

THE POWER AND THE GLORY

© by

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THE POWER & THE GLORY

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THE POWER & THE GLORY

DEDICATION

This play is dedicated to Gemma. Gemma isn't a wife, a daughter or family friend but was a small brown terrier bitch, one of two strays that I brought back from the local police station. She and her sister were small bundles of fun that ran around my feet and shoulders while I drove them home; she balanced on the top of armchairs; her small, rough tongue licked me awake in the mornings and, in short, for a while she brought me happiness.

It is to my eternal regret that whilst I was emotionally involved in the writing of this play, Gemma managed to open the rear metal gate of our house and ran down the drive into the freedom of the big wide world outside. Her freedom, like her, was short-lived because at the end of the drive there is a busy main road.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Whilst the play is fictitious and the characters in it do not represent any person living or dead, the story itself is based upon two events that actually occurred. One was in a small French village at the end of the Second World War and the other happened in Russia with the birth of communism. Some people may find the play disturbing and will take comfort from the fact that the soldiers depicted are German but history indicates that they could quite easily have been British, American or any other nationality. The point is not that they are German but that they are soldiers.

THE POWER & THE GLORY

CHARACTERS

PREAMBLE

Old Man	shabbily dressed, alcoholic doctor suffering from terminal illness
Tourist	British tourist on bicycle who may be either male or female

VILLAGERS

Mdme. Fabergé	Middle aged woman suffering from arthritis who is dressed in widow's weeds.
Francine	Her fifteen-year-old daughter
Christine	Francine's younger sister
Phillipe	Younger brother who is a scallywag
Father Rambert	Elderly French priest with a quiet disposition
Sist. Madelaine	Small determined woman of similar age to Rambert in charge of the Sisters of Mercy, a teaching order of nuns
Sister Claire	One of the Sisters of Mercy
Sister Louise	Another of the Sisters
Mr. Langouste	Shop owner and mayor of the village who also owns most of Pompadour
Mdme. Langouste	His pretentious wife
Angeline	Elder daughter of above, plain and overweight
Beatrice	Younger daughter, equally spoilt and pretentious
Madame Doucier	Foul-mouthed landlady of local hostelry
Yvette	Attractive waitress at hostelry who is deaf and dumb
Mr Vendet	Local lawyer
Mr. Le Clef	Local policeman
Mr. La Terre	Funeral director

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Mdme. La Terre His wife
Mme. Villeneuve Local doctor

SOLDIERS

Major Lammerding German officer with natural charisma who is cold, calm and calculating in his approach

Captain Pfenig Good looking man in the smooth mould of Lammerding whose main problem is his attraction to and for the opposite sex

Lieut. Schlater Scheming, bitter individual who has not got on as he would wish and would do anything to better himself

Sgt Schultz Ruddy faced simple man who used to work as a cook in the family cafe before joining up

Sgt Jungen Intelligent and sensitive man who is out of place in the lower ranks. He writes books in his spare time but hasn't got on in the army because of his anti-establishment views

Sgt Kranz Dark featured man who used to work in a slaughterhouse

Corp. Muller Thief and general factotum who is completely amoral and can obtain anything from anywhere

Peter Schafer Sixteen-year-old naive boy-soldier who has just joined up

THE POWER & THE GLORY

(On the front apron, set in a grassy bank, is a broken crossroads sign leaning over at an angle - one of the arms in feint lettering reads "Pompadour" but it points to the sky and we are unable to tell in which way it was originally facing. It is a warm summer's day. The birds are singing. From the other side of the stage comes an old man carrying a battered doctor's bag. He is dressed in a dusty, shabby suit and wears a battered hat. When he gets to the sign he glances at it, removes the hat to wipe his forehead with his sleeve, then sits down and opens the bag. Taking a whiskey bottle from it he takes a swig, replaces the bottle, then sits fanning himself with his hat, occasionally swatting himself with the other hand whenever a fly lands on him. Despite the summer sun his face is pale and occasionally he coughs a dry, persistent cough.

After a few moments a tourist on a bicycle comes from the same direction. (S)he is wearing shorts and looks every inch the visitor out on an exploratory cycle ride. (S)he rides past the old man and the sign then is unsure which road to take, (s)he stops and taking a map from the cycle rack checks the position then turns back towards the old man)

Tourist Excusez moi

(The old man ignores the tourist and continues wafting the air with his hat)

Excuse me but is this the road for Pompadour?

(S)he is still ignored)

Damned locals - haven't the manners they were born with

((S)he folds up his map and is about to continue when the old man speaks)

Old Man (Dourly) I speak English ... you're looking for Pompadour?

Tourist Yes. Is this the right road?

Old Man It might be

Tourist What d'you mean "Might be?" Either it is or it isn't

Old Man On the one hand it might be - on the other hand it might not

Tourist Look, I haven't got time to waste playing guessing games

Old Man You're very busy are you?

Tourist I am as a matter of fact

Old Man (Taking a bottle out of his bag) Then you won't have time for a drink?

Tourist No thanks, too early for me

Old Man Suit yourself (He takes a swig and continues wafting himself with his hat)

Tourist (Realising its the only way (s)he's going to get the information)

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Go on then, just a drop.

([S]he puts down the bike and sits next to the old man who offers the bottle. The tourist takes a tentative swig, which almost chokes him/her)

Tourist God, that's strong

Old Man Staying locally are you?

Tourist At the caravan site

Old Man What is it that makes you want to visit the famous Pompadour?

Tourist I'd have thought that would have been obvious. I read an article about it in a magazine and being so near I thought I might as well pop in and see for myself

Old Man Like a lot of them do

Tourist They say they've left it just as it was. Is that correct?

Old Man Yes, just as it was

Tourist Are you from round here yourself then?

Old Man No, I'm not from round here.... (Slight pause) What would you say if I offered you a personally guided tour?

Tourist That would be very kind of you ... but if you're not from round here how can you do that? Have you been before?

Old Man Oh yes, I've been before - many times - I come back most years ... but somehow I think this might be my last

(He begins to cough badly and reaches for a handkerchief in which to spit)

Tourist Are you all right?

