, fall back on Genoa, and re-enter France.

On top of these side-acts, Lord Bentinck had disembarked at Leghorn at the head of a body of English troops. He informed the Grand Duchess Elisa that he did not recognize her authority, that in future Tuscany must obey the behests of England until her fate had been decided, and that pending that event it was he (Lord Bentinck) in whom all power was vested.

The English troops joined forces with those of the King of Naples, who had become the ally of Great Britain, and occupied the principal places in Tuscany. Elisa was therefore, to her shame, as a punishment possibly for having turned her back on her brother and for having vainly tried to make an alliance with Murat, who had despoiled her, not permitted by the English to retain Tuscany. She was forced to fly. But flight for her just now was exceptionally difficult. She was on the eve of confinement, as well as at the sunset of her glories, and could only journey by short, painful stages. Yet from every side alarming tidings poured in upon her, the Austrian troops approached.

At last one day the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, who had now become a very small personage, found herself in the pains of child-birth. Brought to bed in a wretched inn, she gave birth to a son, as Mademoiselle Avrillon, lady-in-waiting to the Empress Josephine, expressed it, “at a moment when she ceased to have need of an heir.”[144] She was arrested by the Austrians at Bologna and conducted under escort to Brunn, as a prisoner of war. She had to do her own packing in haste, under the very eyes of the Austrian officers and subalterns, who filled her chamber. For her the role of sovereign was

past, long past; she could only say to herself, "*E finita la comedia!*"[145]

From the beautiful dream in which she had lived so long she had indeed been rudely awakened.

Elisa had wished to establish herself at Rome, as the following letter shows, which she wrote to one of her friends, the Duc de X—, on April 15, 1814; but she never had the least intention of repairing to the Isle of Elba to be near her brother, as may be gathered from the same letter:

"Well, then, this frightful catastrophe has come at last. All is lost. I have made up my mind to depart for Naples. I will never reside on the Isle of Elba. I want to fix my abode in Rome, if the French Government finds no objections and if the Pope permits it.… Do your best for me with the Prince of Benevento;[146] we are proscribed, all the world unites to crush us!"[147]

But she was not allowed to repair either to Rome or Naples. Confined at Brunn, the ex-Princess of Piombino and Lucca, the ex-Grand Duchess of Tuscany, found that the air of that city did not agree with her. She asked permission to go and live in the country. But this was refused her. Later, in 1815, a few days before the departure of Napoleon from Elba, she wrote her sister-in-law, the Empress Marie-Louise,148 praying her to beg permission from her father, the Emperor Francis, to suffer her to return to France. Marie-Louise, in spite of her indifference to the family of her husband, only equaled by her indifference to her husband himself, obligingly transmitted this request to her father. He, however, would not consent, nor did he even trouble to reply to the request of her who not long since was the proud Grand Duchess of Tuscany.

As in prosperity she had changed her Christian name, in adversity she changed her surname. It was, moreover, a custom, if not a consolation, among crowned heads, or rather uncrowned ones. The ex-King Joseph became known as Comte de Survilliers; the ex-King Jerome, Comte de Montfort; the ex-King of Holland, Comte de Saint-Leu; the ex-Queen of Naples, a little latter [sic], became Comtesse de Lipona, the former pupil of Saint-Cyr took the name of Comtesse de Campignano.

After these rude trials of humiliation and disgrace, the Comtesse de Campignano tried in 1816 to make amends for the wrongs she had inflicted on Napoleon. She wrote him from Bologna, where she had been living since the month of September, 1814, that she wished to come and join him at Saint Helena[149] and afford him by her presence those consolations which might soften his lot. But this offer could never be realized.

The changes which so affected her family, especially those which more nearly struck home, perhaps also self-reproaches on more than one score, sapped her health. Her constitution, though robust, could not withstand adversity. After attempting flight, inspired chiefly by the desire to flee, so to speak, from herself by providing herself with activity and excitement,[150] she ended by contracting a nervous fever, which rapidly became serious, and from which she died on August 7th, 1820, at the Villa Vincentini, near Trieste, whither she had retired. She was forty-two years old. Near her, to close her eyes in death, were found her sister Caroline and her husband.

Poor Felix, or rather Paschal Baciocchi! With what good reason had his brother-in-law called him "*Ce bon et rebon Baciocchi!*" He seriously thought, this ideal husband, that because his wife was dead she had possessed all the virtues, and he desired to render her all the honors due to an exemplary conjugal fidelity.

"At San Petronio," says Mounier, "one of the chapels has been bought by that absurd Baciocchi, who has had it rebuilt and decorated at great expense in order to deposit there the ashes of his faithful wife. The inscription will be curious.

