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# Me and the Colonel

By S.N. Behrman

Information has just been received  
of the advance of the German army.  
They are expected in Paris  
in the next 24 hours.  
Premier Reynaud said  
the situation was serious but not hopeless,  
and urged all citizens to remain calm.

Monsieur Jacobowsky, what happened?

I missed the plane by this much.

The approximate size of a visa stamp.

- You can have your room back, of course.

- Thank you.

The hotel is practically empty, but it's much  
too dangerous for you to remain in Paris.

I know, I know.

Tomorrow I will leave for the South.

Do you know why I like you,

Monsieur Jacobowsky?

Because I prefer a sunny day  
to a cloudy day.

Perhaps you would care for a chocolate?

Why is it that the best husbands  
are always unmarried?

You ought to settle down,

Monsieur Jacobowsky.

- I mean, get married.

- No.

Why not?

Well, you see, Madame Bouffier,  
I am a great admirer of beauty.  
But with the ladies, I have been  
somewhat less than a dazzling success.

This has made me rather timid,  
but in many ways it has  
its compensations. I...

It has given me a great deal of time  
for reading and improving my mind.

Chocolate, mademoiselle? Madame?

How can you be so cheerful  
at a time like this?

You forget. I'm used to being a refugee.

In the technique of flight,  
you might say I am a virtuoso.

The situation isn't quite the same for you

as it is for us. France isn't your country.  
I wish it were.  
I've spent most of my life  
trying to become a citizen of some country.  
For over 500 years  
our family has lived in Amiens.  
Now the Germans are there,  
and soon they will be in Paris.  
I can't believe it.  
It's always hard to believe, at first.  
My earliest recollections...  
Poland, shots, screams in the night.  
My poor mother  
took her candlesticks and her pillows,  
her most cherished possessions,  
and fled to Berlin, and there I grew up.  
I was quite happy there.  
I was successful in business.  
I was a citizen, a patriot. I belonged.  
But a certain house painter  
had different ideas.  
So, I packed my belongings in five trunks  
and I fled to Vienna, the City of Waltzes.  
But the waltz soon changed  
into a goose step.  
I packed my belongings in two trunks  
and fled to Prague.  
But the German army seemed to take  
absolute delight in following me.  
Once again I fled, this time with no trunks.  
And I came to Paris, the City of Light.  
Now the lights are going out.  
So I embark on migration number five.  
In 1918 Paris was saved at the last moment.  
Maybe another miracle will happen.  
I don't know anything about miracles,  
but my mother, wise woman that she was,  
used to say,  
no matter what happened in life,  
there are always two possibilities.  
I am Dr Szicki of the Polish Embassy.  
I must see Colonel Prokoszny at once.  
- Room 209.  
- Thank you.

- Szabuniewicz.

- Huh?

- Wake up!

- Oh, Dr Szicki.

I must see the Colonel.

Oh, no. Colonel not alone.

And when Colonel not alone,  
he want strictly to be alone.

- But I have urgent business with him.

- Please, no.

No. As Colonel's orderly,  
only I can disturb Colonel. Wait.

Excuse me, Colonel, but I...

See? I told you.

Colonel does not like to be interrupted  
in the middle of campaign.

Oh, my poor darling. This awful war...

It is not war that is awful.

It's being out of it that is disgusting.

Can't I make you forget the war,  
just for a little while?

There is only one woman  
who can make me forget.

She is written in my heart.

- To her I shall always be faithful.

- Beginning when?

- To the end of time.

- I adore you.

- And I don't care if you don't love me.

- Who says I do not love you?

But you just told me  
that your heart is given away.

But, sweet child, you understand so little.

It is only because I love you  
that I tell you the truth.

Szabuniewicz, my boots.

Colonel!

It is imperative that I speak to you at once.

Imperative? What makes imperative?

- I'm just about to start for the embassy.

- The embassy has been evacuated.

Run along, my dear.

Here are the papers.

- Is it everything?

- Everything.

The code, a full list of names  
and addresses of our men in Warsaw.

- Our government in London is waiting for it.

- I will deliver it.

Four days from now, the British submarine  
will pick you up off Saint Jean de Luz.

It will take you to England.

You must be there on the 16th.

Don't worry, Doctor.

I, Tadaeusz Boleslav Count Prokoszny,  
will get to England, even if I have to swim.

Do you have transportation for me?

I have engaged a taxi. It's waiting outside.

Fools! Why don't you learn to drive?

Fools! Pigs! Fools!

Imbeciles!

Why don't you attack the Germans?

They said the government will pay.

Where is the government?

- This must be the last taxi in Paris.

- It was. I'm ruined.

I was promised 10,000 francs

to drive a gentleman out of Paris tomorrow.

- That's too bad.

- Yes, sir.

- Excuse me?

- Please.

- I will give you 10,000 for it.

- For this?

- Yes, I would like it only as a souvenir.

- 10,000 francs!

And one more.

Surely the Polish Embassy has automobiles.

- Instruct them to send one.

- I'll go immediately to the embassy.

But I fear the Consul has taken  
all four automobiles with him.

Why does that pig need four automobiles?

Evidently a man who signs papers  
is more important

than one who is ready to die for Poland.

- All packed.

- So now, child, get me vehicle.

Yes, sir. Vehicle?

Get me automobile, get me plane,  
get me motorcycle, get me donkey,  
but get me.

Yes, sir.

Pardon me, Colonel,  
may I make a suggestion?

I tell you, Monsieur, Monsieur...

- Jacobowsky. S.L. Jacobowsky.

- I thought so.

My suggestion is  
that you mind your own business.

But strangely enough  
we're in the same business.

- The business of escaping.

- This fellow gets on my nerves.

First thing in the morning, Szabuniewicz,  
I want waiting here vehicle.

You will see to it, Doctor.

Double vodka, please.

Cosette! Never here when I need her.

Cosette, a double vodka for monsieur.

Our guests have a right to some service.

I want to go with you.

I'll make you forget the other girl.