Old Man As well as can be expected ... tell me friend, are you any good at keeping secrets?

Tourist What do you mean? You mean like when you're a child?

Old Man No, I mean a real secret, something that's burning away inside you for years and years until you feel you can't stand it any longer, you just have to let it out, to tell somebody, because if you don't you know you won't get any peace for the rest of eternity

Tourist I've never had one quite like that

Old Man I have such a secret, my friend, and the time has come to tell someone

Tourist But why me? You don't know me from Adam

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Old Man Exactly. You have arrived at the right place at the right time - life is like that, it picks you out for no apparent reason.... (thoughtfully) for better or worse ... You want to know about Pompadour? O. K. I'll tell you about Pompadour... I'll tell you a story, a story that has never been told to anyone before today ... a story that will make your hair stand on end and your heart miss a beat ... a story that began on such a day as this ... I remember the war was almost over

(The lights fade on the pair and come up on the other side of the apron where there is the wall of a bridge over a country river. There is birdsong and the reflection of the water on the underside of the bridge. We hear the sound of army lorries approaching then stopping, doors banging and distant voices shout orders in German. A group of three sergeants appear. They are half-shaven and war-weary from recent encounters)

Schultz "When are we going to eat?" That's all they think about, their bellies and their bowels

Jungen Just like my lot

Kranz You' re too soft on them, you want hear any of mine complaining. Give them an inch-

Jungen And they take a mile. Talking of taking, did you see that hen house down the road?

Kranz We did. We thought about Muller as we passed it

Muller (Coming on last) What do you mean you passed it? You know what they say - "Never look a gift horse in the mouth" - or a gift chicken for that matter (he opens his tunic and produces a dead chicken) I thought this might come in useful

Jungen You're an animal - you know that?

Muller A man's got to live hasn't he

Schultz Are you sure we're at the right place?

Jungen "By the bridge," he said. I don' t see any other bridges round here

Kranz What the hell does he want to bring us down here for anyway? The place looks like a one-horse town on the map

Muller Perhaps he knows something that we don't

Jungen And perhaps he's on another of his detours

(A 16yr old boy soldier enters)

Peter Excuse me, Sir

Muller "Sir?" Did you hear that?

Jungen You don' t have to call him "Sir", son, he' a not an officer

Peter Sorry sir

Jungen And neither am I

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Peter I just wondered which group I should go with?

Kranz We don't know yet, just wait with the others till the boss arrives

Jungen He can wait here. Hang about son, we'll ask him

Muller You ask him, the last time I asked him something petty he nearly bit my head off

Schultz How old are you son?

Peter Seven -

Schultz The truth

Peter Sixteen - but I'll soon be seventeen

Schultz Sixteen - they're sending us children now

Muller (Giving him a water bottle) Nip and fetch us some water lad
(The boy goes off to get water from the river)

Jungen That should tell you something about the state of the war Muller

Muller We ask for men and that's what they send us

Kranz Perhaps that's all they have left

Jungen There was a time when they wouldn't have let the likes of him even enlist

Kranz Do you think the rumour's true then?

Jungen Why else do you think we're headed north

Schultz So it could be the turning point?

Muller Turning point my arse. If they come our lads will drive them into the sea

Kranz I hope you're right

Jungen I hope he's wrong
(The boy returns with the water)
Thanks

Muller What d'you mean you hope he's wrong? You want to lose the war?

Jungen I don't care any more about winning or losing, I've had enough of it. I just want to get home, back to my family and back to normality

Kranz You shouldn't talk like that in front of the boy

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Jungen Why not?

Kranz Sgt Jungen's talking out of turn. He's seen too much of the action

Jungen (Stressfully turning on him) Perhaps I've just had enough of sticking my hand into cow pats every five yards of the way checking for landmines, sleeping in bloody draughty tents and haystacks every night instead of my own bed - you weren't on the Russian front were you?

Kranz No

Jungen Well I was. I've had five years of this frigging war and all it entails - I've seen things there that would make your blood curdle so don't come it with me - all right?

 (Awkward pause)

Schultz So what will you do when you get home Jungen, if you get home? Go back to your classroom?

Jungen I might. I might even try writing full time

Peter You're a writer?

Kranz Oh yes, you're mixing with the hoypoloy now, son

Peter Have you ever had anything published?

Jungen One or two plays, a novel

Peter That's marvelous, you must let me read one

Schultz You'll be lucky, he hasn't shown any of them to us

Jungen There's an old saying about casting pearls before the swine.

Schultz I must admit the thought of getting back is very attractive. You know what I'm going to do after all this is over - head straight for the family cafe - I can almost smell the smell of the food drifting out of the kitchen ...

Muller That's not a bad number, they're always wanting food. What about you Kranz? Have you got a job to go to?

Kranz I have

Muller Don't tell me, with a miserable face like that you're probably a funeral director?

Kranz Not far off - the family's got a knacker's yard

Peter (Interested) You're one of those people who puts animals to sleep? I've often wondered how they do that. (innocently) Have you ever had to kill anything yourself?

 (There are knowing looks exchanged between the hardened war veterans)

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Kranz Yes - yes, I've killed things, son, in my time. It's not as easy as you think though, there's an art to it, like everything else
- (He smiles at the others)
- Peter I've always wanted to know something. You know when the animals are going in at the end, don't they ever get wind of what's about to happen?
- Kranz Not if you do the job right. You have to keep the place spotlessly clean otherwise they get the smell of the blood - if one of them as much as gets a whiff of it, it can cause a hell of a panic - for the most part though, once they see there's no way out they just seem to accept what's coming and take their turn (he gives another knowing look to the others who smile back - all except for Jungen)
- Schultz What about you Muller?
- Muller I'll be doing exactly the same as I'm doing now
- Jungen Robbing and stealing.
- Muller Please, I prefer to call it redistribution of wealth
- Schultz Can I tell them about the sheep?
- Muller Please yourself
- Kranz Don't tell me he nicked a sheep as well?
- Schultz He didn't actually nick one - he told me he once screwed one
- (General disbelief)
- Kranz You what? He screwed a sheep? You're having us on.
- Schultz It's true, the man's an animal
- Kranz (Amidst laughter) Was it rape then or did the sheep consent?
- Jungen And more to the point, Muller, the really important thing I'd like to find out - was it an ugly sheep or was it a pretty one?
- (There is general laughter and while everyone is laughing the senior officers, Major Lammerding, Captain Pfenig and Lieutenant Schlater come in. The laughter ceases abruptly and everyone stands to attention in fear of their authority)
- Major L Please gentlemen, don't let us disturb you
- Schlater What's the joke?
- Schultz Muller was just telling us about the time he had some French mutton, Sir
- Major L Really? I like a bit of mutton myself now and again

