

PLAYS FOR
New Audiences

A Division of Children's Theatre Company

Scaramouche

by Barbara Field

Based on the story by Rafael Sabatini

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CHARACTERS (9 men, 3 women):

André-Louis

Quintin de Kercadiou / Binet-Pantaloon

Marquis de la Tour d'Azyr / first Scaramouche

Philippe de Vilmorin / Pierrot / Desmoulins

Isaa--Le Chapelier /

Chabrilane / Léandre /

Polichinelle / ruffian / policeman

Harlequin / Bertrand des Amis / Cazales / King's Lieutenant

Rhodomont / Danton / Jacques

Aline

Climène / ballad singer

Mme. de Plougastel

TIME: 1788 to 1794

PLACE: Brittany and Paris

NOTE ON COSTUMES:

The actors begin in rehearsal or street clothes, except for the actress playing Aline, who does not appear in the prologue. They gradually add pieces of their period costumes during the first two or three scenes, until they are all in full period dress by the end of Act One.

By the final scene of the play (in Paris), many of the actors are back in their rehearsal garb.

SETTING:

A scaffold upstage, with several escape stairways and ladders. A wagon for the Troupe Binet's stage, and later for the Assembly. Not much else besides a naked stage and a few set pieces.

THE COMPANY ENTERS IN TWOS AND THREES, SOME WITH CARDBOARD CUPS OF COFFEE, A COUPLE EATING DANISH OR DONUTS, ONE WITH A NEWSPAPER, A COUPLE WITH SCRIPTS AND BOOKS. ONE ACTOR PERCHES HIGH ON A LADDER. HE HOLDS A COPY OF THE NOVEL, "SCARAMOUCHE".

THE FOLLOWING WILL HAVE INTERJECTIONS, AD LIB, FROM THE ACTORS. AS EACH ACTOR READS, ATTENTION IS PAID, OR NOT PAID, AND THERE ARE SEVERAL PERSONAL CONVERSATIONS GOING ON, SOTTO VOCE, DURING THE READINGS.

"It was in truth an hour of universal ferment; mildest men
Were agitated; and opinion filled the walls
Of peaceful houses with unquiet sounds.
The soil of common life was at that time
Too hot to tread upon...." William Wordsworth on the Revolution.

(SUNG:) *They tell me there's a Revolution,
Oh man, I guess I don't wanna change the world....* (Beatles)

So?

So listen to this: Paris, 1789:
The Declaration of the Rights of Man.
Men are born, and always continue, free and equal in respect to their rights.@

The end of all political associations is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man; and these rights are Liberty, Property, Security, and Resistance of Oppression---

I suffer from insecurity—

I suffer from boredom—

Go on—

"The nation is...the source of all sovereignty; nor can any INDIVIDUAL or ANY BODY OF MEN be entitled to authority which is not expressly derived from it.'

Tell that to the folks in Darfur.

Or East Timor.

Let's hear it for high dudgeon!

High dudgeon? What about low dudgeon?

Go on!

Tom Paine: "A thousand years hence those who shall live in America or France will look back on contemplative pride on the origins of their governments and say *this was the work of our glorious ancestors!*"

Sure. But what about that small detail of slavery and the blacks?

What about women's rights?

There she goes again!

Chill!

Lenin.

John?

V.I. Lenin: "What experience and history teach is this: that nations and governments have never learned anything from history or acted according to rules that might have been derived from it. "

He stole that from Hegel.

But what does it mean...?

It means: If you don't learn from history, you're forced to repeat it.

THAT PRONOUNCEMENT COMES FROM THE ACTOR ON THE LADDER. HE PUNCTUATES THE STATEMENT BY TOSSING HIS BOOK TO THE FLOOR.

What's that?

"Scaramouche". By Raphael Sabatini. He wrote swashbuckling novels back in the twenties. Most of them were made into movies. Errol Flynn...you know...

But is it relevant...?

Is it even history?

Almost. Almost history.

France. Brittany. The village of Gavrilac. Seventeen hundred eighty -eight.

