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Love and Death

By Woody Allen

How I got into this predicament,
I'll never know.
Absolutely incredible.
To be executed for a crime
I never committed.
Of course,
isn't all mankind in the same boat?
Isn't all mankind ultimately executed
for a crime it never committed?
The difference is
that all men go eventually,
but I go six o'clock tomorrow morning.
I was supposed to go at five o'clock,
but I have a smart lawyer. Got leniency.
I've a tremendous yearning
to be young again.
A boy. Such happy memories
at our summerhouse.
Uncle Nikolai with his wonderful laugh.
God, he was repulsive.
There was Grandpa and Grandma,
who had been married for 50 years
and still felt as deeply about one another
as the day they met.
And my own father,
a handsome and generous man.
In addition to our summer and winter
estate, he owned a valuable piece of land.
True, it was a small piece. But he carried
it with him wherever he went.
Dimitri Petrovich!
I would like to buy your land.
This land is not for sale.
Some day, I hope to build on it.
He was an idiot. But I loved him.
Then there was mother, who made
the most delicious blintzes in the world.
Of course, there was Old Gregor,
and his son, Young Gregor.
Young Gregor's son
was older than Old Gregor.
Nobody could figure out
how that happened.
My two brothers, Ivan and Mikhail,

used to play amusing little games.
But I had a completely different
concept of myself as a child.
My first experience with death
was with one of our serfs, Old Nehamkin.
Old Nehamkin was on the roof, putting up
a lightning rod, when a storm broke out.
After he failed to show up for dinner,
Mother went to look for him.
What is it, Old Nehamkin?
You're not looking well.
Are you OK? You feel all right?
We laid Old Nehamkin to rest,
and that night
I had a strange and vivid dream.
I knew that after that dream I would
not grow up to be an ordinary man.
I spoke often with Father Nikolai,
who was always dressed in black
with a black beard.
For years
I thought he was an Italian widow.
Every action has a cause. The universe
exists, therefore it has a cause.
It follows God created the universe,
therefore He exists.
And yet Spinoza didn't believe
in the Holy Trinity.
- Spinoza was a Jew.
- What's a Jew?
You never saw a Jew?
Here. I have some sketches.
- There are Jews.
- No kidding.
- They all have these horns?
- No, this is the Russian Jew.
The German Jew has these stripes.
I recall my first mystical vision.
I was in the woods, thinking about Christ.
If He was a carpenter, I wondered
what He'd charge for bookshelves?
Suddenly...
- Who are you?
- Death.

What happens after we die?
Is there a hell? Is there a God?
Do we live again?
All right. Let me ask one key question.
- Are there girls?
- You're an interesting young man.
We'll meet again.
- Don't bother.
- It's no bother.
I grew to full manhood.
Actually, fiive foot six,
which is technically not full manhood
in Russia, but you can own property.
Over 5'3", you can own land. Under 5'3",
you need permission from the Tsar.
We were three healthy men.
My brother Ivan.
My brother Mikhail.
And myself.
Finally, there was my cousin Sonja.
In addition to being the most beautiful
woman I had ever seen,
she was one of the few people
I could have deep conversations with.
Boris, look at this leaf. Isn't it perfect?
And this one? Look.
Oh, yeah. I definitely think that
this is the best of all possible worlds.
- It's certainly the most expensive.
- Isn't nature incredible?
To me, nature is... I dunno,
spiders and bugs and,
big fish eating little fish.
And plants eating plants
and animals eating...
It's like an enormous restaurant.
Yes, but if God created it,
it has to be beautiful,
even if His plan's not apparent
to us at the moment.
Sonja, what if there is no God?
Boris Dimitrovitch, are you joking?
What if we're just
a bunch of absurd people

who are running around
with no rhyme or reason?
But if there is no God,
then life has no meaning.
Why go on living?
Why not just commit suicide?
Well, let's not get hysterical.
I could be wrong.
I'd hate to blow my brains out,
then see they found something.
Boris. Let me show you
how absurd your position is.
Let's say there is no God, and each man
is free to do exactly as he chooses.
What prevents you
from murdering somebody?
- Murder's immoral.
- Immorality is subjective.
Yes, but subjectivity is objective.
Not in a rational scheme of perception.
Perception is irrational.
It implies imminence.
But judgment of any system
of phenomena exists
in any rational, metaphysical or
epistemological contradiction
to an abstracted empirical concept
such as being, or to be, or to occur
in the thing itself, or of the thing itself.
Yeah, I've said that many times.
Boris, we must believe in God.
If I could just see a miracle,
just one miracle.
If I could see a burning bush,
or the seas part, or...
Or my Uncle Sasha pick up a check.
We should go back downstairs.
By now
the last golden streaks of the sunset
are vanishing behind the western hills.
Soon the dark blanket of night
shall settle over us all.
Hey, you've been going
to finishing school.

Hey, are you dating any Russians
I should know about?
Well, Minskov has proposed.
And he's very sweet and wealthy.
But the age difference is too great.
I'm 28 and he's 81 .
- Oh, that is big.
- When I'm 50, he'll be 103.
That's a bad age for a man. They slow up.
And Voskovec
has made his intentions clear.
But he deals in herring,
and he always smells of it.
He even bought me
herring-scented cologne.
That's probably
why the cat follows you around.
Love is everything, Boris.
I wanna meet some man
and scale the heights of passion.
Some man who embodies
the three great aspects of love.
Intellectual, spiritual and sensual.
Well, there's not too many of us
around, but it can be done.
- So many women settle cheaply.
- I know. Poor things.
- They marry for money.
- Money! Well, money.
But I feel as though
my life would be wasted
if I didn't love deeply
with a man whose mind I respected,
whose spirituality equalled mine,
and who had the same lustful appetite
for sensual passion that drives me insane.
You're an incredibly complex woman.
I guess you could say
I'm half saint, half whore.
Here's hoping I get the half that eats.
- Boris.
- Yes?
I have a confession to make.
Ever since you and I were little children,

I've been in love with your brother Ivan.
It's only nat...

Ivan? You're kidding! He can barely write
his name in the ground with a stick.

He has true animal magnetism.

All that talk about some perfect love
and you're hot for Ivan?

- He kissed me.

- Any place I should know?

- It warmed the cockles of my heart.

- Great. Nothing like hot cockles.

I think he's going to propose to me.

But he's a gambler and a drinker,
with a Neanderthal mentality.