- Impossible. She's waiting for me.

- Where? Here in Paris?

In Reims. I promised I'd come back for her.

- Good evening, Cosette.

- Good evening.

Since this is my last night in Paris,

I will start with the onion soup.

- Are you leaving us, too?

- Yes, I'm afraid so.

I'm going to try to reach the Spanish border.

- Cosette! Please.

- Yes?

Suppose you were travelling  
from Paris to Hendaye,  
what would be the best way to go?

I would take the road south to Orleans.

Orleans... Orleans... Orleans.

After that, what course would you suggest?

After the soup? The chicken a la casserole.

Cosette, thank you.

- Cosette, triple vodka, please.

- Yes, sir.

- For you, too, Monsieur Jacobowsky?

- No, no, thank you, Cosette.

You see, the Colonel and I have a problem,  
and I must concentrate on it.

Cosette, will you explain  
to Monsieur Grabowsky, he has a problem?

- I have no problem.

- The problem of transportation.

Explain.

My orderly takes care of transportation.

You might explain to the Colonel that  
his orderly may encounter some difficulty.

But together we can arrange...

Cosette, will you ask Monsieur Grabowsky  
why he says "we"? Where is we?

I am Tadaeusz Boleslav Prokoszny.

S.L. Jacobowsky. Delighted.

Don't you remember us?

- Us? Who is "us"?

- The Jacobowskys from Horodenka.

You see, the Colonel and I come from  
the same village in Poland, you know.

- Really?

- Oh, yes.

It is true. I come from Horodenka.

It is one of my father's villages.

Who inhabits these villages I do not know.

Our rent collector knows.

It's a geographical accident.

No significance.

Still, when one travels together,  
it's more pleasant than when one...

When I travel, I travel alone.

When I travel with company,  
it's company that I choose.

- Tell him that.

- Yes, let me explain why I choose him.

You see, the Colonel is a strong man.

He's a chivalrous man.

He's a military man. And a military man  
can requisition an automobile.

Now, he has every right to know  
why he chooses me.  
Well, if I say so myself,  
I am a resourceful man.  
Perhaps I can find an automobile  
for the Colonel to requisition.  
You see, strength plus resourcefulness.  
Isn't that a wonderful combination  
for an emergency like this?  
He and I do not speak the same language.  
Fortunately, we have a charming interpreter.  
Hear me, Monsieur Leibowitz!  
You're a clever man. You know what I mean.  
Please do not force me  
to bring it into the open.  
But take my word for it. Any association  
between us is simply not possible.  
There is no such thing as "not possible".  
My mother used to say,  
there are always two possibilities.  
I disagree with your mother.  
For a true man, there's only one possibility.  
That's not enough.  
With one possibility, I cannot manoeuvre.  
I repeat, for a man of honour,  
one possibility.  
If that were true,  
I'd have died I don't know how many times.  
Now you put your finger on the issue  
between us.  
I do not fear death.  
Honourable death, I welcome.  
For me, that is the one possibility.  
Honourable death.  
What about an honourable life?  
Isn't that a possibility, too?  
Listen, Leibowitz,  
even if you were Baron Rothschild himself,  
and were sitting out there  
in his Rolls Royce,  
I would not go with you.  
Good night, sir.  
- Madame Bouffier?  
- Yes?



The Baron Rothschild,  
do you happen to know his address?

S.L. Jacobowsky.

I am a relative of the Baron.

- Distant, but still a relative.

- The Baron has left Paris.

Actually, it's not the Baron I want to see.

I would like to talk to his chauffeur.

You're talking to him.

- How do you do?

- How do you do?

I have a strong family feeling.

I am quite willing to take one of  
the Baron's automobiles off his hands.

Have you any proof

of your relationship to the Baron?

Certainly.

Monsieur.

In all Paris, no vehicles.

Dr Szicki has tried everything.

Impossible to get automobile.

Thank you very much.

Just a moment. Are you quite sure  
you cannot drive me to Hendaye?

I will pay you very well.

I'm sorry, monsieur, but I have two more  
automobiles to sell this afternoon.

- You must go at once.

- Thank you, madame.

It just came over the radio.

The Germans are already in Reims.

You must go at once.

That is my intention,  
my dear Madame Bouffier.

First I must find a driver.

Leibowitz!

You see, there are always two possibilities.

- I apologise. I'm taking your advice.

- I am delighted. You are welcome.

You advised me

to requisition an automobile.

In the service of my country,  
I requisition this automobile.

But, Colonel, why do you

have to requisition this automobile  
when we already have it?

- How much did you pay for it?

- 50,000 francs.

Make out compensation order, 60,000 francs.

But, Colonel,

I have no wish to make a profit.

Take out what belongs to him.

- Put in what belongs to us.

- Yes, sir.

Perhaps I did not

make myself clear, Colonel.

I bought this automobile for us.

You insist in using this

intimate pronoun "us"?

- I am on a military mission.

- I have every reason to wish it success.

I won't interfere, I assure you.

He refuses to understand.

I understand perfectly.

The Colonel does not like Jews.

He cannot help that.

That's the way he was brought up.

I am Jewish. I cannot help that.

That's the way I was brought up.

But what has that to do with

our escaping together in this automobile?

Evidently you do not mind

to travel with somebody like me.

You're very tolerant.

- I can't afford not to be tolerant.

- I can.

- Be careful with my vodka.

- Yes, sir.

But, Colonel, you can't leave

Monsieur Jacobowsky stranded here.

Not my problem.

Szabuniewicz!

You have compensation order?

Yes, sir.

How will you get across the border,

without an automobile, without a visa?