Scaramouche. Scaramouche. "He was born with a gift of laughter, and a sense that the world was mad. And that was all of his patrimony." His very paternity was...*obscure*.

The country folk in Brittany, where he grew up, knew that when a minor aristocrat brings home a baby, claiming to be the child's godfather...well, they knew what they knew. And so it was with our hero, André-Louis Moreau, and the man he called Agodfather@, Quintin de Kercadiou, Lord of Gavrilac, who lived in the big chateau on the hill...

ANDRE-LOUIS LOOKS AROUND, FINDS HIS PROPS, SITS.

With his niece, Aline de Kercadiou. At fifteen, the boy was sent off to Paris for schooling, and returned to Gavrilac--six years later, as a lawyer. His head was crammed with much learning and little experience, and he was filled with the world-weary cynicism of the very young.

ANDRE-LOUIS SEIZES THE BOOK, FLIPS THROUGH IT, TOSSES IT INTO A CORNER. HE SETS HIMSELF UP SO THAT SUDDENLY, HE IS FISHING ON THE RIVER-BANK. IN THE DISTANCE, A SINGLE, RESOUNDING GUN SHOT. A FLOCK OF BIRDS FLAP THROUGH THE AIR, COMPLAINING.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Mad...the world is mad.

ALINE SNEAKS UP ON HIM.

ALINE

Talking to yourself again?

ANDRE-LOUIS

I amuse myself.

ALINE

Honestly, the way you loaf and lounge—you never *do* anything.

ANDRE-LOUIS

There's not much I want to do, coz.

ACTOR

Hey, the guy's a slacker!

ACTOR

Just like you.

ACTOR

Shhh!

ANDRE-LOUIS

I was just observing, Aline, that men are mad.

ALINE

Women, on the other hand, are rational , sane creaturesC

ANDRE-LOUIS

Rational? Look at your shoesCruined. Women's shoes aren't built for tramping around in the fields, but you *will* wear them. No, you're as mad as we are.

HE PULLS A PRETTY LITTLE TROUT OUT OF HIS PAIL.

Fish, on the other hand...

ALINE

Are sane? No, they're stupid, and easily caught. You won't find me offering myself up as someone's meal.

ANDRE-LOUIS

My dear coz, someone's going to catch you and gobble you up. Maybe sooner than you think. (SHE TURNS AWAY IN SILENCE.) What?

ALINE

Nothing. Uncle's waiting lunch, André. (BEAT) We've got company. Guess who?

ANDRE-LOUIS

(INDIFFERENT:) Who?

ALINE

Never mind, you're even too lazy to guess.

SHE DELICATELY REMOVES THE TROUT FROM ITS HOOK.

I think I'll have this nice little fish for lunch.

SHE STARTS OFF, TALKING TO THE FISH.

Did André-Louis tell you, men are mad? He certainly is— (SHE SPOTS SOMEONE RUNNING.) And so is that *serious, sober, sacred* chum of his, Philippe.

A YOUNG MAN DASHES IN BREATHLESSLY. ALINE CALLS OUT:

Hail and farewell, Father Philippe, sorry I can't stay and chat, I've got a visitor.

SHE IS GONE.

ANDRE LOUIS

You're late—

PHILIPPE

André-Louis, thank God you're here—put down that pole—

ANDRE-LOUIS

Have a seat. You're out of breath—

PHILIPPE

There's trouble! Someone's been killed! That peasant Grosse!—

ANDRE-LOUIS

Yes?

PHILIPPE

Shot dead in the woods across the river.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Yes?

PHILIPPE

By a gamekeeper. The Marquis de la Tour d'Azyr's gamekeeper's *murder!*

ANDRE-LOUIS

Was he on the Marquis' estate?

PHILIPPE NODS.

Next time Grosselet should poach on someone else's land.

PHILIPPE

Idiot! We've got to do something—talk to your godfather or—

ANDRE-LOUIS

Why? Grosselet trespassed---

PHILIPPE

Don't you know what's going on in France?