"The chapels of a church belong to the vestry,[151] who sell them to noble families. These cause them to be ornamented, enclosed by a railing, called by their name, and they thus become veritable private possessions. Formerly the trade was a thriving one, but it has become less flourishing nowadays. Although Baciocchi is known to be very rich, he was only forced to pay for his in San Petronio about 3,000 francs."[152]

If this was the price of a chapel, there was no reason why M. Baciocchi should have paid a higher price, and on that account he is scarcely to be blamed. But wherein the poor man is to be censured is that he failed to comprehend his duty was to make himself forgotten as quickly as possible—it would have been the easiest of tasks!—and not to address letter after letter, as he had the bad taste to do, to persons in power, especially to M. Pozzo di Borgo, the greatest enemy Napoleon ever had. Such behavior forces one to conclude that all the dignities with which he had been tricked out had caused him to forget his dignity as a man.

[1] SR: On June 24th of 1812, Napoleon invaded Russia with a huge army. The Russians refused to engage with him, retreating and burning crops behind them. When Napoleon and his troops finally reached Moscow, they found that it was deserted, and no food had been left behind. A month after the invasion began, Napoleon was forced to retreat with his starving, dejected troops. Harassed by the Russians, the retreating French lost 80% of its five hundred thousand men.
[2] SR: The island in the South Atlantic to which he was banished the second time.
[3] SR: Caroline Bonaparte's husband was Marshal of the Empire and held several other titles throughout his life, largely thanks to his relationship as brother-in-law to Napoleon. Murat was a firm Republican, and fought in the French Revolutionary War, as well as the 13 Vendémiaire (see note 25) and Bonaparte's foreign campaigns.
[4] SR: Napoleon's second wife.
[5] SR: Napoleon's younger sister, married to Joachim Murat (see note 3).
[6] SR: Jerome was Napoleon's youngest brother, who gained fame and kingship over the short-lived kingdom of Westphalia only through Napoleon's beneficence. Despite the position Jerome had attained from his brother, Jerome was always slow and reluctant to help in Napoleon's causes, and petitioned him mainly to ask for help with finances or to allow his wife to flee to Paris. All this in addition to the infidelity to Napoleon Trowbridge mentions above this note.
[7] SR: Jules Michelet, a French historian who lived from 1798-1874.
[8] SR: A member of the church of some high standing, such as a bishop or a priest.
[9] SR: A French philosopher who lived from 1626-1696. While her works were not appreciated during her lifetime, they became prestigious after her death, largely for the history and court gossip they contained, as well as the eloquent writing style. The story of the cherries is likely buried in her writings somewhere, but it is not widely referenced and so is difficult to find.
[10] SR: "Madame Letizia" refers to Maria Letizia Buonaparte, Napoleon's mother. Napoleon's mother was an Italian noblewoman of some small rank, smaller still when Corsica was claimed by the French.
[11] SR: Charles Louis Marboeuf was a powerful French military commander, standing in as interim commander after Chauvelin. Marboeuf was a the governor of Corsica for some time, and became a friend to the Bonaparte family. It was also through Marboeuf's influence that Napoleon was allowed to go to a military academy at Brienne-le-Château.
[12] SR: Outfit of clothing, household linens, etc. for a bride.
[13] SR: Conversion rates are tricky because the livre went out of usage in 1795, but this could convert to anything from 6,500-35,000 USD today.
[14] SR: Feasts, such as Christmas and Easter.
[15] OG: Th. Lavallée, *Histoire de la Maison Royale de Saint-Cyr.*
[16] OG: Ibid.
[17] OG: The frightful massacres in the prisons of Paris took place on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th of September, 1792.
[18] SR: Trugeut would have been around 40 at this time. Aside from the accomplishments Turquan writes of, Trugeut served in the American Revolutionary war and was made a knight of the Order of Saint Louis for his heroism.
[19] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[20] OG: La Revellière-Lépeaux, *Mémoires.*
[21] SR: Corsica's history is complicated. Genoa claimed ownership of the island, but the Corsicans were really under the leadership of a man independent from Genoese influence, Pasquale Paoli. Genoa, realizing that they could not rule Corsica themselves, secretly sold the island to France. When the islanders realized what had happened, the supporters of Paoli rose up in rebellion, causing the environment in which Letizia Bonaparte would need to flee to safety.
[22] SR: As mentioned previously, Letizia was married to a Bonaparte. She herself was married at the age of 13, although her husband was 17, not middle-aged..
[23] SR: Calvi is a small town at the north-west edge of Corsica.
[24] SR: Tuolon is on the south-east edge of France.