My dear Madame Bouffier,

when you take one of these,

you can cross any border,  
without an automobile, without a visa.  
When we've won the war, the Polish  
government will honour this in Warsaw.  
It will go into my estate.  
Dearest Cosette, in the cathedral of my  
heart, a candle will always burn for you.  
You are a thief, monsieur.  
You charge me 60,000 francs  
for an automobile that doesn't move.  
It doesn't move because,  
look, there's no gasoline.  
No gasoline?  
No gasoline.  
Then why did you sell me this automobile  
when you have no gasoline?  
No.  
In the first place,  
I did not sell you this automobile.  
You confiscated it.  
In the second place,  
who says I have no gasoline?  
You have gasoline?  
Must have gasoline. Must have Jacobowsky.  
Less and less I like this Jacobowsky.  
This automobile is a fake.  
Perhaps if you release the hand-brake.  
The Colonel is an experienced motorist?  
- I am a cavalry man.  
- Modern cavalry is generally motorised.  
In Poland, no.  
It's amazing.  
I heard that all the roads  
leading south from Paris  
were absolutely crowded with refugees.  
But, look, look at this.  
Very annoying.  
Pardon. Pardon me, Colonel.  
Pardon. Pardon me, Colonel.  
Corporal, could you arrange for me  
to speak to the Colonel, please?  
Colonel singing, and when Colonel singing,  
does not wish conversing.  
But he has made a...

There has been a terrible mistake.  
We should be heading south  
toward Orleans.  
Instead, we are heading north toward Reims.  
Colonel has business in Reims.  
Business?  
But that's where the Germans are.  
- Colonel not afraid of Germans.  
- But don't you understand?  
The submarine is waiting for him  
in the opposite direction.  
- Less and less I like this Jacobowsky.  
- You see? You irritate him.  
- Sorry, Sister. Are you all right?  
- Hurry, Sister.  
Excuse me, Sister.  
You are going south, aren't you?  
Well, of course. The Germans are only  
50 kilometres from here.  
Szabuniewicz, tell me something.  
Is he crazy or am I crazy?  
- We go first to pick up a lady.  
- Lady? What kind of a lady?  
- Lady love.  
- At a time like this?  
For Colonel, any time good for romance.  
Tadaeusz!  
He's here. I knew he would come.  
- Darling!  
- I am not darling.  
Too bad. I wish I were.  
With the least encouragement, I could be.  
Meantime, I am Major Von Bergen.  
- And extremely hungry.  
- The restaurant is closed.  
Then I suggest you re-open.  
Our troops will soon be here  
as occupying forces.  
And I assure you that the officers at least,  
like myself,  
have a deep appreciation of French cooking.  
It would be to your advantage  
to entertain them.  
Won't you invite me in?

- Yes, just as he described it, exactly.

- Who?

My father. He had several meals here when he visited France in the First World War.

The way he described the cooking was enough to make my mouth water.

If you Germans didn't devote yourself so exclusively to fighting, you could come as civilians and enjoy what we have to offer.

I should prefer that myself.

But with us, militarism is a way of life.

We keep on fighting, even when we know that we are going to lose.

- Well, you have almost won this time.

- But, my dear, we always almost win.

I tell you what, as soon as you have lost this war, come back and I'll give you a gala dinner.

I'm afraid I can't wait that long.

Why don't you bring some wine?

And then we can discuss the rest of the menu.

This is too much.

Using our last drop of precious gasoline.

And why? To get behind the German lines!

The Polish government

will pay you for your gasoline.

Szabuniewicz, child, write down everything we owe this tradesman.

In my head is written.

Write down also in your head

that the Polish government owes me

for one heart in very weak condition,

one wrecked nervous system, and if the

Germans catch me, one entire Jacobowsky.

Please, need help.

What do you think will happen to you if we fall into German hands?

I do not think. I act.

Gun, I shoot. Woman, I love.

Honour, I defend.

A figure from the Middle Ages,

as sure as the world is round.

- Who says that?

- Who says what?

- That the world is round?

- I don't insist.

There is no doubt, Colonel,  
that you have one of the finest minds  
of the 12th century.

Unfortunately, I live in the 20th.

Smells heavenly.

Not in the least like my mother's cooking.

You seem nervous.

Do you expect "Darling" will come in on us?

He has nothing to be jealous of,  
for the moment.

My husband is not jealous.

Husband? Is he so sure of you?

Yes. And with reason.

Your husband. French?

No. Polish.

How quaint.

I did not know there were any Poles left.

He must be the last one.

He is among the first.

Well, we took Poland away from the Poles.

It might be amusing to take you away  
from this Pole.

It would not, Major, I assure you,  
be the least bit amusing.

Your resistance might be amusing.

Divisional Headquarters  
moving immediately, sir.

General Schloesser will hold  
conference within the hour.

That leaves us very little time.

And you are worth a little time.

Well, the efficiency of our army  
takes all the joy out of life.

Imagine giving you up  
for General Schloesser.

He's a fantastically ugly man.

Well, wasn't it an American who said,  
"War is hell"?

Those were Germans, Colonel.

- So?

- I don't understand you.  
You seem to look down on  
the instinct of self-preservation.  
Maybe you don't want to live, but I do.  
In your case, this ambition is trivial.  
We are here.  
Must be asleep.  
Szabuniewicz, child, my balalaika.  
We wake her sweet.  
Yes, sir.  
You pick this moment for a recital?  
It's a dream I dream. It's a dream.  
I, the only son of Reba Jacobowsky,  
lost far from home,  
headed for destruction  
with Don Quixote and Sancho Panza,  
in Rothschild's Rolls Royce.  
It's a dream. It's a dream.  
- Darling!  
- I have returned.  
Tadaeusz!  
In the cathedral of my heart,  
a candle was always burning for you.  
That must be the best-lit cathedral  
in Europe.  
- Jacobowsky! Fill tank with gasoline.  
- And just where do you suggest I get it?  
Gasoline is in your blood.  
"Get gasoline. Fill tank."  
That's very easy for him to say.  
"Get gasoline. Fill tank."  
Where am I going to get gasoline?  
We're miles from nowhere and surrounded  
on all sides by the German army.  
"Get gasoline," he says.  
Yes, but Colonel is in bigger danger  
than you.  
- That's debatable.  
- Sure. Germans have put price on his head.  
At the rate we're going, they'll collect it.  
When Colonel escape  
from prison camp in Poland,  
Germans offered 100,000 marks  
for his capture, 100,000 marks...