THE POWER & THE GLORY

(They laugh again)

Schlater Quiet!

Schlater (Sees Peter) You boy - what are you doing here?

Peter (Terrified) I've just arrived, sir - I didn't know which group to go with

Schlater Didn't they teach you anything at training school?

Peter Sir?

Schlater Your tunic's undone

Peter (Doing it up) Sorry sir

Major L You want to know which group to go with? You're the teacher Jungen, I'm sure you're "very good" with young boys. You can take him under your wing

Jungen Sir

Major L Now then - stand at ease ... I expect you're wondering why we've brought you down here

Kranz We said you probably knew something that we didn't

Major L On the contrary, Kranz, I know exactly the same as you. (To Pfenig) You have the intelligence report?

Pfenig (Glancing at his notes) The village is small, about six hundred inhabitants and there are no reports of any activity from the maquis. It's very isolated - on the one side there's a river and on the other a steep cliff - this road appears to be the only way in or out. They won't be used to the sight of our uniforms and if the truth were known they probably don't even know there's a war going on

Major L So why am I bringing you here? You may have heard a rumour about some activity up north - well it's true - it's believed that the enemy may attempt to establish a beach-head there - the exact location isn't yet known and we are awaiting orders as to our future role.
Until those orders arrive we have a little spare time on our hands - I suggest we use it accordingly and relax a little before the big push

Muller Which hotel are we taking over sir?

Major L On this occasion, Muller, we aren't "taking over" any hotel. This is to be a low-key affair - we don't want to draw any unnecessary attention to ourselves. We'll find accommodation in the normal way and pay for it like any other tourist –

(seeing the surprise on their faces) Yes, I said pay - I want our stay here to be as uneventful as possible and to that end I must ask you all to remind your men there is to be no undue fraternizing with the local inhabitants, no unnecessary violence and no drunkenness - do I make myself clear?

THE POWER & THE GLORY

All Sir

Major L All being well, we shall spend a pleasant few days here before moving on and if we behave ourselves as the "perfect gentlemen" that I know we all are, I've no doubt we shall have them all eating out of our hands

(For a second the scene is frozen as organ music cross fades and the lights go down on the bridge to come up inside the church at Pompadour. Outside the church there is a large wooden cross while inside the sunlight floods through a leaded window onto the scene. The pews are sparsely populated as though this is a village with no great demand for spirituality at the moment and there are a few villagers kneeling at the altar rail literally eating out of the hands of the elderly Father Rambert)

Rambert The Lord Jesus, in the night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks He brake it saying, "This is my body, which is given for you: do this in remembrance of Me"

(He goes along the line putting the wafers onto their tongues)

In like manner, also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the New Covenant in My blood: do this, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me"

(He then goes along the kneeling group at the rail with the wine repeating as he goes in muffled tones)

In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti

(After he has finished they all go back to their seats and bow their heads as Father Rambert solemnly gives the blessing)

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us and remain with us now and for evermore

All Amen

(The service is over and the organ strikes up quietly in the background as Rambert goes to the church door to bid farewell to his flock)

Mme L A very good sermon father

Angeline Yes, very good

Beatrice Papa only fell asleep the once

Langouste I beg your pardon young lady? I did no such thing, I was merely resting my eyes - I heard every word

Beatrice Go on then, what was he talking about?

Langouste He was ... it was ... something about eating

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Beatrice See! I told you he was asleep - it wasn't about eating, Papa, it was about not eating, over-indulgence, something you should know a great deal about - how abstinence is supposed to be good for the soul
- Langouste Are you implying, young lady, that I'm overweight
- Mdme L You are a little, Bernard
- Langouste I am well made, that's all, I have large bones - I don't know, the children of today, you bring them into the world, bring them up as best as you can and this is all the thanks you get
- Rambert (To three nuns) Sister Madeleine
- Sister M Father
- Father R How are you?
- Sister M Fine
- Father R I hear you're expecting a rise in class numbers next term?
- Sister M Apparently so but we'll get by somehow - with the Lord's help
- Father R We never know what the future will bring
- Sister M That's true
- Father And how is Sister Claire?
- Claire I'm very well father
- Father R And Sister Louise?
- Sister L Very well - and what about yourself father? Did I notice you having a little trouble with your arthritis?
- Father R Yes, it comes and it goes. The spirit is willing but the body is weak, past its working life, but you can expect a few creaks and groans when you get to my age. Thank God I can still bend my knees in prayer - it takes a little longer lately but I'm sure the Lord is patient
- Sister L I'm sure he is
- Father R (To lawyer) Monsieur Vendet
- Mr Vendet (Nodding) Father ... Have you thought any more about my suggestion?
- Father R I have - and I know I should make a will but I can never get round to it - you lawyers charge such extortionate fees - dying seems such an expensive business
- Mr Vendet Even more expensive if you die intestate, father

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Father R But not my worry then, eh?

Mr Vendet You know where I am if you change your mind

Father R (Shaking hands with the next) Monsieur Le Clef - how is the police force? Still locking them up are we?

Le Clef Yes father, still locking them up - mine is an occupation that never changes - while-ever they have hands at the end of their arms they'll keep on thieving - I don't think you'll see many of my clients here today

Father R That's true - where would we be without you?