I mean, I love him like a brother.

Just not one of mine.

Do you hear that commotion?

What's going on downstairs?

Have you heard the news?

Napoleon has invaded Austria.

- Why? Is he out of Courvoisier?

- A chance to taste the glories of battle.

Check with me when it's over...

- No, Boris. You're going to fight.

- You're gonna have your head examined.

- We leave the day after tomorrow.

- Fellas, I'm a pacifist.

- I don't believe in war.

- He doesn't believe in war.

Napoleon, he believes in war.

What are you going to do when
the French soldiers rape your sister?

- I don't have one.

- That's no answer.

- They won't rape Ivan. They'd throw up.

- Don't disgrace me in front of my friends.

What good is war? We kill Frenchmen,
they kill Russians, then it's Easter.

Boris, you're talking about Mother Russia.

She's not my mother. My mother wouldn't

let her youngest get shrapnel in his gums.

- Get away from me.

- I can't believe what I'm seeing.

- He has a yellow streak down his back.

- No, it runs across.
- Boris, you're a coward.
- Yes, but a militant coward.
Boris. Medals... We'll get medals.
Take it easy, Ivan.
You've got to cut down on your raw meat.
He'll go and he'll fight.
And I hope they will put him
in the front lines.
Thanks a lot, Mum. My mother, folks.
This is crazy. I can't shoot a gun.
I was meant to write poetry.
Sonja, I'm not the army type.
I slept with the light on till I was 30.
I can't shower with other men.
Friends. My friends.
On the eve of this glorious occasion,
I have an announcement to make.
Because we go into battle, perhaps
never to see our loved ones again,
I wish to announce
that tomorrow I intend to marry.
I'm going to take as my bride
a woman I have grown up with.
Anna Ivanova.
Ivan.
I'm sorry. I should have told you.
I also have an announcement to make.
Tomorrow, I too get married.
I have been proposed to
and have accepted the hand of
Sergei Ivanovich Minskov.
Yes... I mean Leonid Voskovec,
the herring merchant.
You! Get out here!
You're the worst soldier I ever seen.
- You ignoramus!
- Ignoramus, sir.
- You want a dishonourable discharge?
- Yes, sir. Or a furlough.
Goddamn you!
You love Russia, don't you?
- Yessir.
- Louder!

- You like it here?
- Yessir!
- You want to make a career in the army?
- Well, let's not get carried away.

You can clean the mess hall
and the latrine!

Yessir. How will I tell the difference?

OK.

One, two! One, two! One, two!

Three is next, if you're having any trouble.

Naturally, the war affects
the herring industry.

The ports are blockaded.

Fresh shipments of the herring
become more difficult to obtain.

And, of course, when something
hurts herring, it hurts me.

What people don't understand
is that there are hundreds
of types of herring,
each with its own interesting history.

Sonja. Are you OK?

Oh, yes.

But I've talked long enough.

Why don't you two play, as I have got
some important business to attend to?

A capital idea.

Ready? And a one and a two...

And...

- You stopped.

- What would you think
if I told you you were one of the most
beautiful women I have ever seen?

I'd think what a mad fool he is.

And what would you say

if I suddenly put my arms around you?

I'd think what a mad,
impetuous fool he is.

And what would you think if I kissed you?

I'd think what a mad,
impetuous, wonderful fool he is.

- Don't!

- I must!

- We just ate.

- Your skin, it is so beautiful.
Yes, I know. It covers my whole body.
I must have you.
No, not on the piano. It's a rented piano.
Darling, my darling, my...
Sonja!
Sonja, did you see a jar of wine sauce?
- Come to my quarters tomorrow at three.
- I can't.
- Please!
- It's immoral. What time?
- Who is to say what is moral?
- Morality is subjective.
Subjectivity is objective.
Moral notions imply attributes
to substances
which exist only in relational duality.
Not as an essential extension
of ontological existence.
Can we not talk about sex so much?
- I'm terribly sorry.
- You'd better go.
- Sonja, please.
- No, I mean it.
Men...
Next week, we leave for the front.
The object will be to kill
as many Frenchmen as possible.
Naturally, they are going to try
and kill as many Russians as possible.
If we kill more Frenchmen, we win.
If they kill more Russians, they win.
What do we win?
What do we win, Private?
Imagine your loved ones
conquered by Napoleon
and forced to live under French rule.
Do you want them to eat
that rich food and those heavy sauces?
No.
Do you want them to have
souffl every meal and croissant?
No.
Men, since you are all getting a three-day

furlough before going into battle,
we would like to show you
this little hygiene play.
Goodbye. I hope you had a good time.
I did. I had a good time.
What's this sore on my lip?
I'd better see the doctor.
Doc, I have this sore on my lip.
- You have a social disease, my friend.
- Oh, my God.
If you do not treat it, you will go blind.
Or insane!
Well, men. That is the end of the play.
Have a good time on your furlough,
but look after yourselves!
- Well, what did you think of the play?
- It was weak. I was never interested.
Although the doctor
was played with gusto.
The girl had a delightful cameo role.
A satire of contemporary mores, a spoof
aimed more at the heart than the head.
I'm planning to spend
the next three days in a brothel.
- Can't you come with me?
- No. I went to a brothel once in my life.
I got hiccups. It was over like that.
And there's someone I must see
in Saint Petersburg.
Well, have fun.
I think the Magic Flute
is Mozart's greatest opera.
It's a hell of an opera, isn't it?
Do they sell popcorn?
We're so delighted you decided
to spend your furlough with us.
You were always our favourite nephew.
Even though you are
an incredible coward.
Thank you so much.
Any news of cousin Sonja?
Only that she and Voskovec
are unhappy and she takes lovers.
- She takes uppers?

- Lovers.

Oh, lovers.

Hey. Who is that?

That's the Countess Alexandrovna.

One of the most enticing women
in Saint Petersburg.

Ample bosoms, yes?

I'd say ample for a regiment.

She's recently widowed.

They say her husband, the Count,
died in her arms
trying to satisfy

her prodigious sexual desires.

No kidding! Died smiling, I bet.

Who's the character with her
with the wry moustache?

That's Anton Ivanovich Lebedokov,
her current lover.

Although the way she's staring at you...

I could work something out with him.

I'd let him warm her up.

I could come in and finish her.

You must be careful of Anton Ivanovich.

He has a furious temper.