ANDRE-LOUIS

Ignorance is bliss, Philippe. What I don't know can't upset me. Look at you: you're apoplectic!

PHILIPPE

Where's your humanity?

ANDRE-LOUIS

It's not a question of humanity, it's a matter of game laws.

PHILIPPE

Stop talking like a lawyer!

ANDRE-LOUIS

Stop talking like a priest!

THEY GLARE AT EACH OTHER, THEN RELEASE INTO A FAMILIAR WARMTH.

ANDRE-LOUIS

You're my best friend, Philippe, but you're tedious, with your righteous anger.

PHILIPPE

You, in the other hand, have the morality of a tree-sloth. Nothing bothers you. (HE REMEMBERS HIS MISSION, GROWS ANGRY) André, we've got to *do* something: go to your godfather, he'll help us get justice for that poor man. Stir yourself, André, I beg you-- (ANDRE-LOUIS RISES LAZILY.)

ANDRE-LOUIS

All right, all right! But I'd rather stay and catch another trout—
THEY START OFF.

PHILIPPE

The cruelty of that man d'Azyr—he owns the land, the sky, and damn any poor soul who needs to feed a starving brood of kids. I hate the aristocracy—

ANDRE-LOUIS

Yes, yes, the peasants hate them too, and the middle class hates the bishops and the nobles hate the king and the—

PHILIPPE STOPS IN HIS TRACKS FOR A MINUTE, WHISPERS:

PHILIPPE

I hate the corrupt Princes of Church.

ANDRE-LOUIS

(SHOCKED:) You're supposed to be a priest.

PHILIPPE

Not a corrupt one. André, I'm going to reform it.

ANDRE-LOUIS

I'm glad God's on your side; nothing short of divine intervention can change the Church, or the system.

PHILIPPE

André, a man's been killed for *nothing*, a couple of woodcocks. Grossel had a wife and four children! Hurry! (HE SEES SOMEONE IN THE DISTANCE, SLOWS DOWN.)

PHILIPPE

Oh God, he's here. The Marquis de la Tour d'Azyr!

D'AZYR, ALINE AND CHABRILLANE ARE CROSSING, IN THE DISTANCE.

ANDRE-LOUIS

With his faithful spaniel, the Comte de Chabrilane, a spaniel in laceCwhat's Aline up to, the brat?!

ALINE OFFERS HER HAND TO D'AZYR, WHO KISSES IT REVERENTLY. SHE RUNS OFF.

He's slobbering on her fingers.

D'AZYR AND CHABRILLANE MOVE FORWARD.

PHILIPPE

(CALLS OUT:) He's as calm as if nothing had-- (CALLS OUT:) A word!

D'AZYR

(APPROACHING:) Father de Vilmorin.

HE MERELY NODS AT ANDRE-LOUIS .

PHILIPPE

How can you stand here as if nothing had happened?

D'AZYR

I beg your pardon?

PHILIPPE

You murdered a peasant today.

D'AZYR

I?

PHILIPPE

Your gamekeeper. I expect you to make reparation to the widow, Mme Grossel!

D'AZYR

Reparation? (TO CHABRILLANE:) Droll, eh?

PHILIPPE

Don't laugh, monsieur. Your gamekeeper—

D'AZYR

Acted on my orders. I've been troubled by poachers before, you see.

PHILIPPE

A few woodcocks?

D'AZYR

It's not the birds *per se* that annoy me. No, it's the contempt for my inviolable rights.
(TO CHABRILLANE:) I don't stand for insubordination, you see. The only way to meet it is to stamp it out.

CHABRILLANE

After all, there *are* game laws.

PHILIPPE

And greater laws than that, laws of Humanity.

D'AZYR

(HE LAUGHS.) A sermon!

PHILIPPE

You won't be laughing when God presents his bill to you!

CHABRILLANE

(TO D'AZYR:) My dear, the *rhetoric!*
ANDRE-LOUIS EDGES TOWARD PHILIPPE, TOUCHES HIS SHOULDER.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Better be going, Philippe!

