

JOSEPH. Don't be frightened.

(He mouths "I'm taking him to the doctor" to MARIE, she gets all excited. JOSEPH and LOUIS exit.)

LOUIS. *(on exiting)* Have you seen my clocks? //

JOSEPH. Do you foxhunt? //

LOUIS. I've got watchsprings.

5.

START

(They are surveying the grounds of L'hameau, dressed as shepherdesses.)

(Fake pastoralism)

(Herds of sheep grazing; there should be something ersatz about it.)

(MARIE's enormous spires of hair are now shorn, cut tight in "l'enfant" hairstyle, as is POLIGNAC's.)

MARIE. Tilly, my page, she's so sweet, she says I walk better than any other woman //

POLIGNAC. I love Tilly! //

MARIE. And just as you'd offer a regular person a chair you'd offer me a throne!

POLIGNAC. Awww //

MARIE. Her parents were serfs //

POLIGNAC. *(There's still something of that in her)*

MARIE. She pays compliments very naturally //

POLIGNAC. I love nature!

MARIE. I told you!

(points)

See the cracks in the wood that's very authentic right? The first time it looked very fake I had them do it over; and we installed this fabulous farming couple from Touraine, they do all the cheese, the dairy //

POLIGNAC. It's so cozy //

MARIE. I know I love the simplicity of it, this is all I really need //

POLIGNAC. Is that a windmill? //

MARIE. *(pouring water into bowls)* All those mirrors, those gilded things, I'm done!

POLIGNAC. What's that? //

MARIE. Sevres porcelain.

POLIGNAC. I'm supposed to drink from this?

MARIE. It's more peasantry.

(They sip.)

MARIE. I used my own breasts as a mold, it adds to the fun I thought.

(POLIGNAC chokes.)

POLIGNAC. *(bright)* Oh!

MARIE. Helen of Troy did that; she's my inspiration!

POLIGNAC. I love the Odyssey.

(beat)

MARIE. *(clueless)* What's that?

POLIGNAC. By Homer?

(pause)

MARIE. *(brazen ignorance)* Who?

(double take)

POLIGNAC. Homer?

(MARIE looks at her with a blank expression.)

[STOP]

POLIGNAC. *(stymied)* I love your brooch //

MARIE. I'm doing bows now, simplicity, clean lines, nothing too ornate, metals – no big jewels – organic flowing forms //

POLIGNAC. White organdy //

MARIE. *Exactement* //

POLIGNAC. *(inhales)* And it smells lovely //

MARIE. I have the goats and sheep perfumed, I don't like rustic smells //

POLIGNAC. That's clever //

MARIE. Do you want to play roulette later I feel like gambling.

POLIGNAC. I don't have much money with me //

MARIE. *(rapt)* You SEE: THIS is what I love, you're so SIMPLE. I just want an uncomplicated life – I'm wholesome! – I feel so misunderstood.

(She feeds a goat.)

POLIGNAC. You really are.

END

(beat)

MARIE. *(as she feeds goat)* We can just use my money.

POLIGNAC. What.

MARIE. For roulette.

POLIGNAC. Marie I couldn't take any more from you.

MARIE. *Arrete!*

POLIGNAC. But you've already been so generous.

MARIE. That's what friends are for! You know I got Therese a job in the palace Do you want one?

POLIGNAC. Like what?

MARIE. *(coy)* Governess?

POLIGNAC. Are you *pregnant?*

MARIE. Well: Louis had an operation.

POLIGNAC. Why? Is he alright?

MARIE. I shouldn't be telling you this but he had *(stage whisper)* *phimosis.*

POLIGNAC. What's *phimosis?*

MARIE. This rare disease where the orifice of the prepuce contracts when the man gets an erection and then he can't retract it.

POLIGNAC. Hmm.

MARIE. So everyone's blaming me and saying I'm barren, but it's not my fault at all (you don't mind my speaking candidly do you duchess) he just had surgery so I hope that works – "hello Isabelle" //

POLIGNAC. (Who's that) //

MARIE. (Some peasant girl we installed) //

POLIGNAC. (Sweet) //