- Really?

- He has killed several men in duels.

All in a jealous rage over the Countess.

Glad you mentioned it.

Think I'll watch the opera.

Ah, there is something about Mozart!

Well, I think you're probably
responding to his music.

Couldn't you be careful?

I believe...

I believe that the lobby of...

I believe that the lobby of the St Pete...

Opera House

is one of the most beautiful in Europe.

Who is this attractive
and mysterious soldier?

Boris Grushenko.

- Sorry. I goosed that lady.

- He has quite a sensitive face.

That's the part of me that shows.

Grushenko. Isn't he the young coward
all Saint Petersburg is talking about?

- Not so young. I'm 35.

- The one so afraid for his own safety,
he won't defend his country?

He is in a bad mood.

Don't you like your seats?

You must visit me for tea.

I'm sure we'd have a lot to talk about.

OK. I'll bring the tea bags.

We could run a check
on your erogenous zones.

- What about the dybbuk?

- Why do you always taunt me in public?

If you so much as
come near the Countess,
I'll see that you never see daylight again.

If a man said that to me,
I'd break his neck!

- I am a man.

- Well, I mean a much shorter man.

Boris! Boris Dimitrovitch!

Sonja!

Look at you.

You look so handsome in your uniform.

I got a perfect build for clothes.

I'm a 28 dwarf.

And you, Sonja, you look more beautiful
standing here than you do in person.

- Oh, Boris, I'm so unhappy.

- I wish you weren't.

Voskovec and I quarrel frequently.

- I've become a scandal.

- Poor Sonja.

I've been visiting Seretsky in his room.

Why? What's in his room?

And before Seretsky, Alexei.

And before Alexei, Alegorian.

- And before Alegorian, Asimov.

- OK!

Wait! I'm still on the A's.

- How many lovers do you have?

- In the midtown area?

- Oh, Sonja.

- Boris, my life is ruined. Over.
I can't stand Voskovec.
His mentality has reduced all the beauty
of the world to a small pickled fish.
Sonja, you need somebody
to take you away from Voskovec.
Someone who loves you. Someone who's
always loved you and cared for you.
How is your brother Ivan?
- Ivan's all right.
- Yes? Ivan is well?
Ivan's a tiger. He did his basic training
in two weeks. Became a major.
- Does he ever speak of me?
- Sonja, he's busy.
Well, he must!
He must speak of me sometimes.
Take it easy, will you?
This is army property.
He... Once he was sick... He was delirious.
He called your name out.
Really? Then there's hope.
Look. Tomorrow, my regiment pulls out.
We're going to the front.
We're outnumbered by the French.
It's unlikely that any of us will come back.
- Exactly what did he say about me?
- Sonja!
Now, where did you say you were going?
Oh, yes, the war. Well...
Dress warmly, Boris,
and have a nice time.
The idea is not to panic and run,
then they shoot you in the back.
I don't want to be trampled by a horse.
And you, Boris?
I wouldn't mind.
I don't even want to fight.
It's no different living
under the Tsar or Napoleon.
They're both crooks. The Tsar's taller.
If you don't like Napoleon
and you don't like the Tsar,
who do you think should run the country?

- Do you really wanna know? The serfs.

- Oh, the serfs.

Only they know how to do things.

A fence needs putting up,

it's always the serfs.

He wants the serfs to run the country.

Why not the criminal element?

Or the Jews?

Some Jews are smart. Though I hear their

women don't practise sex after marriage.

- Are you married, Boris?

- Me? No.

- You got a sweetheart?

- No. I'm in love with a girl. She's married.

She's in love with someone and he's

married. It's a real healthy situation.

Hey, look, Boris. Look.

- What have you got there?

- I got a lock of my wife's hair.

A lock of her hair.

Jeez, she's probably running around bald.

Don't drop it. Have you got

a lock of your sweetheart's hair?

No. She's married.

But I got a lock of her husband's hair.

Boy, this army cooking'll

get you every time.

There's Visinksy. He was from my village.

- He was the village idiot.

- Yeah, what did you do? Place?

Oh, God is testing us.

If he's gonna test us,

why doesn't he give us a written?

Wow! The battle looks completely

different in the middle of it

than it does

to the generals up on the hill.

Hey, get your red-hots.

- You got anything to drink?

- The guy with the beer's coming.

You got something smaller than that?

I just started.

We started the battle with 12,000 men.

When it was over, we had 14 survivors.

We got a message from the Tsar
saying "Keep up the good work."

That night, as I was burying bodies,
I had another mystical experience.

Mercifully, God was on our side.

It could have gone a lot worse
if he wasn't. It might have rained.

Grushenko!

- Vladimir Maximovitch. You're alive.

- No, I'm dead. Look at this hole.

- Oh, does it hurt?

- I feel nothing.

You don't look so bad for a guy
who's dead. I think it agrees with you.

- Listen, do me a favour.

- Anything.

This engagement ring, I was gonna
give it to my girlfriend. A surprise.

- You want me to give it to her?

- No, what's the point?

Take it back to the jeweller's in Smolensk.

Vladimir Petroshnik.

Tell him I'm dead and get a refund.

- OK. What did you give him for this?

- 1600 roubles.

- For this you gave him 1600 roubles?

- This is a diamond with two baguettes...

This is insane!

I could have gotten you this ring for 1200.

- Never that ring. Never.

- The exact same ring.

Anyway. Listen, take the deposit.

- Go to Kiev.

- Right.

- Give it to a woman, Natasha Petrovna.

- Right. OK.

Get a receipt.

Make sure you get a receipt.

- Why do you need that? You're dead.

- Tax purposes.

Oh! Good thinking.

- What happened?

- He was cleaning his pistol. It went off.

- The bullet has lodged in his heart.