Le Clef Where indeed.

Father R (Shaking another hand) Monsieur La Terre – it's a long while since we've seen you here

La Terre I haven't been well, father

Father R Nothing serious I hope

La Terre Just a little back problem

Father R A funeral director with a bad back? An awkward ailment in your trade - all that lifting ... and how is Madame La Terre?

Mdme L T Very well, father - he won't listen to me - I've told him he's getting too old for it but he won't employ anyone

La Terre Labour costs money - she thinks we're made of it.

Father R She might be right, La Terre, you're not as young as you used to be - you'll have to be careful – who's going to bury you when the time comes?

La Terre (Confidentially) I have an arrangement with Golfier in the next village

Father R Very wise - (To doctor) Madame Villeneuve - you make up the set, you bring them into the world, I christen and marry then and La Terre finishes off the job for us

Doctor You look after their souls father but I look after their bodies

Father R But which is more important eh? Answer me that. You know what they say: "Man cannot live by bread alone"

Doctor Yes but it helps, father, it does help

Father R (A young boy and girl with their elder sister) And last but not least the Fabergés - you'll tell me honestly if it was a good sermon won't you?

Christine F There was a butterfly, father, a butterfly in the church

Father R A butterfly eh? And I thought you had your minds on heavenly things

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Phillipe F It went right up to the roof, it had wonderful blue wings

Father R Did it now? And what did you make of that?

Christine I think it was probably looking for God

Father R You could be right child but aren't we all? (To elder sister) And how is your dear mother, Francine?

Francine She's no better I'm afraid - she asked to be remembered to you

Father R Tell her I've sorted everything out for the funeral. She's got nothing to worry about

Francine That's very kind of you

Father R A very sad time and so unexpected. Your father seemed such a strong man. Have you had any more thoughts about your own future?

Francine I still have my heart set on joining Sister Madelaine but mother says I'll probably have to work in the bread shop

Father R You tell her from me you're worth more than a shop assistant

Francine She says they'll always want bread

Father Anyone can sell bread - it takes a special sort of person to deliver the word of God
(The soldiers enter led by Lammerding)

Phillipe Who are those men?

Father R Soldiers

Major L (Pleasantly) Good morning father - Major Lammerding. I wonder if you could direct me to the person in charge

Father R Monsieur Langouste is our mayor - (calling to him) Monsieur Langouste
(He comes over)

Langouste Father?

Father R This gentleman is asking for the person in charge

Langouste They have elected me mayor but I don't know about being "in charge"

Father R He's very modest, he owns anything round here that's worth owning

Langouste Can I help you?

Major L My name is Major Lammerding. My men and I are in need of some lodgings for a few days.

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Monsieur L We are a small community

Major L There is a hotel?

Langouste Yes but it isn't large

Major L No matter - if you could direct me

(Langouste takes Lammerding and his group pointing them up the road. Peter and Francine exchange a look of mutual interest)

Francine F What do you suppose they want?

Father R I don't know.

Francine F They seem pleasant enough

Father R (Not totally convinced) They do, don't they

Christine Now look what's happened, the sun's gone in

Francine Its only a passing cloud

Phillipe Perhaps there's going to be a storm

Father R (Still looking at the soldiers) Yes. If I were you, Francine, I'd get the children home now safely while you can

Francine Come on then

(She ushers the children out while the old priest stands at his church door looking thoughtfully in the direction of the departing soldiers)

(The next scene finds Madame Doucier, the slovenly maitresse of the local hotel showing Lammerding and his men around the barn at the back)

Madame D There is always this - it isn't much but its dry and it's warm

Lammerding What do you usually keep in here?

Madame D The animals in winter

Lammerding Then it should suit my men down to the ground

Kranz But sir?

Lammerding You have a problem Kranz?

Kranz (Recognizing the look) No, sir

Lammerding We'll take it - Pfenig see to it that everything's arranged

Madame D If you'd like to come this way I'll show you your rooms

THE POWER & THE GLORY

(They go out leaving the sergeants and the boy. Madame Doucier on leaving casts a sickly smile towards Muller)

- Muller (Impersonating her) "I'll show you your rooms" - bloody typical - officers in the best rooms and us in the shithouse as usual
- Schultz It's not a shithouse it an outhouse
- Muller Whatever
- Jungen You ought to think yourself honoured Muller - it was in quarters such as these that the saviour was born
- Muller Don't give me that Christian shit
- Jungen We are all of us made in the image of God, Muller, even you
- Kranz He must be a queer looking bastard then, that's all I can say
- Jungen If you don't like it you can always complain
(The others laugh knowing it wouldn't do any good)
- Schultz You know what Muller? I reckon she fancies you
- Muller You what?
- Schultz Did you see the way she was looking at you?
- Kranz I know he's hard up but he's not that hard up
- Muller I don't know, I've had worse
- Kranz I should stick to sheep Muller, at least you don't have to wine and dine them before you get your end away
- Schultz That's a point - I wonder how much grass it takes to get a sheep pissed
(General laughter)
- Jungen You're making the boy blush
- Kranz He'd sooner hear that than go deaf
- Jungen Ignore them - they have minds like sewers - I feel the need of some fresh air
(Jungen goes outside away from the group and Peter follows)
(To Peter) Cigarette?
- Peter No thanks