CHABRILLANE

(TO D'AZYR:) Ah, here's the bastard....

PHILIPPE

You have a man killed for two birds, and you—

ANDRE-LOUIS

(MORE URGENTLY:) Philippe!

PHILIPPE

Each man enters this world with the right to *live*. He can eat, sleep, laugh, weep, build, destroy, make love and mourn, and these rights are given him by God!

D'AZYR

God has given me a right too, He has consecrated my absolute authority overCwaitC
(TO CHABRILLANE) He's made me cross. I dislike being cross. (TO PHILIPPE:)
You've a gift, Priest, you use your tongue to sway and seduce little men. Too bad
you're a priest, or I'd silence that tongueC

ANDRE-LOUIS

He's not a priest, he hasn't taken orders yet.

D'AZYR

In any case, he's not a gentlemanC

ANDRE-LOUIS

His blood's quite as good as yours, d'Azyr--

D'AZYR

I think not. His mother was guilty of a little "lapse" with her gardener on a summer night
and this was the result.

A DEAD SILENCE. THE INSULT SINKS IN. ABRUPTLY PHILIPPE
SLAPS D'AZYR. D'AZYR SMILES, UNSURPRISED.

See what you've done, priest? A blow has been struck. You know what must follow....

PHILIPPE LOOKS BEWILDERED. ANDRE-LOUIS IS NUMB WITH
CONFUSION.

ANDRE-LOUIS

It was a trap! Come away, PhilippeChe doesn't even own a sword!

CHABRILLANE

I'll lend him mine.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Here? Now? *Why?*

D'AZYR

He has insulted me. But don't worry, your godfather won't overhear us, we'll duel in felt
slippers.

ANDRE-LOUIS

You must be mad!

CHABRILLANE

(TO D'AZYR:) Your coat?

D'AZYR

No thanks, I'll leave it on. This won't take more than a moment.

CHABRILLANE

Are you quite ready, monsieur?

PHILIPPE LOOKS DOWN AT THE SWORD. IT'S ALL A DREAM TO HIM. HE NODS, FACES D'AZYR SQUARELY.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Don't just stand there like a statue, Philippe, give him your side, your profile—less of a target—and hold up your sword. Look at him, for God's sake.

D'AZYR BOWS, SALUTES, PHILIPPE FOLLOWS CLUMSILY. D'AZYR STARTS TO CLOSE IN, THERE IS ONLY A CLASH OR TWO WITH THE SWORDS, AND SUDDENLY D'AZYR SINKS HIS SWORD INTO PHILIPPE'S VITALS.

ANDRE-LOUIS

No!

HE CATCHES PHILIPPE UNDER THE ARMS AS HE STARTS TO FALL, AND STAGGERS WITH HIM TO THE GROUND.

Philippe—Philippe? (TO D'AZYR:) You've killed him.

D'AZYR

Naturally.

HE WIPES HIS BLADE WITH HIS HANDKERCHIEF.

The man had a dangerous gift of eloquence.

HE STARTS TO LEAVE.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Come back, coward, and face me!

HE GRABS CHABRILLANE'S SWORD. D'AZYR STOPS.

CHABRILLANE

Oh come away, he's raving.

D'AZYR

He called me a coward.

ANDRE-LOUIS

You are! He frightened you. Complete your coward's work on me!

D'AZYR STARTS TO PULL HIS SWORD, THEN STOPS.

D'AZYR

I must forego that pleasure, Bastard. It would be bad form to cross swords with anyone so base-born. (TO CHABRILLANE:) And of course there's the girl, his cousin...it might complicate my plan...

HE LEAVES WITH CHABRILLANE. ANDRE-LOUIS SITS ON THE GROUND, HOLDING PHILIPPE'S BODY.

ANDRE-LOUIS

My friend. My foolish, moral friend.