- Is it serious?
With proper medical care,
he could last another ten minutes.
Why were you cleaning your pistol?
I was going to fight a duel
to defend your honour.
A Turkish cavalry officer
cast aspersions on it.
He said you were sleeping around.
I knew he was lying, that you were pure.
Yes, well...
Leonid, I know I could have been
a better wife to you.
Kinder. I could have made love
with you more often.
- Or once, even.
- Once would have been nice.
You were a kind and loving husband.
Generous and always considerate.
What's he got? About eight minutes?
I think I'm slow. He's got about three.
Swimming out to the open sea
like the great wild herring.
I realise this must be
a great blow to you, Sonja.
But you must not allow yourself
to be consumed with grief.
The dead pass on,
and life is for the living.
I guess you're right.
Where do you wanna eat?
- Let's go to Rykoffs.
- No, no, no.
- Why?
- I feel like meat, not a cheese sandwich.
It's not good for your health.
There's a tavern at the edge of the square
makes a sausage that's wonderful.
Meanwhile, the war continued.
My regiment had been wiped out and
I found myself lost behind enemy lines.
I panicked, and hid where I could.
Then I fainted.
When I came to, I realised

I had made a terrible mistake.
As fate would have it, I landed
on a group of French generals,
causing their immediate surrender,
and making me a hero.
My brother Ivan was not so lucky.
He was a fatality of war.
He had been bayoneted to death
by a Polish conscientious objector.
You're praying for Ivan?
Yes. Your husband.
I loved him, as you know.
I wanted you
to have some of his possessions.
How kind.
I kept his sword, and gold watch.
But, here,
I'm giving you his moustache.
I'll cherish it.
Also,
some string.
Ivan saved string.
I know.
It was one of the reasons why I loved him.
I understand that.
I loved him for his string, too.
Anything else for me?
I thought we should divide his letters.
Do you want
the vowels or the consonants?
His vowels.
You keep the consonants.
Life is unbearable.
- So we meet again.
- Countess Alexandrovna.
I wish there was a way to thank you
for what you've done for Russia.
- I may be able to think of something.
- Maybe we could meet in my room later.
As you wish. How's five minutes?
Well. What have we here?
- Still dating laughing boy, huh?
- Back from the war, I see.
I'd have stayed longer,

but they ran out of medals.

I understand

your heroism was quite inadvertent.

You should have

such inadvertent heroism.

- Are you still talking to this strutting ass?

- Careful. It's a trick question.

Fetch my carriage, Lebedokov.

I'll join you momentarily.

Nice seeing you again, Quasimodo.

- My room at midnight?

- Perfect. Will you be there, too?

- Naturally.

- Until midnight, then.

Midnight.

- Make it a quarter to twelve.

- Midnight.

- Midnight.

- Boris, you hardly touched your blini!

Yes, well... I've been sick, you know...

Come in!

How do you like it?

It's all right.

I prefer something sexy, but...

Would you like some wine?

Something to put you in the mood.

Oh, I've been in the mood

since the late 1700s.

You're disgusting, but I love you.

Well, my disgustingness

is my best feature.

It must be lonely at the front.

How long has it been

since you've made love to a woman?

What's today? Monday, Tuesday...

- Two years.

- Two years. You do remember how?

Well, if you start me, it'll all come back.

Remember that?

Yes. That was just like kissing, right?

You're the greatest lover I've ever had.

Well, I practise a lot when I'm alone.

- Shall we say pistols at dawn?

- We can say it. What does it mean?

You have insulted the Countess' honour.
- Why? I let her finish first.
- Her seconds will call on you.
- Seconds? I never gave her seconds.
- My seconds will call on your seconds.
My seconds will be out.
Have 'em call on my thirds.
If my thirds are out, go to my fourths.
He's serious!
You must meet him on the field of honour.
I'm not gonna duel with him.
He's a marksman and a killer.
- Your honour is at stake!
- Hey, what is this? Slap Boris Day?
You are a war hero. Surely a duel with
Anton Lebedokov is nothing to fear?
Look, I just don't wanna
waste a good bullet.
The kid's rash. I'll drop by later,
give him a chance to apologise.
If he doesn't, I'll move to Finland.
Guess who.
Oh, I'd know those hands anywhere.
It's Old Nehamkin.
No. It's...
- Boris!
- Yes. How are you?
- I brought you a present.
- What?
You know those earrings
you always wanted? The long ones?
Thank you, cousin Boris.
Twice removed. By tomorrow morning,
I may be removed completely.
What is it? You look so worried.
Sonja, are you scared of dying?
Scared is the wrong word.
I'm frightened of it.
It's an interesting distinction.
If only God would give me some sign.
If he would just speak to me once.
Anything. One sentence. Two words.
If he would just cough.
Of course there's a God.

We're made in his image.
You think I was made in God's image?
You think he wears glasses?
- Not with those frames.
- Nothingness.
Non-existence.
Black emptiness.
- What did you say?
- Oh, I was just planning my future.
Why are you so preoccupied with death?
Sit down with me for a second.
Sonja, tomorrow morning I'm gonna
fight a duel with Anton Lebedokov.
He's much better than I am at it
and I'll probably be killed.
In case I don't see you again,
I wanted to say that I love you.
- Boris!
- I've loved you ever since we were kids.
I was heartbroken when you loved Ivan.
Why didn't you say something?
- Would it have mattered?
- Oh, of course not, darling.
If, by some miracle, I'm not killed
tomorrow, would you marry me?
What do you think the odds are?
To die before the harvest...
The crops, the grains.
Fields of rippling wheat.
Wheat. All there is in life is wheat.
Sonja, here's your chance to do
something kind for a dying boy.
But I don't really love Boris. I mean,
I love him, but I'm not in love with him.
Oh, wheat! Lots of wheat! Fields of wheat.
A tremendous amount of wheat!
And yet, he loves me.
And he would make a devoted husband.
Not too exciting, but devoted. We'd have
a family. Maybe we could rent one.
I could learn to love him.
Me, Boris and six rented children.
Or would I feel trapped?
Suffocated? Can't breathe?

Open a window!
No, not that one! The one in the bathroom.
Yellow wheat. Red wheat.
Wheat with feathers. Cream of wheat.
Poor boy, duelling with Anton Lebedokov.
By tomorrow, my beloved cousin
Boris will look like a Swiss cheese.
Promise him anything,
make him happy for a night.
Oh! Or would I feel trapped?
Suffocated? My youth gone?
Living with a Swiss cheese
and rented children.
Of course I'll marry you, Boris.
It would be an honour for me.
This Anton Lebedokov,
he is a good shot, isn't he?
- I'm afraid so.
- Well,
since this may be
your last night on earth,
let's go back to my room and make love.
Nice idea. I'll bring the soy sauce.
At last. You're late, Grushenko.
We thought you weren't coming.
- Well, I overslept.
- Can you be so relaxed and confident?
I hate to shoot anybody
before my morning tea.
I get a lot of bad mail from the serfs.
I implore both of you,
come back to your senses.
It can still be called off, by mutual
consent, with no loss of honour.
Since you put it that way,
maybe I will hop back into bed.
We'll do it now and to the death.
Oh, no! I can't do anything to the death.
Doctor's orders.
I have an ulcer condition.
Dying is one of the worst things for it.
Begin.
You have been challenged. Choose.
Sure.