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Jungen Very wise ... I must apologise for my colleagues - they are sometimes a little 'basic'
- Peter That's O.K.... can I ask you something?
- Jungen Ask away
- Peter If you're a writer what are you doing in the army?
- Jungen I could ask the same of you - what does a boy of sixteen want with a uniform?
- Peter Its something I've always wanted to do. I used to hear the soldiers going down the street at home, the music playing and the feet marching and it gave me such a thrill. I would run to the window to watch them go by. It was fascinating, like watching a great machine in action, the sound of their boots hitting the ground and I just wanted to be a part of it
- Jungen You fell for the razzamatazz
- Peter Don't you enjoy being a soldier then?
- Jungen I don't think enjoy" is quite the right word – I "endure" it ... I started with great ideals like you but I soon learned the reality. There's more to it than marching bands and bugles - that's the hook that they use to get you in - the promise of glory – “Come and fight for your country and make it great again" - then when they've got you where they want you there's no turning back - you' re a part of the system, rules and regulations - and all aimed at one thing - controlling the individual
- Peter You've got to have discipline or people wouldn't carry out orders
- Jungen That's true and that's how they work it - first they get you used to doing simple things so that when the time comes you'll do anything they want
- Peter Nobody does anything they don't want
- Jungen (Thoughtfully) Don't they?
- Peter I certainly wouldn't ... does everyone feel the way you do?
- Jungen No, most of them lap it up, they can't get enough of it. They love the feeling of being in control - perhaps I'm made differently or perhaps I've just seen too much
- Peter Too much of what?
- Jungen Wait and see ...
- Kranz (Coming out) Now then, what's going on here? I'm not interrupting anything am I?
- Jungen (Going off) No Kranz, you're not interrupting anything - I'll leave the boy to your tender mercies
- Kranz He's a funny old sod that one - what's he been telling you?
- Peter Just about the war

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Kranz You've got to take everything he says with a pinch of salt. He's a lefty, a thinker and the one thing this army doesn't need at the moment is thinkers...Do you play cards lad? We're just setting them up
- Peter I don't know
- Kranz Come on - you got any money?
- Peter A little
- Kranz Great - don't worry, we'll show you how to go on, you'll soon pick it up
- (The officers are being shown the guests' lounge by the maitresse)
- Madme D And this is the lounge - we don't use it normally except for special occasions - weddings, funerals, that sort of thing but you're quite welcome to make use of it
- Major L You're very kind - I see you have a piano
- Madme D Yes but it might need tuning - do you play yourself Major?
- Major L A little
- Madme D I do like a man who can play, it shows such breeding, don't you think? I've never been able to get the hang of it myself
- Major L (Indicating the stool) Do you mind?
- Madme D Be my guest
- (Major L sits down and runs his fingers over the keys)
- Madme D Very nice – I'd give my eye-teeth to be able to play like that.... well, I'd better be going about my business - there is one thing Major. I know we agreed a price but I wondered if you could just see your way clear to - you know - leaving a small deposit in advance
- Schlater You'll get your money in due -
- Major L (Interrupting) That's no problem Madame - Captain Pfenig will see to everything - (To Pfenig) Sort it
- Pfenig (Goes off with her) Sir
- Madme D And I 'ope your stay with us will be very enjoyable
- (She exits)
- Schlater (After she's gone) The cheeky cow - the beds are damp, the wallpaper's peeling and there are cockroaches in the cupboards - she's charging us exorbitant rates and then she asks for an advance - I'd have told her where to get off

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Major L Innkeepers are the same the world over Schlater, you ought to know that by now - and beggars can' t be choosers
- Schlater I'd make her beg given half a chance
- Major L If you'll excuse me, I think I'm going to lie down - I think I have one of my migraines coming on
- (He goes out holding his head as Pfenig returns)
- Schlater Him and his migraines, they'll be the death of him
- Pfenig The death of someone
- Schlater Have you seen the bedrooms? There isn't room to swing a cat ... I notice you got the biggest one again
- Pfenig Rank has its privileges, Schlater
- Schlater I always end up getting second best
- Pfenig Your time will come, all you need is a little patience
- Schlater Patience? I've just about run out of it
- Pfenig I'll tell you what, after I'm gone you can have the bigger room
- Schlater (Excitedly) Have you heard something?
- Pfenig No. I've told you, promotion doesn't matter to me like it does to you - I don't know why you get so all het up about it - if they're going to promote you they'll promote you and all the huffing and puffing in the world won't change things. Why is it so important to you?
- Schlater It just is
- Pfenig You won't do yourself any good worrying about it.
- Schlater That's what makes it even more annoying - I have to sit back and watch people like you getting on when you're not even bothered - all you're interested in is wine, women and song
- Pfenig (Laughing) But not necessarily in that order, eh? Lord knows what we're going to do for them in this Godforsaken hole
- (Madame D knocks on door and comes in with glasses on a tray followed by Yvette the serving girl)
- Madme D The major ordered this
- Schlater Put it on the table
- Pfenig (Smiling at the girl) Well now, things are looking up already

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Madme D I'll put it on the bill

Pfenig (To Yvette) You, young lady, what's your name?

(She apparently ignores him)

I said what's your name? Don't play the insolent with me

Madme D She's not insolent sir, she can't hear you -she's deaf and dumb

Pfenig Oh!

Madme D She can lip-read though

(Yvette has now turned to Pfenig)

Pfenig (Precisely) You have a name?

Madme D It's Yvette

Pfenig Yvette? Very pretty - like its owner

(Yvette understands and smiles shyly at him before going out followed by Madame Doucier)

Perhaps things aren't going to be as boring here as I'd first imagined

Schlater You heard what the boss said, no drunkenness and no fraternizing with the residents

Pfenig I wasn't exactly thinking of 'brotherly' love....

(The scene changes to the sparse home of Francine where the mother lies ill on a sofa. The dog is tied to a table leg as the children come rushing in from church)

Christine We're home, maman!

Phillipe Have you been a good boy, Chico?

Mother He hasn't stopped whining since you went out

Phillipe He misses us - he thought we'd left him but we hadn't, had we boy?

Francine Have you been O.K.?

Mother Much the same

Francine Is there anything you want me to do?

Mother (Struggling to move) I've got to get up and make some lunch

Francine I can do that, you stay where you are

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Mother There's some soup on the stove

(Francine busies herself putting out bread etc on the table)

Mother I feel so useless ... was it a good service then?

Francine Same as always

Phillipe It was dead boring

Christine I saw this butterfly in the church with blue wings

Phillipe You did not, I saw it first

Christine No you didn't

Francine Does it matter who saw it first.

Mother What was the sermon?