- What?

- What?

What is that?

- Sounds like tank.

- Tank?

- Is tank.

- Is tank.

Please, Szabuniewicz. Is tank, yes?

Is French tank.

Hey, move that automobile out of our way.

I would be happy to oblige, Lieutenant.

But unfortunately, we are out of gasoline.

Sergeant, push it off the road.

Why go to all that trouble?

If you could just supply us  
with a little gasoline, we will...

Don't you realise

we are in the middle of a war?

Yes. Yes, I realise that.

But in wartime, shortages develop.

We are a little short of gasoline.

Sergeant, you heard my order.

Well, wait. Just a moment, please.

I have to get a bag, it's very valuable.

This I cannot lose because...

I didn't want to lose this, it's very valuable.

I have genuine, imported Polish vodka.

Vodka?

Have you been faithful to me?

Have you been faithful to me?

How can you ask a thing like this?

If I didn't love you,

would I have come back for you?

When all the others left, I stayed behind,  
because I knew you would come.

Since that week we had together in Paris,  
I have been lonely for you.

And there were no other women?

Especially when I am with other women,  
I feel lonely for you.

And is that all you did

when you were with them? Think about me?

To every woman I am polite.

I do not say this to be funny.



I know you don't. That's why it is funny.

You are adorable and funny.

I love you, darling.

There is no man left in this bleak,  
awful modern world like you.

- He says I'm from the 12th century.

- Who?

- This fellow who is with me.

- Who is he?

Nobody.

My beloved.

My eyes.

My skin.

My hair.

Yes?

Excuse me, Colonel, and mademoiselle.

I don't like to interrupt,  
but we are ready to leave.

- You have gasoline?

- Naturally.

How did you manage to get gasoline?

For centuries, alchemists have been  
trying to turn lead into gold.

I have done a little better.

I have turned vodka into gasoline.

You gave away my vodka?

Please, Colonel,

you must be philosophical about this.

Without gasoline an automobile cannot run,  
but a man can run without vodka.

Wait outside. We come down in an hour.

Please, dear lady, explain to the Colonel  
an hour may be too late.

I was just told the Germans

have started pouring into Reims in force.

He lives in fear of death, this man.

I know I am a superfluous man.

But even a superfluous man

wants to go on being superfluous.

- Your friend is funny.

- He is not my friend. He is an accident.

I am Suzanne Roualet.

Enchanted, mademoiselle.

Actually, it is more important for the Colonel

to get away than for me.

- Because of his secret mission.

- Who told you about my mission?

- You did.

- He eavesdrops.

Your Colonel is a peculiar man.

When he shouts in my ear,

he says I eavesdrop.

My Colonel is very loveable,

but he is a little mad.

Sing for your mistress. Sing. Does he sing?

Oh, yes.

I feel Aristide is in good hands with you.

- I shall dedicate myself to him and to you.

- Thank you, monsieur.

Sing.

- Do you have any other pets?

- Only the Colonel.

- To him I am already dedicated.

- Less and less I like this Jacobowsky.

Less and less.

Why so quiet, darling?

Driving all day along dusty roads

makes my throat dry.

Please, Colonel, forget the vodka.

We should just be happy that we are

together and travelling in the right direction.

You imply that yesterday when we were

on our way to Mademoiselle Suzanne,

we were driving in the wrong direction?

Geographically it was wrong.

- Emotionally it was right.

- That is nice.

Could you tell us what's the best way

to get to Saint Jean de Luz?

Saint Jean de Luz?

Better go by way of Limoges and Prigueux,

or you'll meet the German army.

- Did they already get this far?

- They're advancing south along the coast.

Now that Paris has fallen,

the war will soon be over.

And it won't be very healthy for anybody

caught travelling with a Polish officer.

Colonel, may I speak to you  
about something?

What is it?

Well, don't you think  
we should take some precautions?

What precautions?

- Your uniform.

- You don't like my uniform?

On the contrary, I think it's beautiful,  
but with the Germans all around us...

- Always in terror of your skin.

- I'm attached to it.

Besides, mademoiselle's skin,  
surely that is worth saving.

- Mademoiselle's skin is no concern of yours.

- He is right, you know, darling.

- He's always right.

- Now, don't be silly.

Now I'm silly? This is a new development.

Obviously you sympathise

with Jacobowsky, so ride with Jacobowsky.

Delighted!

Thank you.

- Good morning.

- Good morning, Monsieur Jacobowsky.

How would you like to have a mushroom  
omelette and apple fritters for breakfast?

A mushroom omelette?

Apple fritters? How did you manage?

It was very simple, really.

I picked the mushrooms at dawn.

A cooperative hen has just supplied the egg  
and the milk should be here

any moment now.

- Szabuniewicz.

- I'm ready. She is not ready.

Monsieur Jacobowsky, you are wonderful.

What is it?

Good morning, Colonel.

Suzanne, I'm sorry

I lose my temper yesterday.

- It was for you, too, Jacobowsky.

- Don't mention it.

We're going to start the engine

in the automobile for a few minutes.  
And as soon as the water boils  
in the radiator, we'll have our coffee.  
- I'm glad you admitted you were wrong.  
- Wrong?  
Who said I was wrong?  
Well, I was wrong.  
He's the most amazing man,  
Monsieur Jacobowsky.  
Last night he told me  
he has been an art dealer, a headwaiter,  
an usher in a movie theatre...  
You wouldn't believe some of the things  
he has done in order to survive.  
I believe it.  
But I'm not sure it was worth the effort.