- All right, I'll take these.

- Just one.

Oh, he gets one! That was silly.

Starting back to back, on my signal,
you will walk ten paces, turn and fire.

- Is that clear?

- Of course.

Of course.

Good luck. And God be with you both.

Are you listening?

One, two,

three, four,

five, six,

seven, eight,

nine, ten.

Does this come out from dry-cleaning?

- You must shoot.

- No, no, I don't wanna shoot.

You must. It's the law.

Well, if it's the law,
then I'll shoot in the air.

There. I've fulfilled my obligation.

Boris Dimitrovitch.

I've learnt a great lesson here today.

Me too. Never shoot up in the air
when you're standing under it.

You could have killed me. And you didn't.

How can I ever repay you?

You can start by getting off my toe.

Oh, I beg your pardon.

Boris Dimitrovitch, from this day on,

I will lead a new life.

I will modify my views.

I will preach goodness,
perhaps join the church.

I will lead a righteous life.

Devote myself, as I did in my childhood,
to my singing.

He's got a great voice, hasn't he?

I should have shot him.

And so, Sonja and I married.

I now pronounce you man and wife.

I'm so happy. Look at the kid.

She's so happy, she's speechless.

He missed. He missed... He missed.
I know you're worried whether
you'll be stimulating enough for me.
Whether it's possible to live up to
the chores and obligations of married life.
It's gonna be a cinch, I promise.
I have no bad habits at all.
I grant that I have a few eccentricities.
I won't eat any food that begins
with the letter F. Like chicken.
Boris, I just don't love you.
- Oh, Sonja.
- I love you. But I'm not in love with you.
Sonja, do you even know
what love means?
There are many
different kinds of love, Boris.
There's love between
a man and a woman.
Love between a mother and a son.
Two women. Let's not forget my favourite.
- And the love I've always dreamed of.
- Yeah?
The love between
two extraordinary individuals.
- Sonja.
- Oh, don't, Boris. Please.
Sex without love is an empty experience.
Yes, but as empty experiences go,
it's one of the best.
At fiirst, things were
a little tense between us.
But aftera while, she relaxed.
Don't. Not here.
Soon, Sonja got more used to me.
Sometimes, she actually had fun.
Like the time she baked her fiirst souffl.
Money was scarce, and Sonja learned
to make wonderful dishes out of snow.
- Sweetheart, it looks a little rare to me.
- I baked it for an hour and a half.
Did you? Cos it looks...
What's for dessert?
- A surprise, Boris.

- Yes? What?
- A nice big bowl of sleet!
- Oh, sleet! My favourite! That's wonderful.
Evenings, we played music together.
And as time passed, I won her heart.
Oh, Boris. I've never been so happy
in my entire life.
I love you, Boris, in a deeper way
than I ever thought was possible.
Really?
I wanna have children with you.
- What kind?
- Little children.
Of course.
The big ones are mentally slower.
- I wanna have three children.
- One of each.
Oh, Boris.
I'm actually happy.
Well, I hate to say I told you so, but
some men have it and some men don't.
Fortunately, I have so much of it.
Those next months
were the happiest time of my life.
Then one day, at the height
of my sense of wellbeing,
I suddenly,
and for no apparent reason,
was seized with an urge
to commit suicide.
You're healthy, you have a beautiful wife,
your work is going well.
I know, but something's missing.
- What?
- I feel a void at the centre of my being.
- What kind of void?
- Well, an empty void.
An empty void?
I felt the full void a month ago,
but it was something I ate.
Maybe what you have
is a sickness of the soul.
- Look, there's Death.
- What? Who?

Death!

He's got Krapotkin, the wine merchant.

- Really?

- Yeah, and a woman.

- Ooh, it's not Mrs Krapotkin.

- You're kidding.

No. I always knew Krapotkin
was diddling somebody else.

- Where are you taking Krapotkin?

- Away! For ever!

Listen, if you run into my wife,
tell her I'm with you!

Goodbye, Krapotkin.

If you get a chance, write.

Father Andre,

holiest of holies, aged and wise,
you are the most wrinkled man
in the entire country.

Get off my beard, you little jerk.

Rise, my child. Rise.

- I'm standing.

- My eyesight is poor.

Everyone says you're senile with age,
but you're the only one that can help me.

I don't think you're senile.

Where did you say the fish was caught?

- What fish?

- Didn't you say something about fish?

Father, Boris is trying to commit suicide.

Last week he contemplated killing
himself by inhaling next to an Armenian.

Tell Boris this.

I have lived many years
and, after many trials and tribulations,
I have come to the conclusion
that the best thing is...

Yes?

..blonde, 12-year-old girls.

Father!

Two of them, whenever possible.

Father, I counted on you.

I forgive you. I forgive you.

Thank you, Your Grubbiness.

As I dangled at the rope's end,

I was suddenly seized
with an urge to live.
All I could think of was Sonja.
I wanted to hold her close to me,
weep tears on her shoulder,
and engage in oral sex.
It was then that I made
the decision to live,
to live and become a great poet.
I should have been
a pair of ragged claws
scuttling across the floors
of silent seas.
Too sentimental.
That winter
Sonja and I had a wonderful time.
We found a new friend,
Berdykov, the village idiot.
Berdykov would sit smiling for days
and stroke a little piece of velvet.
Sonja would make him happy
by feeding him cookies.
We looked forward to the spring,
when we could have a child of our own.
Little did we know...
War! Napoleon
has invaded Russia! It's war!
Oh, what about all our plans?
We were gonna be parents this year!
There's gonna be a slight change.
Instead, we're gonna be refugees.
- That's terrible!
- We have to take everything and flee.
I'm very good at that. I was the men's
freestyle fleeing champion for two years.
We have to burn the food so the French
don't get it. But it's tough to light borscht.
- Boris, I have an idea.
- What?
Let's assassinate Napoleon.
Yeah. Interesting.
Do you want to start knitting dinner?
- I'm serious.
- What do you mean?