HE KISSES HIS FOREHEAD, THEN FOLDS HIS ARMS. IN DOING SO, ANDRE FINDS A LITTLE PRAYER-BOOK OF PHILIPPE'S. HE OPENS THE BOOK, READS:

"To Philippe Vilmorin, If you insist on pursuing this priestly course, accept this missal from your doubting fiend, André-Louis Moreau."

HE KISSES THE BOOK, PLACES IT IN PHILIPPE'S FOLDED HANDS.

That odious man was afraid of you. Afraid of your "dangerous gift of eloquence". He killed you for it. It follows that I must avenge you...how? Adopt your passion? I'm not even sure I understand it. But I promise you, my friend, that what he feared in you he'll learn to dread in me.

M. KERCADIOU COMES RUNNING TOWARD ANDRE-LOUIS .

KERCADIOU

I've heard! I've heard! Such a fine young man, Philippe, so full of promise!

HE KNEELS BY THE BODY, CROSSES HIMSELF.

But the marquis is a hard man, and he feels very strongly in these political matters.

ANDRE-LOUIS GENTLY PUTS PHILIPPE'S BODY ON THE GROUND AND HE RISES.

He may be right. I've never killed a man for holding another opinion...in fact, I've never killed a man at all, not my nature, but men are differently made. You're as pale as a ghost, boy!

ANDRE-LOUIS

I'll have to tell his mother.

KERCADIOU

A pity he struck the marquis.

ANDRE-LOUIS

He was deliberately provoked.

KERCADIOU

Well, he provoked the provocation with his radical ideas. No good ever came from education, André. See what comes of it?

ANDRE-LOUIS

You criticize the victim but not the killer?

KERCADIOU

Killer? My God, boy, you're talking about the Marquis de La Tour d'Azyr! He's my neighbor, my friend—soon he'll stand in a closer relationship. He's asked for Aline's hand.

ANDRE-LOUIS

No!

KERCADIOU

And she hasn't objected. One of France's oldest families, my brother would have been so pleased.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Pleased to have his child united to a murderer?!

KERCADIOU

Don't make me cross with you, child—

ANDRE-LOUIS

What have you done, godfather?! You've sold Aline to the highest bidder—

KERCADIOU

She likes him!

ANDRE-LOUIS

Because you told her to like him—Cassassin! "Thou shalt not kill." That's the King's law as well as God's. He's broken it and I want him tried for it!

KERCADIOU

Absolutely not, my boy!

ANDRE-LOUIS

Absolutely! I'm going to Nantes!

KERCADIOU

Nantes?!

ANDRE-LOUIS

To lay my case before the King's Lieutenant

KERCADIOU

Lunacy! Don't you know what's going on there? There's a meeting of the Provincial Assembly there—the rabble's out of control—the King's Lieutenant will have his hands full with them and... (LIGHTBULB.) I know what's wrong, you haven't had a bite since breakfast! You get so fractious when you're hungry. Now go up to the kitchen and ask cook for a bite---

BUT ANDRE-LOUIS IS NOWHERE IN SIGHT.

NANTES. THE STREET.

A BALLAD SINGER IS SINGING *LA CARMAGNOLE*, A FOLK SONG.

*Mademoiselle, come dance with me,
Dance the Carmagnole with me.
Take pity and come dance with me,
Dance the Carmagnole with me.*

*First we tap with both our feet,
Then we swing around and meet,
Then take hands and form a ring,
Hold on tight and then we swing,
Dance the Carmagnole with me,
Come dance with me.*

THE CROWD SURGES, AS SOMEONE ELSE JOINS IN THE SONG.
A THIRD PERSON APPROACHES, RHODOMONT, WHO TAUNTS
THEM WITH ANOTHER VERSION OF THE SONG:

RHODOMONT

*Behold the Bishops, fat and sleek,
They bless the rich and scorn the weak.
The church's coffers bulge with gold
Whilst poor men starve and die of cold.
God's Lieutenants, so they say,
Will lead us all to judgment day,*

*Pater noster, let us pray,
Will you pass the Beaujolais?
Ah, the Carmagnole.*

ANDRE-LOUIS APPEARS, DRESSED FOR TOWN (HAT, COAT,
ETC.). HE LOOKS AROUND, SPOTS A FRIEND IN THE CROWD.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Chapelier!