Francine Abstinence being good for the soul

Mother Hah! That's a laugh when you see some of hem - Langouste could do with a bit of that. What do they know about abstinence? They don't have to bring up a family on a pittance

Phillipe And we saw some German soldiers

Mother Soldiers?

Phillipe They were looking for somewhere to stay

Christine Monsieur Langouste took them to the hotel

Mother Soldiers, that's all we need

Christine What d'you suppose they're doing here?

Mother Lord knows

Phillipe Perhaps they're looking for trouble-makers - they'll put them all up against a wall and (he imitates a machine gun) rat-tat-tat-tat

Francine For goodness sake Phillipe, grow up - make yourself useful and give Chico his dinner - there are some bones outside

Phillipe Would you like that Chico? Would you like some dinner?

(He takes the dog out)

Christine It was my turn to feed him, Phillipe did it yesterday

Francine I don't care whose turn it is just as long as he gets fed

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Mother The damned dog gets too much anyway, he's fatter than the rest of us put together

Francine You can feed the birds Christine, here

 (She gives her some bread and she too goes out)

Francine (Busyng herself with the soup at the stove) I saw Father Rambert after church

Mother Really?

Francine He was asking after you - he said everything's ready for tomorrow

Mother I never thought I'd see the day I'd be burying my own husband - the way I feel at the moment I won't be far behind him

Francine Don't talk like that

Mother That's how I feel. Sometimes I close my eyes at night and pray that the good Lord will take me while I sleep but each day the morning comes and with it the pain

Francine (Hesitant) He was ...

Mother Yes?

Francine He was asking me if I'd thought any more about the future

Mother Stupid man - putting silly ideas into your head

Francine Why are they silly?

Mother Look, we've discussed it before, it's all settled

Francine By you

Mother I'm not having any daughter of mine giving up her life for no good reason to go into a convent

Francine There is good reason - there's love

Mother You can't love a god, you can worship him - I don't mind that - I don't mind you going to church every other day and three times on Sunday but a woman's place is at home with her children

Francine I'll be with children, it's a teaching order

Mother But they're not your own, there is a difference ... "love" indeed

Francine How else can I describe it? I feel it as I get near to the church, as I walk in through the door, in the quietness of the building and the echoing of my footsteps on the cold stone floor - its the most wonderful sensation - I look up at his face lit by the sunlight coming through the window and it just feels so ... so ...

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Mother Childish infatuation

Francine It's not

Mother Three years ago you were in love with your teacher, then it was the turn of the postman and now its Christ's turn - you'll grow out of it

Francine How can you say that?

Mother Sisters of Mercy! What do they know about mercy? Forgiveness? What have they ever had to forgive? At least if you've lived with a man you know the true meaning of forgiveness. Admittedly you don't know what you're letting yourself in for at the beginning, Lord knows its not all roses and clover, but its better than a nunnery - you have the good times and the bad times, the arguments when he comes home drunk now and again and the making up afterwards - its not perfect but its better than nothing ... when he takes you in his arms and tells you he loves you, you won't get that from your God, when he gives you a cuddle and tries to get round you and eventually you tell him that all is forgiven - a man won't bring you happiness, Francine, he'll bring you tears as well as joy but at least he'll give you love, real love and put bread on the table when you need it. Will your God do that for you? If only your father was alive ...

Phillipe (Appearing at the door) Now what are you arguing about?

Francine We weren't arguing

Christine Yes you were, we heard you

Francine We were discussing something, there's a difference. Now come in and have your soup

Phillipe I hate soup

Francine Don't be rude

Mother Have you washed your hands?

Christine I have

Francine Phillipe?

Phillipe They weren't dirty

Francine Go and wash then

 (He spits on them and rubs them on his trousers)

 Properly

Phillipe I don't see what all the fuss is about - Chico never has to wash his hands

Francine He's a dog and you're not

 (Phillipe goes out to the pump)

THE POWER & THE GLORY

I don't know where he gets it from

Mother Don't look at me

Francine Do you want to come up to the table?

Mother You can bring it over here

(She takes some soup to her mother)

Christine He doesn't wash them, you know, he only pretends

Francine Don't tell tales Christine, God prefers those who keep their own counsel

(Phillipe returns)

Are they clean? (He nods)

Let me see (she inspects them again) They'll have to do I suppose (Phillipe grins cheekily and is about to start) We haven't said Grace yet

Phillipe Aw!

Francine Hands together, eyes closed - you too Christine (they do so while Phillipe peeps) "For what we are about to receive may the Lord make us truly thankful ... Amen"

Phillipe If I get born again I'm going to come back as a dog

Francine Manners are the one thing that separates us from the animals - do you wish to be thought of as an animal Phillipe?

Christine I already think of him as an animal! (Phillipe kicks her under the table) Ow!

(Phillipe has tasted the soup and put down his spoon)

Francine Now what's up?

Phillipe Its got bits in

Francine Of course it's got bits in - that's the meat

Phillipe I don't like it

Francine What do you mean you don't like it?

Phillipe I don't like it

Francine You'd eat it if you were hungry

Phillipe I am hungry but I still don't like it

Mother For goodness sake, give him some bread and jam

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Francine He should be made to eat it, Langouste's meat is expensive

Mother Anything for a quiet life

Francine Have you been eating sweets again?

Phillipe No

Francine I bet you have. Why can't you eat it nicely like your sister?

(He turns to look at Christine who is eating angelically. He pulls a face at her and puts out his tongue)

(The lights dim and come up again at the bridge - Peter is throwing pebbles into the water as Francine comes along on her evening walk).

Francine I'm sorry, I didn't mean to make you jump

Peter That's all right, I was miles away

Francine You speak French?

Peter A little (Holding out a hand) Peter

Francine (Not taking it) Francine

Peter "Francine." Nice name

Francine You think so?

Peter Definitely

(They both stare over the bridge towards the water for a while then he turns and offers her a coin)

Francine What's this?

Peter A German penny for your thoughts

Francine (Trying to return it) There's no need

Peter What's the big decision?

Francine Whether to stay at home or to leave

Peter You must leave

Francine Just like that?