I mean, let's you and I kill Napoleon.
You been drinking from
the glass we use for the village idiot?
- It's the answer to our problems.
- It's not the answer. It's an answer.
And it's the wrong answer.
The correct answer is flee. F-L-E-A. Flee.
- The French occupy Moscow. He's there.
- Sonja!
Two innocent-looking types like us
could get in and shoot him.
We'd never get near him,
and if we did, we'd miss.
He's a tough target. He's very small.
Boris, it's our chance
to perform a truly heroic act.
Since when is murder a heroic act?
Violence is justified
in the service of mankind.
- Who said that?
- Attila the Hun.
You're quoting a Hun to me?
Don't you know
that murder carries with it
a moral imperative that transcends
any notion of inherent universal free will?
That is incredibly jejune.
- That's jejune?
- Jejune!
You have the temerity to say that
I'm talking to you out of jejunosity?
I am one of the most june people
in all of the Russias.
I have Ivan's old pistol.
Sonja!
Political assassination doesn't work.
Violence leads to violence. He who
lives by the sword dies by the sword.
Well, I'm out of clichés now.
- Are you suggesting passive resistance?
- No, I'm suggesting active fleeing.
- You can't run away all your life.
- I know, but murder.
The most foul of all crimes.

And not abstract murder like shooting
an unknown enemy on the battlefield,
but standing in a closed room
with a live human being
and pulling the trigger, face to face.
And a famous human being, a successful
one, one who earns more than I do.
My God, you figure Napoleon has gotta
be good for 10,000 francs a week.
That's minimum. That's without tips
or extras. Nothing like that.
And me, what am I? He's a great man.
He thinks like the superman
and I'm just a worm,
an insect, some kind of crawling,
disgusting, creeping little vermin.
- You know, you can stop me.
- I will when I disagree.
Sonja. Who are we to kill somebody?
Boris, for the first time in my life
I feel free. Weightless.
I have an exhilarating feeling
of human freedom.
It's called the guillotine.
Oh, look, Boris.
The soft golden dusk is
already transmogrifying itself
into the blue star-sprinkled night.
Careful, cos that gun may be loaded.
Several days later
we set out for Moscow.
We took Berdykov with us partway.
He was on his way to Minsk.
There was a village idiots' convention in
Minsk. Berdykov was planning to attend.
Village idiots from all over Russia
were meeting there.
We drove through
small villages and tiny hamlets.
We had no great plan, but when we
stopped at an inn, fate provided one.
Pardon me. Could you tell me
who those people are behind that screen?
That's Don Francisco of Spain

and his sister.

They're en route to meet Napoleon.

- Don Francisco, I presume.

- Do you know me, seor?

Oh, let's just say

your name is legend in these parts.

- It is?

- Well, perhaps not legend,

but it never fails to get a big laugh.

And you must be the Don's sister,

the noted Spanish countess and mieskeit.

Who are you?

Just a humble servant

who wishes to buy His Excellency a drink.

I would be honoured.

Waiter, a bottle of your best red wine,

please, and two straws.

Two straws.

Word has it

the Don is en route to visit Napoleon.

Word travels fast.

Not as fast as good news.

No news is good news.

Here today, gone tomorrow.

You can lead a horse to water,

but you can't make him drink.

- Your turn.

- We would invite you to join us,

but the difference in social rank and

wealth, it makes it silly.

Oh, yes, I threw this on.

It's a knockdown.

You guys know Napoleon, or what?

Hardly.

A joke, Your Nothingness?

We're friends with his brother,

who arranges the affairs of Spain,

but this is our first meeting

with the great emperor.

It's all I wanted to know.

- Don Francisco?

- Pardon me?

I'm having trouble adjusting my belt.

You think you could come over here

and hold my bosom for awhile?

Of course, seorita.

No, no, no, it's not what I had in mind.

It should have more cream

between the crust and no raisins.

- But at our last meeting you said raisins.

- No!

If this pastry is to bear my name,

it must be richer! More cream.

- Yes, but is there time?

- Very little.

My spies tell me

that my illustrious British enemy

is working on a new meat recipe

which he plans to call Beef Wellington.

It will never get off the ground.

We must develop the Napoleon

before he develops Beef Wellington.

The future of Europe

hangs in the balance.

Yes, Your Highness.

We must see you, Your Highness.

We believe there is a plot

to take your life.

Vraiment?

So we've made up an obscure private

from the ranks to look like you. Look.

How do you do, Your Highness?

- He looks like me?

- You're seeing him without his rug.

- Come.

- Just let me get this on, Your Highness.

And now I take your place.

I will teach you to walk like me.

I have a great walk.

With the emperor out of the way,

all that remains is to kill Don Francisco.

That will destroy His Highness'

stupid dreams of a treaty with Spain.

Then I'll sail to Austria,

and form an alliance with the crown.

Not the king, just the crown.

They call me mad,

but one day,

when the history of France is written,
they will mark my name well.

Sidney Applebaum.

We're here to see the emperor.

Who is calling?

- Who? Oh, that's droll!

- Droll, yes.

He's not familiar with the list of
the hundred most important Spaniards.

Yes.

It is only Don Francisco and his sister.

Yes, the Donessa.

We have an appointment with Napoleon.

Napoleon Bonaparte.

The noted international tyrant.

- You are Don Francisco and his sister?

- Oh, for sure.

- We have had a long... a hot journey.

- A hot journey.

- Our throats are parched.

- They're parched.

- We seek succour. Succour.

- Succour!

Yes. Is Succour here by any chance?

I never knew your name, madam.

The boys usually just call me Juanita.

The emperor appreciates
magnificent women.

- He'll be much taken with you.

- Oh, good! I wore my flats.

We are, of course, all most anxious
to hear your proposal for a treaty.

Good. I've given it a lot of thought
and I've come up with all the little details.

If I can just think of the main points,
we got something!

Let's leave business,

you've had a wearing journey.

- We should say hello to the emperor.

- Shorts gets touchy if we bypass him.

Later. First, you'll be wined and dined
in a manner befitting Spanish nobility.

Oh, wonderful! But go easy on

the champagne. The Donessa has gout.

Well, if you'll proceed,
your needs will be attended to.

Thank you.

While you're here with your sister,
should you desire a French love dream
to be sent to your room,
it will be arranged.

Good. Maybe I'll have two
to keep the symmetry perfect.

- I prefer two myself.

- I prefer three, but it's hard to get one.

Is this room big enough,
or would you prefer a suite?