**It's after 6:**

I wonder what happened  
to Monsieur Jacobowsky?  
Obviously, Jacobowsky's ingenuity  
has failed him this time.  
Not even he can find us a place  
to sleep tonight.  
But I do not care.  
It's wonderful, at last, to be alone with you.  
You mean, without Monsieur Jacobowsky.  
- You miss him?  
- Monsieur Jacobowsky amuses me.  
He makes me laugh.  
Why is it when you mention his name  
I feel a stab, here?  
I'll tell you why, dearest.  
Because you are jealous.  
Fine situation I have reached.  
I, Tadaeusz Boleslav Count Prokoszny,  
am jealous of S.L. Jacobowsky.  
But it's so silly.  
I don't think of Monsieur Jacobowsky  
that way at all.  
I am touched by him.  
He's so anxious for people to love him.  
He want the whole world to love him.  
- In this ambition he will fail.

- He knows that.  
- That is what makes him so touching.  
- I have an idea.  
Let's make a firm rule  
not to mention his name.  
All right.  
After all, before we met him,  
we had a lot to talk about.  
What did we talk about?  
I don't remember.  
Actually, I don't think we did much talking.  
He loves you, this Jacobowsky.  
I thought we were not  
going to mention his name.  
Perhaps he does, a little bit.  
I think it will be necessary  
to kill this Jacobowsky.  
- Well, where do we sleep?  
- No place to sleep. Nothing to eat.  
- But I bring news.  
- What sort of news?  
Marshal Ptain has  
taken over the government.  
He's negotiating for armistice, and...  
I almost forgot.  
The Germans will occupy north of France  
and the whole coastline.  
- Where did you hear this?  
- I don't hear it. Jacobowsky hears it.  
Where is Monsieur Jacobowsky?  
I don't know. I lost him.  
Well done, Corporal.  
For 35 years I've been custodian  
of this castle, as was my father before me.  
But nowadays we don't get many visitors.  
This is the only room  
that survived from the original castle.  
The night before the Battle of Castillon,  
in 1453,  
King Charles the Seventh  
slept in this very bed.  
- Did he have a good night?  
- No. He was too nervous.  
- This is the Queen's bedroom.

- Extraordinary.

There is no one in the world  
who knows what I know about this castle,  
from the 13th to the 18th centuries.  
And after that, did you lose interest?  
Nothing that happened since  
is of any importance whatever.  
The glory of France died with the monarchy.  
Suppose I were to tell you that  
the glory of France is about to be restored,  
and that you may play  
a very important role in it.

- I, monsieur?

- Yes.

Are you a man who can keep a confidence?  
There are things I know about  
Henry the Third I have never told anyone.  
Not even my wife.

Well, then, monsieur,  
I am not a simple tourist.  
I am in the service  
of a very important personage,  
who may soon be honouring this chateau  
with his presence.

But this is a castle.

Surely Monsieur Jacobowsky  
didn't mean this.

That's what he said in the note he sent us.

- Who's that?

- But they are waiting for us.

We are deeply honoured, sir.

Don't worry. Your secret is safe with us.

My husband awaits you within  
to show you to your rooms.

Jacques, take the automobile round  
to the back and unload the luggage.

Welcome to the castle, monsieur.

Too bad your equerry  
gave us such short notice,  
but we will do our poor best to make you  
and your entourage comfortable.

- Where is our equerry?

- He's in the kitchen. He insisted.

He says that no one else

is allowed to prepare your meals.  
I am putting mademoiselle  
in the Queen's bedroom.  
Monsieur, naturally,  
will have the King's bedroom.  
Yes?  
Tadaeusz!  
I've never seen you looking so magnificent.  
I have not worn this uniform  
since Marshal Pilsudski  
marched into Warsaw in 1926.  
And it still fits you.  
You haven't put on an ounce.  
Suzanne, when the war ends,  
this is how I receive you  
in our ancestral home in Horodenka.  
I just can't believe it.  
An hour ago,  
I was ready to sleep in the marketplace.  
And here I am in the royal bedchamber.  
This is how you deserve to be treated,  
like a princess.  
I am not a princess.  
I am an innkeeper's daughter.  
You may feel at home here,  
but I'm not used to such luxury.  
All I can think of  
is how much everything must have cost.  
A beautiful woman should be surrounded  
by beautiful things.  
The cost is immaterial.  
Darling, you are incurably romantic.  
Come in.  
Mademoiselle, sir, dinner is served.  
Gefilte fish with horseradish sauce,  
compliments of Monsieur Jacobowsky.  
Delicious. You must try this fish, Tadaeusz!  
Wait till you hear what he told about you,  
why you are here in this castle.  
What's the matter with you?  
Why do you walk backwards?  
Everybody around here walks backwards.  
Compliments of my mother,  
Reba Jacobowsky.

This was her own recipe.  
Borscht and sour cream.  
May she rest in peace.  
What did you tell these people about me?  
Szabuniewicz, dismissed.  
- I reduce you to Private.  
- Yes, sir.  
What lie did you tell this Monsieur Girardin?  
A big one, I'm afraid.  
Wait till you taste this borscht.  
My mother, God rest her soul,  
was a wonderful cook.  
Out of nothing she could make  
absolutely something.  
So can you. You do it all the time.  
Tadaeusz! You promised me  
to be nice to Monsieur Jacobowsky.  
I am not nice to you, Monsieur Jacobowsky?  
You are charming.  
Believe me, he is charming.  
What did you tell him?  
I told him the Ptain government  
had decided to re-establish the monarchy,  
and that you were the pretender  
to the throne of France,  
travelling incognito,  
on your way to be crowned.  
Me, King of France?  
An occupied France.  
In wartime,  
people will believe any rumour and this...  
This appealed to his royalist sympathies.  
Monsieur Jacobowsky, you are a genius.  
Genius? He does it all with lies, trickery.  
I don't care how you did it. I love you for it.  
And so should you.  
You must admit, you were enjoying yourself.  
So...  
It comes out.  
- You love him.  
- All right. Yes!  
Colonel.  
What mademoiselle is saying  
is not what she really means.