CHAPELIER

What are you doing here, Moreau?

ANDRE-LOUIS

Isaac Chapelier!

THEY SHAKE HANDS ENERGETICALLY.

Come to see the sights.

CHAPELIER

You've dragged your lazy body all the way to Nantes to see the sights? You'll see plenty today, I promise you! How are you enjoying your bucolic retirement?

ANDRE-LOUIS

Well enough, until yesterday. I came to town seeking justice. I failed. For the love of God, what does a man have to do to speak to the King's Lieutenant? I was turned away at the door like a peddler.

CHAPELIER

Old friend, the King's Lieutenant has more important fish to fry. But wait—can this be the André-Louis Moreau I went to school with in Paris? Talking about justice? No, that man was cool, and indifferent to such things.

ANDRE-LOUIS

And so am I...was. My best friend was murdered yesterday, by the Marquis de La Tour d'Azyr. He was trying to get a little justice on behalf of a dead peasant but—

CHAPELIER

The marquis objected? (ANDRE-LOUIS NODS.) So he silenced your friend? (ANDRE-LOUIS NODS AGAIN, UNABLE TO SPEAK.) That's nothing new. (BEAT.) Well, well, you have the feeble beginnings of a cause. It must be nurtured. I wonder if your cause is my cause? Come, now, no time for tears, we'll fortify our selves with brandy, and then....

ANDRE-LOUIS

What?

CHAPELIER

I'll show you the sights.

CROSS FADE TO GAVRILLAC. KERCADIOU AS HE WAS. ALINE ENTERS.

ALINE

What has that scamp done to you?

KERCADIOU

He's given me a headache. I don't want to discuss it.

ALINE

Never mind, I'll pry it out of him when he gets back. He can't keep a secret from me, I just tickle him until...

SERVANT

You've a visitor, monsieur.

HE HANDS KERCADIOU A CARD, ALINE GRABS IT, READS IT:

ALINE

Madame de Plougastel?

KERCADIOU

Here? She's here?! (HE WAVES THE SERVANT OFF.) All the way from Paris? It's been ten years since her last visit.

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

Twelve, Quintin...old friend....

KERCADIOU

Therese....

HE KISSES HER HAND, THEN THEY EMBRACE AS OLD FRIENDS.

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

Let's have a look at youCa little more Asubstance@ in the bellyCbut you look wonderful. I, on the other hand....

KERCADIOU

Nonsense! Thérèse, what on earth are you doing here in Brittany?

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

Whim, mere whim. I was on my way to Paris, but Paris is so warm now, I decided to make a small detour, to check up on my old friend. I haven't come at a bad time?

HE KISSES HER HAND AGAIN.

Who's that shy young person, Quintin? It can't be C

KERCADIOU

It is! Aline, my niece Aline! (TO ALINE:) Child, this is my very dear old friend, Madame de Plougastel, you've heard me speak of her.

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

Not *too* old, Quintin. Such a pretty child. She has your brother's eyes.

SHE KISSES ALINE ON THE FOREHEAD.

And your good nature. How she's grown! Surrounded by beaux, I'll wager. (TO ALINE:) Take my advice, little one, don't choose the first fellow who tips his hat to you. Time...time and experience are the best guarantees of a happy match.

ALINE CURTSEYS.

KERCADIOU

Yes, but—

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

I've brought you a little gift, Aline, a locket C

ALINE

Look, it's engraved with a little "A"...for Aline.

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

Or for "Amour".

ALINE

It's lovely. Put it on me, please?

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

It suits you, my dear. But I remember another child here, a boy, about this high...?

ALINE

My cousin André, he's grown up too, been to school, been to Paris, studied law—

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

A lawyer, fancy. And he's here in Gavrillac?

ALINE

You've missed him by a day, madam. He's gone to Nantes.

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

Nantes....