- Boris, I'm scared.

- You? I'm growing a beak and feathers.

- What are we gonna do?

- I say we get outta here now.

I'm not leaving here
until we shoot Napoleon. Here.

Oh, I see. Thanks. I'm the hit man.

Remember, you can't take any chances.

Now, make sure the barrel of the gun
is pressed against his head or his chest.

And don't pull the trigger, Boris.

Squeeze it.

Where did you go to finishing school?

On a pirate ship?

Let's just make sure
our plans are straight.

OK. You flirt with him,

bring him back here after dinner,

I'll lull him into a state of satisfaction
and I'll shoot him.

"I'll shoot him."

Can you believe I'm talking like this?

Yes. Spain is quite warm this time of year.

Barcelona is warmer than Madrid,

but, then, the people are so different,
the Barcelonians and the Madridniks.

Are all the ladies in Spain

as beautiful as you are, madam?

Well, not all. You gotta have some beasts.

Oh, General.

Do excuse me, madam.

Take it easy.

You're making a fool of yourself.

- Hey, this is good champagne.

- Are you gonna drink another case?

I'll be fine, all I need is a few solids.

A few solids? You should drink a blotter.

Oh, I believe I had the pleasure
of meeting your sister once.

- My sister? Which one?

- I thought you only had one.

One? Oh, no, no.

Actually, well, I have a half-sister.

Well, no, not exactly half. It's two-fifths.

Ladies and gentlemen,

His Imperial Highness,

the Emperor Napoleon.

- So you are Don Francisco?

- Yes. I have regards from your brother.

Says you went away, you don't write.

He never hears from you.

You took his razor,

you never returned it.

- This is an honour for me.

- It's a greater honour for me.

- No, a greater honour for me.

- No, a greater honour for me.

- No, a greater honour for me.

- Well, perhaps it is a greater for you.

- You must be Don Francisco's sister.

- You must be Don Francisco's sister.

- No, you must be Don Francisco's sister.

- No, you must be Don Francisco's sister.

- No, it's a greater honour for me.

- Our guests have a sense of humour.

- She's a great kidder.

- No, you're a great kidder.

No, you're Don Francisco's sister.

- Shall we dine?

- Oh, can we eat first?

Your sister and His Highness

seem to be getting along quite well.

Do you find me attractive as a man?

Yes. I think that's your best bet.

How much of your feelings for me

are because I rule half of Europe?
Oh, I'd say half my feelings. It evens out.
Will you be more difficult
to conquer than Russia?
Well, I weigh less.
- I'll go to your room after dinner.
- Good. I'll go to yours.
Come in.
Sonja, I've been thinking
about this. It's murder.
If everybody did this,
it'd be a world full of murderers.
- What would that do to property values?
- I know.
If everybody went to
the same restaurant one evening
to eat blintzes, there'd be chaos.
But they don't.
I tell her murder. She tells me blintzes.
Hey, you said yourself
there is no right or wrong.
- It's what you choose.
- That's right,
and I choose danger.
- Oh, really?
- No, but it sounded great tonight.
Oh, Boris.
If only we could be children again.
Yeah, I know. Preferably French children.
Do you know the only truly happy person
I know is Berdykov, the village idiot?
It's easier to be happy
if your only concern
is figuring out how much saliva to dribble.
- Kiss me.
- Which one do you want?
- Give me a number eight.
- That's two fours. That's an easy one.
Coming!
- Are you alone?
- Of course.
- I thought I heard voices.
- I was praying.
- I heard two voices.

- Oh, well, I do both parts.
Champagne! From France.
I see you brought the whole kit.
- To your eyes.
- To the bridge of your nose.
My lust knows no bounds.
Shall we... to the bed?
Shall we what to the bed?
Forgive my haste.
We have always heard
that Spanish blood is the hottest.
- I had mine cooled for the summer.
- You may set the pace.
Good. Why don't we just
sit awhile and build slowly?
You don't want to peak too early.
You'll be gone before midnight.
- You are a temptress.
- Oh, please, Excellency.
- Call me Napoleon.
- Good. You can call me Napoleon, too.
I've never met a woman like you.
I could rest my head on your shoulder
like this for ever.
Yes, it sounds like it'd be fun,
except for the grease mark.
His Excellency.
- What's that?
- Oh, just a breeze.
A breeze with mice.
Mice, what's the difference?
If I had a woman like you
instead of my wife,
I would conquer all of Europe.
- What's that?
- What? Oh, that.
I think that was the old closet door
slamming shut.
One can't be too careful. The Russian
underground would love me dead.
I take a great chance
in an occupied territory.
Assassins surround me.
Every day

is another encounter with death.
Yes, well... This is the price
one pays for political power.
Yes, life at the top is hell.
Which is why
I relish every minute with you.
Every second means something to me.
That's why the sooner...
The sooner we consummate
the act of love, the happier I will be.

- Go ahead.
- I can't.
- Don Francisco.
- Shoot!

Put down that pistol. She's over 18.
You're a tyrant and a dictator
and you start wars.

- Why is he reciting my credits?
- Kill him!
- Guards!
- No.

Boris, we're not here on a vacation.
I can't shoot him. He's a human being.
He'll bleed on the carpet.
Give me that gun.
See? It's not so easy.
Why? Why can't I do it?
Because it's morally wrong.

- I see. Can you define your terms?
- There's a moral imperative here.
- Where?
- By killing Napoleon, you kill yourself,
because we're involved
in a kind of a total absolute.
Come on. We're not.
You're being pantheistic again.
How is that pantheistic? We all
relate universally to a giant oneness.
You wanna hit him? He's coming to again.
Just give him a little shot.
We're dealing with an ethical question.
You're not gonna quote
Thomas Aquinas again?
Absolutely. He said "Never kill a man,

particularly if it means taking his life."

What?

If we don't stop him,
he'll burn down half of Europe.

Maybe it'll be
the half with our landlord in it.

- Boris. For our children.

- We don't have any.

- For our parents.

- They don't have children.

- Well, I'm gonna kill him.

- Sonja.

- I am.

- No. All right. Look,
pull the carriage out front. I'll go kill him.

Look at him. If I don't kill him,
he'll make war all through Europe.

But murder?

What would Socrates say?

All those Greeks were homosexuals.

Boy, they must have had
some wild parties.

I bet they all took a house together
on Crete for the summer.