What she really means is  
that she loves the fish, really.  
And she loves the borscht.  
That's what she really means.  
For a man of honour,  
this situation is impossible.  
This situation is fine. What's wrong with it?  
It's you who are impossible.  
And I'm tired of hearing about your honour.  
You went too far.  
Colonel!  
- Colonel!  
- Let him go.  
I don't want him back.  
We need him.  
I don't.  
We need him to drive the automobile.  
Tadaeusz is right.  
You are practical, Monsieur Jacobowsky.  
Practical, yes.  
If I were not practical, I would have  
long since joined my sainted parents.  
Please, don't be practical,  
not this one night.  
One evening, in this awful time,  
and he had to spoil it.  
Please don't let him.  
- But, mademoiselle...  
- Suzanne.  
What's your first name?  
Samuel.  
To you, Monsieur Samuel,  
and to this evening.  
You know something?  
I believe you are afraid to be alone with me.  
- Yes, that, too.  
- How very amusing.  
It's not exactly amusing, it's uncomfortable.  
But why?  
That question I do not have to answer  
because you are a clever woman  
and you know why.  
Monsieur Samuel, you are in love with me.  
How very nice.

It would have been nicer  
if I hadn't met you through the Colonel.

Please excuse me.

Monsieur Samuel, I think you are a puritan.  
My father was very orthodox.

They are the worst puritans in the world.

Besides, I'm feeling very sorry  
for your Colonel.

- That's an odd thing for you to say.

- No, not really.

He sees us together, laughing and talking,  
sharing a sympathy and understanding  
he knows he cannot share.

And...

I'm very angry with myself  
for having let this happen.

But since it has happened, why not face it?

I have, in my mind.

- Oh, you have?

- Yes.

Well?

There are two possibilities.

- Even with us?

- Especially with us.

What are they?

Either you really like me,  
Colonel or no Colonel,  
or you like me only for the moment  
because you are angry with him.

If you like me only for the moment,  
that is good.

Why?

Because I have the sense to see it  
and would not take advantage of you.

But, darling, Monsieur Samuel,  
supposing I really like you,  
deeply like you, Colonel or no Colonel.

- That is bad.

- You are a funny one.

Do you like to dance?

I used to love it  
but lately there have been no opportunities.  
Right this minute,  
dear funny,

adorable Monsieur Samuel Jacobowsky,  
there is an opportunity.  
You dance beautifully.  
It's a dream I dream.  
It's a dream.  
I, the only son of Reba Jacobowsky,  
am dancing in one of  
the most beautiful castles of France  
with the loveliest daughter of France.  
But if it is a dream, I hope I never wake up.  
Jacobowsky!  
I challenge you.  
- To what?  
- Duel.  
I'm out of practise.  
I asked Monsieur Jacobowsky  
to dance with me.  
If you want to challenge anybody,  
challenge me.  
Monsieur!  
- What weapons do you prefer?  
- No preference. I dislike them all.  
Tadaeusz, you're mad.  
You don't know how devoted  
Monsieur Jacobowsky is...  
Name your choice. Pistols or swords?  
- What would you like?  
- I haven't a thing on me.  
You're drunk.  
Stop being afraid and fight!  
Afraid?  
I'm not afraid of you.  
It's you who are afraid of me.  
I will say in your presence  
what I wouldn't dare say in your absence.  
I love her. Do you hear? I love her.  
- Then fight for your love.  
- Why not?  
En garde!  
Szabuniewicz!  
En garde!  
Jacobowsky!  
Jacobowsky! Come here.  
Other men, I can out-drink, out-fight.

You neither drink nor fight.

Here, maybe this will give you  
some Dutch courage. Over here.

- It's good.

- Good? It's superb!

1792, brandy of Napoleon.

You know, Colonel,

I'm beginning to understand why you drink.

It...

- It solves everything.

- Drink, very important.

- You are the custodian of this castle?

- Yes, General.

It is requisitioned by the German army.

You will prepare accommodations

for me and my officers.

I will also need someplace to billet my men.

Colonel, Colonel.

- Germans.

- I know.

Where are they?

- Where are the Colonel's papers?

- I sewed them in my scarf.

- Good. And his uniforms?

- I hid them in the chimney.

Here, I found that in his pocket.

Pierre Michel, stone quarry,

Saint Jean de Luz.

Turn left off the Corniche Road

after crossing the Nivelle.

Can you remember that?

Pierre Michel, stone quarry,

Saint Jean de Luz.

- Yes.

- Good. I will destroy this.

Pierre Michel, stone quarry,

Saint Jean de Luz.

What have you done to me?

Hurry.

Do you realise, darling,

that this is the first time

I've ever seen you without a uniform?

I must say, you look very distinguished.

There is a time for advance

and a time for retreat.

This is the uniform of retreat.

I know. I've worn it all my life.

- How far are we from Saint Jean de Luz?

- Only about 30 kilometres.

But I'm afraid we're almost out of gasoline.

Well, the virtuous proprietress  
of the best restaurant in France.

This is an unexpected pleasure.

Sir, my companions

had nothing to do with the accident.

It was my fault.

- Who are you?

- My name is Jacobowsky.

S.L. Jacobowsky.

- From?

- From Poland.

Where in Poland?

It's a small village.

I don't believe you would know it.

- It's called Horodenka.

- Horodenka.

Horodenka, that rings a bell. Horodenka.

I think we're interested  
in somebody from Horodenka.

Not me, I hope.

That is highly unlikely.

Horodenka was the place, but the name...

What was the name?

Does the name Prokoszny  
mean anything to you?

I beg your pardon?

- What did you say the name was?

- Prokoszny.

Colonel Tadaeusz Boleslav Prokoszny.

That's quite a formidable name  
in Horodenka.

Do you know him?

Now, how would I know Colonel Prokoszny?

I do not ask how you would know.

I asked, do you know?

But, Major,

the Prokosznys belong  
to the highest aristocracy.