[25] SR: The 13 Vendémiaire was a battle fought between French Revolutionaries and Royalists on the 5th of October in 1795. Napoleon played a crucial role in this battle, and it was one of his first steps towards the fame and glory he would eventually know.
[26] OG: General Philippe de Segur, *Histoire et Mémoires.*
[27] SR: An informal circle of intellectuals, especially during the Renaissance, usually led by fashionable women.
[28] OG: General de Ricard, *Autour des Bonapartes.*
[29] OG: Comte de Survilliers, *Mémoires*.
[30] SR: Baciocchi was 35 when he married Elisa. He had been promoted to captain in the French army a few years prior.
[31] SR: Baise-yeux means something like sex eyes.
[32] SR: A somewhat untranslatable term. Means something like "intellectual lightweight," or "hail-fellow-well-met."
[33] SR: Bonacite means goodness, but it's not found in Italian and generally not in French dictionaries either.
[34] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[35] SR: Once later referred to as Madame Junot, (due to her full name, Laure Junot, Duchess of Abrantès) she wrote much about Napoleon, and while they may have been friends earlier in life, as they grew older they garnered a mutual dislike.
[36] OG: Duchesse d'Abrantes, *Mémoires.*
[37] SR: A misnomer. Josephine was previously married to Alexandre de Beauharnais, at which time she went by the name of Rose (her first name) de Beauharnais. After Alexandre was guillotined and Josephine married Napoleon, she was called Josephine Bonaparte, even though her name was not actually Josephine.
[38] OG: Prince de Metternich, *Mémoires.*
[39] SR: A European of mixed race, born and raised in a French colony. In Josephine's case, she was born in the Caribbean.
[40] OG: She did not even know how to sign her name.
[41] OG: *Mémoires de Napoleon Bonaparte.*
[42] SR: Mère simply means "mother" in French. The accent on this instance is backwards though.
[43] SR: Joseph Bonaparte.
[44] OG: Baron Larrey, *Madame Mère.*
[45] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[46] SR: Counsel of Five Hundred. One of ten legislative councils under the rule of the Director.
[47] SR: A mediocre mind.
[48] OG: Madame Émile de Girardin.
[49] OG: Duchesse d'Abrantes, *Histoire des Salons de Paris.*
[50] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[51] OG: Duchesse d'Abrantes, *Mémoires.*
[52] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[53] SR: Celestial Mechanics. A series of volumes written about the movements of celestial bodies, written by Pierre-Simon Laplace, published between 1798 and 1825.
[54] SR: The first Prime Minister of France and later, one of Napoleon's chief diplomats.
[55] SR: Latin translates to "and others".
[56] SR: A madrigal is a medieval short lyrical poem in a strict poetic form.
[57] OG: Duchesse d'Abrantes, *Histoire des Salons de Paris.*
[58] SR: During Napoleon's absence in Italy, Josephine began an affair with Hippolyte Charles. And while Napoleon did love Josephine greatly, he was infuriated when he heard of her infidelity, and while on campaign to Egypt in 1798, he began an affair of his own with Pauline Fourès, a married woman.
[59] SR: The 18 Brumaire is a date in the French Republican calendar. On this particular year, it would have translated to November 9th on the Gregorian Calendar. The 18 Brumaire is also the name given the military coup led by Napoleon to overthrow the French Republic and end the French Revolution. The end result of the coup was that the Directory was replaced with the French Consulate and Napoleon became First Consul of France.
[60] SR: A palace next to the Seine, normally the residence of the French royalty.
[61] SR: French general, who was good friends with Joseph Bonaparte, and an important member of the new French consulate.
[62] OG: It was Chaptal who replaced Lucien as Minister of the Interior.
[63] OG: Stanislas Girardin, *journal et Souvenirs*.