Peter That's what I did. I haven't regretted it yet – why are you looking so worried?

Francine I'll be in trouble if my mother hears that I've been talking to a German soldier

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Peter And I'm not supposed to talk to you so that makes two of us. Where will you go if you leave?

Francine Not far - just to the convent school

Peter Convent? You're not going to be a nun?

Francine Why not?

Peter It'd be such a waste

Francine Why?

Peter You're far too pretty for that - nuns are supposed to be old and plain and wrinkly and you're none of those things

Francine Thank you very much

Peter Well you're not ... isn't there anything else you can do?

Francine My mother wants me to work in the bread shop

Peter Good for her

Francine But I'm not going to

Peter Made up your mind have you?

Francine I think so, but it's such a big decision

Peter Don't you want to get married?

Francine I will be married - to the Lord

Peter I mean properly married, settle down and have a family?

Francine You don't understand, it's a calling

Peter I do - that's how I felt when I wanted to join up

Francine It's not quite the same

Peter Isn't it? It felt like a calling to me, something I'd always wanted to do - my mother didn't want me to go either

Francine You're the first German soldiers we've seen down here

Peter Do we come up to expectations?

Francine There are some strange stories going round, you don't know what to believe - I thought you'd all have two heads

Peter No, only the one

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Francine What are you doing here?

Peter I can't say ... well actually I don't really know yet - I've just joined them

Francine What does your unit do?

Peter I can't tell you that either because I don't know - something to do with counter-espionage, looking for terrorists, that kind of thing

Francine I don't think you'll find many of those in Pompadour

Peter You never know, you could be one

Francine (Smiles) Then you'd have to arrest me

Peter That sounds like a good idea - you're sure you're not a terrorist?

Francine 'Fraid not

Peter Pity ... Is it a good place to live?

Francine It's very boring, nothing eventful ever happens – we get the occasional tourist coming to look at the church in summer but that's about it

 (There is the sound of the church bell sounding in the distance)

Peter What's that?

Francine The bell for evening service - I'd better be going

Peter You go to morning and evening service?

Francine And Sunday School

Peter You must be either very good or very bad

Francine My mother thinks it's a stage I'm going through

Peter I hope she's right, it'd be a great waste for you to be a nun - really, I mean it

Francine How can you say that? You don't even know me

Peter No, but I'd like to

 (She turns to go)

Francine Here's your penny back

Peter Keep it ... as a souvenir

 (There is a moment when their faces are close together as though they are about to kiss then the moment is gone and she goes off looking back at him occasionally)

THE POWER & THE GLORY

(The lights come up inside the church after evensong as people are leaving. The organ is playing as Francine takes in the atmosphere and bows in front of the altar, kneeling in prayer. We are able to see both sides of the confessional box as Father Rambert goes in and Francine then takes her place on the other side)

- Francine (As the organ music fades) Forgive me father for I have sinned
- Father How have you sinned my child?
- Francine I have committed the sin of covetousness
- Father What have you coveted?
- Francine At church this morning I looked at the fine dresses of the Langouste girls and I was envious of them, I wanted to be able to wear fine clothes like them
- Father Would they have made you a better person?
- Francine No, father
- Father Would anyone have thought any better of you had you been wearing them?
- Francine I suppose not
- Father Then why did you want to be in their dresses?
- Francine Just that I've always been brought up in such plain things, second hand clothes and I wanted to know what it feels like to feel the smoothness of silk against your skin
- Father Did you come into the world wearing fine clothes?
- Francine No, father
- Father Will you be able to take them with you when you depart?
- Francine No
- Father Then why do you covet their fine gowns?
- Francine It was just a passing feeling.
- Father A person's clothes don't live on after their deaths in the memories of those that knew them, they fade and wear thin and fall to pieces - what doesn't perish is their reputation, the good that they do while they're on this earth - that is the vestment you should seek to wear ... is that all?
- Francine No father, there's something else ...
- Father Go on
- Francine I thought I was in love with Christ ...

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Father Yes?

Francine And that I wanted to serve him

Father Well?

Francine I'm troubled now because I don't feel so certain

Father Something has happened?

Francine I was talking to a stranger this afternoon, a young man ... he stood near me ... and...

Father And?

Francine I felt a strange sensation ... I was flattered by his attention, his smile was attractive and his laughter infectious...

Father Go on ... what did you feel?

Francine The strangest of emotions ... I felt as though I wanted him to touch me, to kiss me ... I can't explain it ...

Father You've never felt like this before?

Francine Never

Father That, my child, was simply lust ...

Francine But I've never felt like that before about anyone - he was a complete stranger - I didn't even know him

Father It matters not - it's Francine isn't it? You're simply changing, Francine, from a girl into a woman - it's quite natural

Francine But was it sinful father, to feel like that?

Father It could be, if you were a married woman but you're not so there's an end to it

Francine Do all grown women have feelings like that?

Father I'm not a woman so I wouldn't know - I presume they do from time to time - I know men do

Francine You have such feelings Father? You? But you're a priest and you're... you're ...

Father "Old" is the word you're looking for

Francine I never thought ...

Father Just because I wear the vestments of a priest doesn't mean I don't have the feelings of a man - do you think they all fly away as soon as you take your holy vows?

Francine Of course not, just that ...

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Father Your feelings are natural Francine, they were put there for a reason - to bring together men and women to have children in holy matrimony - the trouble comes later

Francine Later?

Father After they're married - that's why the Lord gave us the power of free will, the ability to decide for ourselves - unfortunately some of us have more self control than others

Francine But how does that affect me? I was so sure before that I wanted to serve the Lord and now ... now I don't know

Father You're being tested Francine, that's all, being given a choice

Francine But which is the good and which is the bad?

Father That is for you to decide

Francine Can't you help me?

Father Not on this occasion - you see we all have within us the power to do good or evil and throughout our lives there's a struggle going on - sometimes one wins and sometimes the other - unfortunately the Lord leaves the choices up to you ...is there anything else?