And you know they are not exactly sympathetic to my people.  
And I see their point.  
Did you not say that you had a Polish husband?  
Which one of these specimens is it?  
Really?  
Odd taste.  
Evidently you share the prejudice of your leaders.  
Not particularly.  
I had a weakness for Jewish girls until it became unfashionable.  
What is your name?  
Answer when I speak to you.  
Please, please, Major, you must forgive him.  
He's suffering from shock.  
He was at the bombing of Warsaw.  
- What are you doing with him?  
- He is my cousin.  
- Also from Horodenka?  
- Also from Horodenka, yes.  
You know, there is something to this theory of racial inferiority.  
In my country, a fellow like this would not be at large.  
- Are you also incapable of speech?  
- Who me? No, I speak good.  
- What is your name?  
- Isaac Jacobowsky. Another cousin.  
You swim in Jacobowskys.  
Well...  
There's no accounting for taste.  
Madame, you are a very attractive woman.  
It is a frightful waste.  
Unluckily for you, you always catch me at a busy moment.  
Otherwise I would show you what a waste it is.  
You will all be photographed and fingerprinted.  
Major Von Bergen, you are a cultivated man.  
You are a humorous man.  
And you are not a fanatic.

Well?

Wouldn't it amuse you, for my sake,  
to make it possible for us  
to get to the border?

Why should I do anything for your sake?

You are always either  
waiting for your husband,  
or worse, you are with him.

Why should I help you?

Because, Major,  
in life there are two possibilities.

And what are they?

Why, you may win the war,  
but you may lose the war.

Naturally, there are always  
these two possibilities in any war.

But if you win,  
what harm will it do to you to let us escape?

If we are caught, I'll never be able  
to give you that dinner I promised you.

And if we lose, what?

Then you have three Jacobowskys  
to testify that you saved their lives.

That may come in handy.

I've told you.

The Jacobowskys of this world  
are no concern of mine.

You're free to go, all of you.

There is only one problem.

We are short of gasoline.

Gasoline.

Such chutzpah you must have learnt  
only from your Jacobowsky.

- What?

- Chutzpah.

It is an expression I learnt  
from one of my non-Aryan girlfriends.  
It means effrontery to the nth degree.

Then you can't help us?

Not with gasoline.

But I'll see what can be done.

You know, for the sake of that dinner,  
I really don't want anything  
to happen to you.

- The sergeant will take care of you.  
- Thank you very much, Major Von Bergen.

Thank you. I'll never forget this.

I didn't want to humiliate you.

What just happened was...

I was desperate, they would have killed you.

Perhaps that would have been better.

I could not get any gasoline,  
but I got something almost as good.

- What's the matter?

- He's in a very bad way.

What are you doing?

I think it's time for the Colonel and I to part  
while we are still friends.

- But how you gonna get to Hendaye?

- Walk.

When your feet hurt,  
it is sometimes easier  
to forget the pain in your heart.  
Mademoiselle won't like it that you go.  
I hope you're right, just a little.

- She was a good friend, huh?

- Yes.

He'll be all right, this Jacobowsky.

Nothing bad will happen to him.

Bet he gets out of the country before we do.

He'll get across the border easy,  
with some tricks.

You know what's going to happen  
at the border?

Germans will give him  
passage money to England.

No need to worry about Jacobowsky.

I don't like that tune.

Why do I sing that tune?

Can we give you a lift?

That's very kind of you,  
but won't you be terribly crowded?

We're crowded already.

It couldn't be worse. Do get in.

Thank you.

Please.

You have given my legs a new lease on life.

I don't know how to thank you, dear lady.



You haven't a moment to lose, my son.

God bless you.

Well, the German army must be

in a pretty pass

if they can't get on

without my poor old automobile.

If these supermen

should change their minds,

we're at St Joseph's convent, up the hill.

My passenger.

I'm sorry to see you here.

I myself am not exactly overjoyed.

Courage.

You.

- Your name is Jacobowsky?

- Yes.

And the man in both these photographs

is Colonel Prokoszny, huh?

I know Monsieur Prokoszny,

but I did not know he was a Colonel.

Where is Colonel Prokoszny?

- I don't know.

- Why did you separate?

He took the automobile and went off with it.

- With no arrangements to meet again?

- No.

No, no arrangements. None.

But you know where they were going,

don't you?

I think, I believe,

they wanted to go to Spain. I believe.

Not to England?

England?

No.

Never heard of that.

You don't know

from what point on this coast

the Colonel is planning to sail to England?

No, I'm sorry. No.

I never heard of such a plan.

My friend here is a skilled technician.

He has a faculty for getting from people

who start out totally ignorant

a surprising amount of information.

With me he would fail.  
Not because I doubt his skill.  
It's merely that I... I don't know.  
These Poles can't possibly get away.  
Our intelligence knows  
there is a British ship waiting for them.  
I assure you,  
you will do yourself a great service  
if you tell us the place of the rendezvous.  
Look, gentlemen, they deserted me.  
They took my automobile, which I paid for,  
and left me on the road to Hendaye.  
Why should I protect them?  
Why should I protect them?  
If I knew anything,  
I would be very happy to tell you,  
but how can I tell you if I don't know?  
You will have till 8:00 to solve that problem.  
If you haven't by that time,  
I shall turn you over to my colleague here.  
He will discover what even you don't know.  
You may go now.  
- May I have my passport?  
- I'll keep it.  
Report back at 8:00.  
Berlin wants immediate action.  
The escape route by which these allied  
officers are being smuggled out to England  
must be discovered and destroyed.  
Do you think this Jacobowsky  
knows anything?  
We shall soon find out.  
One thing is certain.  
The Colonel is not in Hendaye.  
I have been keeping a sharp lookout  
for the Rolls Royce.  
But if this Jacobowsky knows where he is  
or knows the rendezvous point,  
he will go running there  
like a frightened rabbit.  
And we shall be right on his heels.  
Where can I find Pierre Michel?  
Second quarry on the left.  
Monsieur Michel?

- I am Colonel...

- Yes, I know.

You travelled part of the way  
with a certain S.L. Jacobowsky.

- Is that correct?

- Correct.

- How much does he know?

- He knows I have secret papers.

He knows I meet submarine. Why?

Monsieur Jacobowsky has been arrested  
by the Germans.

Oh, no!

He had an interview with the Gestapo.