ALINE

May I go admire my locket?

WITHOUT WAITING, SHE DASHES OFF. A BEAT, MME. DE PLOUGASTEL AND KERCADIOU LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

KERCADIOU

My dear. After all these years, why did you come, really? Curiosity?

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

Gavrillac--is pretty far off the beaten path to merely satisfy a whim of curiosity. I'm nervous, Quintin. I'm afraid there's a dangerous mood in Paris; it's spreading to the provinces.

KERCADIOU

Gavrillac's a sleepy place. Not much happens here.

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

I'm relieved. (SHE SEEMS TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT.) That girl's a beauty, Quintin, and clever too! My compliments to the chef. (HE BOWS, LAUGHS.) What about the boy?

KERCADIOU

André-Louis? He shows great promise...as a fisherman.

MME. DE PLOUGASTEL

How nice. Now, how long will you keep me standing before you ring for tea?

LIGHTS CROSS FADE TO:

NANTES.

THERE IS A CROWD, LISTENING TO A STUDENT ORATOR. HE STANDS AT THE BASE OF AN EQUESTRIAN STATUE. A MAN WITH A DRUM SLUNG AROUND HIS NECK PUNCTUATES THE YOUNG MAN'S POINTS. ANDRE-LOUIS AND CHAPELIER DRIFT INTO THE SCENE, AND LISTEN.

STUDENT

Citizens of Nantes, we *have* a king, but he is not our problem. He gave us his word that we will have our voice heard. No, King Louis is not the problem, the aristocracy is. They flout the king's authority! They think themselves the very sovereignty of Brittany!

MAN IN THE MOB

What's those big words mean, mister?

STUDENT

The king has dissolved their scandalous Estates of Brittany, but it did no good for even he is as powerless as a peasant

A DRUM BEAT. A BULLET IS FIRED. THE STUDENT FALLS TO THE GROUND. A HUSH, FOR A MOMENT, THEN THE CROWD TURNS UGLY.

MAN IN THE CROWD

Murder! They killed the lad!

ANOTHER

Who killed him?

CHABRILLANE APPEARS WITH A PISTOL, SINGS MOCKINGLY:

CHABRILLANE

*See the rabble, see the fools,
How they sweat to change the rules!
Inhale the stink of garlic breath;
I fear 'twill choke me quite to death.
The more they howl and grunt for power,
The more their schemes will all turn sour.
We'll string them up until they mould,
Revenge is best when eaten cold,
Ah, the Carmagnole!*

CHAPELIER

You see, André, how cheap a good man's life is? He wanted to change France.

ANDRE-LOUIS

Unfortunately his words were too big.

CHAPELIER

Don't mock him.

ANDRE-LOUIS

He couldn't rouse his audience quickly enoughC

CHAPELIER

Why don't you climb up there and show us how, Moreau?

ANDRE-LOUIS

What an interesting idea...

HE WADES INTO THE CROWD AND STARTS TO CLIMB UP THE
STATUE.

CHAPELIER

Moreau--André-Louis, no, I was joking! Come down fool, you'll ruin everything with your clowning!

ANDRE-LOUIS

Let go of me!

HE SHAKES OFF CHAPELIER. TO THE CROWD:

Citizens of Nantes! Just now you saw a murder before your very eyes. Yesterday, there were two murders. A poor peasant killed two birds, to feed his starving family. And he was shot in cold blood.

MUTTERS IN THE CROWD.

And then a priest, a godly man—not one of your fat bishops—he was murdered because he asked for justice for the dead man's widow. He was killed by a member of the nobility, the Marquis de La Tour d'Azyr. Do you know why?

MAN IN THE CROWD

Why?

ANDRE-LOUIS

Because the marquis was afraid.

CROWD

Why? Why? Afraid of a priest? (ETC.)

ANDRE-LOUIS

Because the priest had Right on his side. That was his powerC

ANOTHER VOICE IN THE CROWD

Your name? What is your name?

PURCHASE PERUSAL FOR FULL SCRIPT