[64] OG: Miot de Melito, *Mémoires*.
[65] SR: The writer being Claude Ignace Brugière Barante, a French writer from 1745-1814.
[66] SR: Jacques Delille was a contemporary French poet.
[67] OG: Baron de Barante, *Souvenirs.*
[68] OG: Ibid.
[69] OG: Duchesse d'Abrantès, *Histoire des Salons de Paris.*
[70] OG: Ibid., *Mémoires*.
[71] SR: Egeria was a nymph in Roman mythology who was said to have advised the king Numa Pompilius.
[72] OG: Duchesse d'Abrantès, *Mémoires.*
[73] SR: Self-identified.
[74] SR: A woman with intellectual interests.
[75] SR: A Frenchwoman who hosted a salon. Considered a leading figure in the French Enlightenment.
[76] SR: Another salon hostess whose influence drew many great minds together. She was heralded as a great beauty as well as an intellectual, and she turned down marriage to Prince Augustus of Prussia.
[77] SR: "The Genius of Christianity."
[78] SR: A suburb, just to the west of Paris.
[79] SR: A play by Voltaire, set during the time of the Spanish invasion of Lima.
[80] SR: The kind of clothing that would have been worn by the tribes that the Spanish invaders encountered would likely have been quite modest, especially for females. It would have been more likely for a man to be wearing just a loincloth, but indigenous people in Peru are traditionally well-covered. However, in France at this time, it was considered immodest to show even an ankle, and Napoleon was concerned with getting women to wear more clothing instead of less.
[81] OG: Bourrienne, *Mémoires*.
[82] OG: Duchesse d'Abrantès, *Mémoires.*
[83] SR: Louise Bénédicte de Bourbon was a member of French royalty in the 17 and 1800s. Another salon hostess, she was known to be witty and pretty, but with a short temper.
[84] SR: Also known as Louis the Second, the great Condé was the Duchesse du Maine's grandfather. He was a French general, instrumental in many French victories, such as the Battle of Rocroi. Condé was forced to marry a girl of 13, and although she bore him three children, he did not love her. He accused her of adultery, locked her away, and pursued several other women illicitly.
[85] SR: The legislative body.
[86] OG: Madame de Remusat, *Mémoires*.
[87] SR: Dragoons are mounted infantry troops. The name is possibly derived from the "dragon," a type of firearm used by these troops.
[88] SR: Jalap is a tuber that acts as a laxative.
[89] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[90] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[91] SR: A marquise, she tired of the society of the French court, and so gathered around her a group of her own making.
[92] SR: Meaning "kiss" and "eyes" respectively. A play on Elisa's surname, Baciocchi.
[93] OG: Meneval, *Mémoires pour servir a l'Hisoire de Napoleon.*
[94] OG: *Souvenirs et Correspondance de Madame Récamier*
[95] SR: Minister of Police under the Directory, Consulate, and Empire.
[96] OG: This was a favorite expression used by her on all occasions.
[97] SR: Count Bernadotte, Joseph Napoleon's brother-in-law, who later became the king of Sweden, thanks to Napoleon's influence. Despite Napoleon's assistance, Bernadotte later fought against Napoleon in the anti-Napoleonic wars.
[98] OG: *Souvenirs et Correspondance de Madame Récamier*
[99] OG: Meneval, *Mémoires pour servir a l'Histoire de Napoleon.*
[100] OG: Madame de Remusat, *Mémoires*.
[101] SR: A private newspaper that served to record and notify the people of official appointments in France.
[102] SR: A literal crown, which legend says is made partly out of a nail from Jesus's cross. This crown signifies the ruler of Italy.
[103] SR: A small area on the west coast of Italy.