Nevertheless, at this moment

he is sipping coffee

in the public square at Hendaye, a free man.

- Draw your own conclusions.

- I don't believe it!

I don't believe Monsieur Jacobowsky  
would give us away.

Our rendezvous is at Pointe Sainte-Anne

**at 5:**

Our liaison officer will meet you there  
and convey you to the submarine.

The Germans will no doubt  
intensify their efforts to intercept us.

So we must be doubly careful.

Our entire operation  
of rescuing allied personnel is in danger.

I know Monsieur Jacobowsky  
didn't tell them anything.

I know it.

What did you expect?

In his place, I do same like he.

Silence, Corporal.

I feel he is in danger,  
our friend Jacobowsky.

Our plan has failed.

He's not going to lead us anywhere.

Give him another five minutes.

Four minutes.

Waiter, may I have a glass of water, please?

- Excuse me.

- Yes?

Excuse me for disturbing you.

I was watching you.

- I know you are in trouble.

- In these times many people are.

There is an old saying,

"No matter how hopeless things look,

there are always two possibilities."

That's what I always thought, until now.

Thank you.

I have a friend

who has a different view entirely.

He says, for a man of honour,

there is only one possibility.

What is it?

That's what I am about to find out.

- Good night, monsieur.

- Good night, monsieur.

Let's pick him up.

This is better luck than I expected.

Jacobowsky didn't go to the Colonel,

but the Colonel has come to Jacobowsky.

Colonel.

Dear Colonel, you are insane.

What is that slop you drink? Waiter!

Two brandies.

I should have come sooner,

but without you,

we had the usual gasoline problem.

You are my comrade in arms.

You think I desert you?

Colonel, it's sheer lunacy

for you to come here.

Don't you realise I'm being watched?

You think I don't know this?

In civilian things, Samuel, you are clever.

But in military things, I am more clever.

They say you sit in the square peaceful.

I know better. I come.

Colonel. Please, Colonel,

go while there's still a chance.

What happens to me does not matter,

but you have a mission.

The papers are safe with Suzanne.

I tell her, if I don't come back

**by 5:**

she is to go in submarine  
to England without me.

I sniff battle. I'm alive again.

I'm afraid, not for long.

- Any moment now, they may arrest us.

- I don't think so.

To capture us, they'll find very expensive.

Yes, Colonel, but they can afford it.

You've walked right into a trap.

Waiter, brandy! Double!

Don't you see

that they are only waiting for us

to lead them to the submarine?

That's their strategy.

But every good soldier

has a counter-strategy.

What a merry chase it will be, Samuel.

Yes, very merry.

What... What is our strategy?

We lead them by the nose.

When they think they've got us,

then they'll find that they haven't got us.

- Isn't it beautiful?

- Very handsome.

How will we do it? How...

That's tactic.

Tactic, I leave to my staff officer.

Samuel, I hereby appoint you

as my staff officer.

- Thanks for the promotion.

- You've earned it.

It requires only one little trick.

This you are good at.

Think of one little trick.

You are thinking?

- I'm paralysed.

- That's not like you, Samuel.

Two heads are always better than one,

especially when one of them

is Jacobowsky's.

Between the two of us, we are a hero.

It's six minutes past 8:00 and I'm still alive.  
Funny.  
You're thinking. That's fine. Keep it up.  
If I am alive at seven minutes past 8:00,  
maybe I will live till 8:30.  
Who knows? Even 9:00. Perhaps even 9:30.  
Colonel, you are right.  
You thought of a tactic?  
I don't know if it's a tactic,  
but it could be a possibility.  
Only one?  
Half of one.  
Follow them.  
They are still behind us.  
There it is.  
Something is wrong.  
They are getting further and further  
away from the sea.  
How dare you stop me like this?  
You're not going to steal  
this automobile as well.  
It was a gift to the convent  
and I defy you to take it away from me.  
Do you hear?

**It's almost 5:**

If we are not out at sea when the  
submarine surfaces, they will not wait.  
They will have to submerge right away.  
- Please, just a few more minutes.  
- A few minutes, please. Perhaps... Look!  
My two musketeers! You are alive!  
- Colonel, I must speak to you.  
- Excuse me.  
Since you saw Pierre Michel  
yesterday afternoon,  
two more allied officers have shown up.  
They have top priority.  
So there is only room  
for two of you in my boat.  
What do you mean, only two?  
I repeat, Colonel.  
I can take you and your fiance,  
but that's all.

Goodbye, Suzanne.  
I wish you both great happiness.  
Goodbye, Monsieur Samuel.  
I'll be with you.  
- Goodbye, Tadaeusz.  
- Goodbye?  
Take Monsieur Jacobowsky.  
The world needs you both.  
It can use you both.  
I'll stay here and fight in my own way.  
Why did you decide this?  
Because you love Monsieur Jacobowsky?  
Because I love you both,  
and because I love my country.  
This I cannot accept. I cannot accept this.  
If you do not go, I cannot go.  
You think I leave you here  
alone with Suzanne?  
Listen to me, please.  
What will you accomplish by staying here  
and getting killed?  
I am in no danger.  
And I can do a lot more good here  
than in England.  
Soon you will come back to free my country  
and I will be here to welcome you.  
Please, Colonel, we must hurry.  
It's getting late.  
Szabuniewicz.  
- I promote you to Sergeant.  
- Thank you, sir.  
- Take good care of Mademoiselle Suzanne.  
- Yes, sir.  
And I will take good care of him.  
- Here, take this.  
- Thank you.  
In the synagogue of my heart,  
a candle will always burn for you.  
I will come back for you.  
I'll wait for you.  
Come back soon, both of you.  
My two possibilities.  
Gentlemen.  
You know, I prayed for Moses

to open up the Channel for me.

You are Moses.

Actually, my name is Basil.

We are about to submerge, gentlemen.

Do you mind coming below?

Wait! Wait!

The papers, my mission.

In my confusion, I left them.

I must die. I must die.

That would be premature.

More and more I like this Jacobowsky.