(a) Socrates is a man.

(b) All men are mortal.

(c) All men are Socrates.

That means all men are homosexuals.

I'm not a homosexual.

Once, some Cossacks whistled at me.

I happen to have the kind of body
that excites both persuasions.

But, you know,
some men are heterosexual,
and some men are bisexual,
and some men don't think about sex at all.

They become lawyers.

My problem is that

I see both sides of every issue.

I'm too logical.

You know, the world is not logical.

If it was logical, how would Old Nehamkin
be younger than Young Nehamkin?

I knew there was something crazy

about that when I was a kid,
but every time I said something,
they'd smack me. So, you know,
I'm just racked with guilt
and I'm consumed with remorse
and stricken with suffering
for the human race.
And not only that, but I'm developing
a herpes on my lip here
that is really killing me.
What to do?
Arrest this man for murder.
Fortunately, he only killed an impostor.
I didn't do anything.
Hey, take it easy, will you?
You're bending my throat.
The Spanish government
will hear about this.
Don Francisco is not a man
who takes these things lightly.
There's Don Francisco now.
There's been a mistake. I know - I made it.
By some miracle, Sonja managed
to elude the French and escape.
I, with my usual good luck, got thrown
in a damp cell to await execution -
my favourite pastime.
Fortunately, it was a French jail,
so the food was not bad.
My family was allowed to visit me.
Remember that nice boy next door?
Raskolnikov?
- Yeah?
- He killed two ladies.
No! What a nasty story.
Bobick told it to me. He heard it
from one of the Karamazov brothers.
- He must have been possessed.
- Well, he was a raw youth.
- Raw youth? He was an idiot.
- And he acted insulted and injured.
- I hear he was a gambler.
- You know, he could be your double.
Really? How novel.

Son,
for long years
I have saved this piece of land for you.
- Look, it has a house on it.
- Yes, it's a nice little house.
You haven't wasted your life, I see.
Don't let any strangers come on it.
No, no strangers.
You're a major loon, you know that?
Next year I'll expect
to build a guest house.
Oh, a little tiny guest house
with a handball court
and a little, little swimming pool
for fleas or something?
Yes, well, you'll want to get
some rest in your rubber bedroom now.
- Who are you?
- I am an angel of God.
- You're kidding.
- Fearnot, Boris.
You have led a just life,
and at the last minute,
before the execution,
the emperor plans to pardon you.
Really?
He will make a great personal show
of his generosity,
and you will have learned your lesson,
but you will not be executed.
Then there is a God.
Incredible.
Moses was right.
He that abideth in truth
and will have frankincense and myrrh
smeared on his gums in abundance,
and he shall dwell
in the house of the Lord
for six months with an option to buy.
But the wicked man
shall have all kinds of problems.
His tongue shall cleave
to the roof of his upper palate.
And he shall speak like a woman,

if you watch him closely
And he shall...
The wicked man shall be
delivered into the hands of his enemy,
whether they can
pay the delivery charge or not.
And... Wait, I have more
about the wicked man.
I shall walk through
the valley of the shadow of death...
In fact, now that I think of it,
I shall run through
the valley of the shadow of death,
cos you get out of the valley
quicker that way.
And he that hath clean hands
and a pure heart is OK in my book.
But he that fools around with
barnyard animals has got to be watched.
I thank you.
All right, Grushenko, come on. Let's go.
You guys are late.
I've been waitin' here since 6.30.
- You're awfully cheerful.
- You know how it is
when you're extra brave. Probably not.
Busy day, huh?
Are you guys having a sale?
No blindfold. That's for losers.
I like to see where the bullet hits.
I learned that during the war.
I was decorated, you know.
Wonder what the emperor's doing today?
- Ready.
- You wanna move closer? Don't miss.
Looks bad on the report.
Aim.
Boy, the emperor's really cutting it close.
What a flair for the dramatic...
that old slyboots.
Fire.
It's a very complicated situation,
cousin Sonja.
I'm in love with Alexei. He loves Alicia.

Alicia's having an affair with Lev.
Lev loves Tatiana.
Tatiana loves Simkin.
Simkin loves me.
I love Simkin,
but in a different way than Alexei.
Alexei loves Tatiana like a sister.
Tatiana's sister loves Trigorian
like a brother.
Trigorian's brother
is having an affair with my sister,
who he likes physically,
but not spiritually.
Natasha, it's getting a little late.
The firm of Mishkin and Mishkin
is sleeping with
the firm of Taskov and Taskov.
Natasha, to love is to suffer.
To avoid suffering, one must not love.
But then one suffers from not loving.
Therefore, to love is to suffer.
Not to love is to suffer.
To suffer is to suffer.
To be happy is to love.
To be happy, then, is to suffer,
but suffering makes one unhappy.
Therefore, to be unhappy one must love,
or love to suffer,
or suffer from too much happiness...
I hope you're getting this down.
I never want to marry.
I just want to get divorced.
Oh, look. It's Boris.
Boris, what happened?
- I got screwed.
- How?
I don't know. Some vision said I was
going to get pardoned, and they shot me.
You were my one great love.
Thank you very much. I appreciate that.
Now, if you'll excuse me, I'm dead.
- What's it like?
- What's it like?
You know the chicken

at Tresky's restaurant?

- Yeah.

- It's worse.

Worse than the chicken at Tresky's.

Oh, well, life must go on.

The last traces of the shimmering dusk
are setting

behind the quickly darkening evening,
and it's only noon.

Soon we shall be covered by wheat.

Did you say

wheat?

Wheat.

Wheat.

I'm dead, they're talking about wheat.

The question is,

have I learned anything about life?

Only that human beings

are divided into mind and body.

The mind embraces all the nobler
aspirations, like poetry and philosophy,
but the body has all the fun.

The important thing, I think,
is not to be bitter.

You know, if it turns out that there
is a God, I don't think that he's evil.

I think the worst you can say about him
is that basically he's an underachiever.

After all, you know,
there are worse things in life than death.

If you've ever spent an evening
with an insurance salesman,
you know exactly what I mean.

The key here, I think,
is to not think of death as an end,
but think of it more as a very effective
way of cutting down on your expenses.

Regarding love...

You know, what can you say?

It's not the quantity
of your sexual relations that count.

It's the quality.

On the other hand, if the quantity
drops below once every eight months,

I would definitely look into it.
Well, that's about it for me, folks.
Goodbye.