[104] OG: Fouché, *Mémoires*.
[105] SR: This area includes the Piombino area, but is much larger.
[106] OG: Napoleone Elisa, born June 3, 1805.
[107] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[108] SR: Calling.
[109] OG: *Souvenirs de guerre du Général Baron Pouget.*
[110] SR: A viceroy is an official who governs as representative of a king.
[111] SR: Semiramis was the mythological wife of the Assyrian king Ninus. Legend says that after Ninus died from an arrow wound, she ruled as queen-regent for 42 years, conquering large areas of Asia during that time.
[112] OG: "Lucca is a small town which did not then afford, and probably does not afford to-day, anything of interest out of the common beyond the imprint it keeps of the Imperial regime, as sand retains footprints. The Princess Elisa, otherwise called Mme. Baciocchi, had modeled it after Saint-Cloud or Compiègne belonging to her brother, and such as she left it such we found it in 1816, and I have found it again much the same since 1840."—*Souvenirs du feu Duc de Broglie*.
[113] SR: Entourage.
[114] OG: *Archives Nationales*
[115] OG: *Archives Nationales*
[116] OG: *Archives Nationales*
[117] OG: Ibid.
[118] SR: Hen-pecked husband.
[119] SR: Straw mattress.
[120] SR: Felix means happy in Latin.
[121] SR: The sweetness of idleness.
[122] SR: The Grand Eagle of the Legion of Honour is one of the highest military honors that can be given a soldier.
[123] OG: Madame Ida Saint-Elme, *Memoires*.
[124] SR: Literal translation is park of stags, however, this likely refers to the house at which King Louis XV kept his secret mistresses.
[125] OG: This little princess was married later on to a wealthy Italian nobleman, the Count Camerata. She was thoroughly masculine in character, imagination, and by nature. She strongly resembled Napoleon. In 1830 she formed a plot to remove the Duc de Reichstadt [SR: Napoleon's son, also known as L'Aiglon, meaning "The Eaglet"] from Vienna. Arrived in the Austrian capital, she installed herself in the Hotel du Cygne, found means to place a letter in the hands of Napoleon's son, and even was able to speak with him, but her attempt was without result.
[126] OG: She maintained at great cost a French *troupe* at Florence, and this company played alternately with the Italian *troupe*.
[127] OG: *Mémoires d'une contemporaine.*
[128] SR: "*Cher ami*" meaning "beloved".
[129] SR: Pius VII and Napoleon had a complicated and rather unfriendly relationship. Napoleon captured and exiled Pius, keeping him exiled from Rome until Pius signed a treaty at Fontainebleau. In return, Pius excommunicated Napoleon, an action which affected the French hold on such Catholic overseas possessions as the island of Réunion in the Indian Ocean.
[130] SR: Ironically, the island that Napoleon would finally be exiled to.
[131] SR: An island, Corsica was the childhood home of the Bonapartes. As is stated in the text, Corsica is only 50 miles off the coast of Italy. It was, until shortly before Napoleon's birth, an Italian possession.
[132] SR: According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, "The high altar is … the chief altar in a church, and … it is raised on an elevated plane in the sanctuary, where it may be seen simultaneously by all the faithful in the body of the church. It symbolizes Christ, and it serves at the same time as the banquet table on which He offers Himself through the hands of the priest."
[133] SR: The Illyrian Provinces were a large area of land around the area of Croatia, Slovenia, and Austria that Napoleon had conquered. The Governor-General was the ruler of the provinces under Napoleon.
[134] OG: Rovigo, *Mémoires*.
[135] OG: Letter of Madame Mère to Elisa, given by the Empress Eugenie to M. le Baron Larrey and reproduced in his *Madame Mère*.

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[136] SR: The War of the Sixth Coalition was a fight between many of the nations Napoleon had fought or conquered and the French empire. It began in 1813, but at this point in history, Napoleon's side was losing badly enough that the invading forces had entered France.
[137] SR: Likely referring to the alliance Murat made with the English and Russian Allies to save his position as King of Naples when Napoleon was being removed from his throne.
[138] SR: A city located on the west coast of Italy.
[139] SR: A Roman poet and soldier who, on being pardoned for his role in the losing side of the war, returned to find that his house had been confiscated and he had nothing left.
[140] SR: Translates into something like "leaving soil and home."
[141] SR: Mazarin was the mayor of the palace for Louis XIV. Mazarin lived in the Louvre palace through the last years of his life, and was greatly upset when it caught fire and many of the paintings were burned.
[142] OG: "*Quando eri felice, eravamo pasquali; adesso the sei ritornato pasquale, saramo felici*."
[143] SR: Paschal, or Pasquale, means relating the Passover lamb. The idea here being that when Pascal was happy, the commoners had to be submissive as lambs to the slaughter, and now that Felix is the lamb again, the people are happy.
[144] OG: This son died at Rome in consequence of a fall from a horse in 1833. The Princess Elisa had another son, who died in 1830 at the age of twenty. The only son of her daughter, Napoleone Elisa, who, as stated in a previous note, married Count Camerata, committed suicide in 1853.
[145] SR: Meaning, "The farce is over!" This is the traditional ending to an Italian *commedia dell'arte* production, pronounced by one of the characters. See, for example, the ending of Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*.
[146] SR: The Prince of Benevento at this time was the same Talleyrand referred to as Napoleon's diplomat heretofore.
[147] OG: Jung, *Lucien Bonaparte et ses Mémoires.*
[148] SR: Marie-Louise was a child bride of the Holy Roman Empire. Napoleon married her soly for political reasons, in the hope that the Pope would support him in his upcoming battle with the Russians and English.
[149] SR: Saint Helena was the island Napoleon got banished to the 2nd time, located in the middle of the Atlantic.
[150] OG: She had wandered from Bologna to Trieste, from Trieste to the Château de Haimbourg, and from there to the Château de Briinn.--Jung, *Lucien et ses Mémoires.*
[151] SR: A committee formed from elected members of the church. They are in charge of the economies of the parish.
[152] OG: Extracts from the *Manuscrits inédits de Mourner,* published by M. le Comte d'Herisson in the *Cabinet Noir.*