

MARIE. I don't know; I miss those shepherds in the mountains, the sound of the Danube rolling by,
 POLIGNAC. (*derision in this*) You're so Austrian.

(*beat*)

MARIE. (*stung*) Is that a bad thing?

(*eek*)

POLIGNAC. I'm not saying it's a bad // thing.

MARIE. (*mustering imperiousness*) I AM Austrian.

(*long uncomfortable pause*)

LAMBALLE. (*buffering*) And look how flawless your French is.

(*beat*)

MARIE. It's all in the gullet
 right here
 back of the throat.

(*She rolls an "R".*)

See?

(*POLIGNAC imitates her. MARIE corrects her. POLIGNAC tries once more. Then LAMBALLE gives it a go*)

(*They all do it.*)

[STOP]

(*They look at each other - see the ridiculousness of it, they burst out laughing.*)

(*Pageantry, flourish; a masked ball, a quadrille*)

2.

[TITLE: Versailles]

START

(*The place is a mess.*)

(*There's lots of watches and clock parts everywhere.*)

(*LOUIS is in pajamas, wig unkempt, playing with a clock.*)

(*MARIE being dressed, it is incredibly processional.*)

MARIE. Clocks undone, watch springs everywhere You're like a little boy //

LOUIS. Well I never had a childhood //

MARIE. (Don't whine) //

LOUIS. I like to take things apart and see how they work //

MARIE. That can be dangerous -

LOUIS. Hobbies are fun //

MARIE. And it's a lot of broken clocks Can't you clean this?

LOUIS. No.

MARIE. This place is a mess.

LOUIS. You make messes too you know //

MARIE. (*examining the swatch of fabric*)

But I hate any mess that isn't mine, you know that What time is it (ooh I like these little striations look) //

LOUIS. Eight.

MARIE. What //

LOUIS. EIGHT //

MARIE. (*looks at a clock*) It says four.

LOUIS. I'll fix that.

MARIE. Has it ever occurred to you to run France?

LOUIS. Why do you have so much contempt for me?

MARIE. It's your lassitude.

LOUIS. Do you know what DAY it is?

MARIE. Thursday?

LOUIS. It's my birthday.

MARIE. You expect me to remember that?

LOUIS. Yes!

MARIE. I have *fifteen* brothers and sisters, I can hardly remember their *names* //

LOUIS. I'm your *husband* //

MARIE. We're great friends you and I
Let's not mar it with facts (By the way I need some money) //

LOUIS. Marie: this heedless // extravagance

MARIE. Its not heedless *Look* at me //

LOUIS. What:

MARIE. What do you mean *what* - This dress?!

LOUIS. What's wrong with that dress?

MARIE. Are you *kidding*?

Moths wouldn't eat it.

LOUIS. Why do you go to the trouble of speaking to me,
just send me an invoice.

MARIE. In care of: //

LOUIS. (*hurt*) You're so *mean*.

MARIE. Did you sleep well //

LOUIS. (*tantrum*) NO!

MARIE. You're cranky, go play with your clocks (Too much // rouge)

LOUIS. (*Meanie*) //

MARIE. And your wig's uncombed You should // fix it

LOUIS. And it wouldn't hurt to wear a corset or stays //

MARIE. "Stays" //

LOUIS. That's what girls wear! //

MARIE. You're so quotidian.

(*beat*)

LOUIS. (*returns to his clocks, quiet*) Where are you going anyway?

MARIE. See some // friends.

(*The clocks start gonging simultaneously over her response; it's a bit chaotic as he tries to silence the various clocks.*)

LOUIS. "WHAT?"

MARIE. "I'M" //

LOUIS. ONE SECOND.

MARIE. (*over gongs*)

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?

LOUIS. IT'S AN EXPERIMENT AND DON'T SWEAR.

(*She dismisses her retinue.*)

MARIE. YOU HAVE TO GROW UP.

LOUIS. WHAT?

(*He stops the gonging.*)

MARIE. I SAID YOU HAVE TO -

(*beat*)

MARIE. (*quiet, serious*) You have to grow up.

(*beat; tone shifts*)

LOUIS. It was just an experiment.

I was // seeing if

MARIE. My mother bore sixteen children

I've bore none.

(*beat*)

LOUIS. (*adolescent shrug*) So.

MARIE. So when are you going to give me a child.

LOUIS. (*averting his gaze*)

Are you in competition with your mother?

MARIE. I am in competition with everyone.

LOUIS. Very funny -

MARIE. Don't deflect.

(*beat*)

LOUIS. You know about (*whispers:*) *the problem*.

MARIE. The people are clamoring for an heir //

LOUIS. Well I don't know what I should do.

MARIE. You spoke to the doctor.

LOUIS. SHHH //
 MARIE. Well you did!
 LOUIS. Maybe it'll just resolve itself!
 MARIE. Its been seven *years*. There's a lot of animus towards me They're saying I'm barren.
 LOUIS. I don't *want* to get an operation.
 MARIE. Its very minor.
 LOUIS. (*tiny, sad*) It's my penis.
 MARIE. Will you stop acting like a baby // I'm
 LOUIS. *You* get an operation See how you like it //
 MARIE. (*to herself, exiting*) Oh my god Forget it.
 LOUIS. I'M ORDERING YOU NOT TO SWEAR
 (*She exits.*)
 LOUIS. (*hurt, deflated*) Where are you going?

END

START

3.

MARIE—FERSEN

(*Late night promenade, Bois de Boulogne*)

(*We hear fireworks in the distance, and see, sporadically, the glare.*)

FERSEN. (*takes her fan*) What's this?

MARIE. (*takes it back*) Fragonard.

(*She flicks it open.*)

FERSEN. Ooh la la very fancy.

MARIE. Well they do call me *the butterfly queen*.

(*She fans herself, does a little spin, "flutters", trips, laughs at herself, FERSEN catches her. It's suddenly tense.*)

FERSEN. Watch out little butterfly or I'll catch you in my nets.

MARIE. What'll you do.

FERSEN. Pin you to the wall;

MARIE. Then I'll scream -

FERSEN. Butterflies can't scream They just beat their little impaled wings //

MARIE. And then they get pressed in a book and forgotten That's a sad end.

FERSEN. That's life.

MARIE. (*disentangling herself from him*) Nice epaulets.

FERSEN. How're things at home?

MARIE. Louis thinks you're ignoring him.

FERSEN. Doesn't he know we're having an affair.

MARIE. We're not.

(*pause*)

FERSEN. Aren't we?

(*beat*)

MARIE. No.