Francine No, father

Father Say three Hail Mary's and pray for forgiveness

 (The lights cross fade to the sergeant's quarters in the back of the hotel)

Jungen Peter! I want a word with you

Peter What's up?

Jungen Who was the girl you were talking to down by the bridge?

Peter What girl?

Jungen Don't play games with me. You're lucky it was me who saw you, if it had been one of the others you would have been in serious trouble

Peter She's just a girl from the village

Jungen You know what the orders were?

Peter Not to mix with the local inhabitants - I was only talking to her for heaven's sake

Jungen (Taking him by the shoulders and looking at him seriously) Listen - when the boss told you not to fraternize with the inhabitants there was a reason for it, O.K?

Peter What reason?

Jungen I can't tell you that, all I can tell you is that it's better not to get involved

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Peter Why not?

Jungen It just is, all right?

Peter I don't understand

Jungen It makes things more ... more 'difficult' if you get involved

Peter How so?

Jungen Just take my word for it

(Jungen goes off leaving Peter looking bewildered. As he goes Lammerding comes on holding an empty bottle)

Lammerding (Slurred) Ah, the boy - you'll do

Peter Sir?

Lammerding This bottle appears to be empty for some reason - I'd like you to go and fetch me another from that Doucier woman

Peter But the bar will be closed now Major

Lammerding Another bottle - and make it snappy

Peter (Agreeing) Sir! ...Sir, can I ask you something?

Lammerding What?

Peter What kind of counter-terrorism do we do?

Lammerding Do? Do? We do what we have to do ... we do what is necessary ... what kind of question is that?

Peter I just wondered

Lammerding You'll find out soon enough - now get me that damned bottle

(The boy goes off)

(Lights cross fade to the bedroom of the Fabergé children where Francine is tucking them in)

Francine (To Phillipe who's being a nuisance) When you've quite finished ... hands together, eyes closed ... 'Lighten our darkness we beseech thee O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all the perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our saviour Jesus Christ ... Amen'

Phillipe Amen

Christine Amen

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Phillipe Why do we always have to say that?

Francine We just do

Phillipe We've never been in any danger

Christine How do you know? You might have been and not known it if you were asleep

Phillipe Of course I would have known

Christine Not necessarily

Phillipe I think it's silly saying prayers

Francine Why is it?

Phillipe It just is. We prayed for papa to get better and he never did

Christine That doesn't mean anything. He might have been too poorly for prayers to help, isn't that right Francine?

Francine Yes, that's right, the Lord sometimes works in mysterious ways that we don't understand - now settle down and go to sleep

(Pause)

Christine (Whispered to Phillipe) Do you think she kisses him?

(They giggle)

Mother What's that?

Phillipe Francine's got a boyfriend

Francine I beg your pardon!

Christine We saw them talking together by the bridge

Mother Is this true?

Francine We were just talking - we'd only just met

Mother Who is he?

Phillipe A German soldier

Francine Phillipe! You little tell-tale

Mother Is this right what he says?

Francine We were just talking

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Mother No matter - no daughter of mine's going to frequent with a German

Francine But what harm does it do?

Mother You don't know them, you don't know what they're capable of

Francine We were only talking

Mother You won't see him again - is that clear?

Francine But ... ?

Mother Never again, over my dead body

Francine (Resignedly) Yes maman

(In the background the children giggle as the lights fade)

(They rise to find Mr Langouste and his wife and daughters having breakfast with Major Lammerding and his officers)

Langouste I'm so pleased you could join us major, it isn't of ten that we have guests for breakfast. Pompadour is such an isolated place, its not often we get the opportunity of having anyone as important as yourselves to dine with us

Lammerding You flatter me

Mdme L More coffee major?

Lammerding You're too kind

Langouste Would you like anything else to eat?

Lammerding No thank you, I've had quite sufficient. You eat very well, monsieur

Langouste And why not, "Eat drink and be merry", that's what I say

Mdme L Your officers seem to have plenty to talk about

Lammerding Only because you have such charming daughters, madame

Langouste Now who is the flatterer, major?

Madame L We rarely see anyone of interest in these parts. It's so refreshing to have someone sensible to talk to - the locals are so ... how shall I say? So parochial

Langouste I have an idea

Mdme L Not another one

Langouste Why don't I show the major round the village this morning and tonight we'll celebrate their arrival with a dance in the village hall? What do you say major?

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Lammerding That would be most kind of you
- Mdme L Did you hear that Angeline? We're going to have a dance
- Angeline A dance? Where?
- Mdme L Here, in the village hall
- Beatrice But I've got nothing to wear
- Mdme L You've got lots of dresses.
- Beatrice But they're so passé. They're not wearing anything like that this year in the capital
- Mdme L No-one here's going to know
- Beatrice Ill know
- Angeline What she means is she can't get into any of them
- Beatrice Are you trying to say I've put on weight?
- Angeline I don't have to say it, its obvious for everyone to see
- Beatrice I haven't, I haven't put on weight have I maman?
- Mdme L You are filling out a little, Beatrice
- Angeline Told you
- Beatrice (Storming out) I think you're all being simply horrible to me
- Langouste Daughters. Who would have them? They cost me the earth, major. Everything has to be the latest fashion and of course expense is no object
- Lammerding Of course
- Langouste That's settled then, I shall get everything organised
- Lammerding If I could just see to my duties ...
- Langouste But of course ... there is one thing major, I hope you don't mind me saying this but since your arrival I have received a few complaints
- Lammerding Complaints?
- Langouste About your men. They say they're sometimes a little - how shall I put it ... sometimes a little rowdy
- Lammerding Rowdy? I find that hard to believe
- Langouste I'd appreciate it if you could ask them to keep it down a little

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Lammerding But of course. We don't want to incur the wrath of the local mayor, do we? (To Pfenig & Schlater) See to it that the men are gainfully occupied and inform them in no uncertain terms that they're to be on their best behaviour until this evening
- Pfenig Sir
- Schlater Sir
- (They salute and exit)
- Mdme L I hear on the grapevine, major, that one of your men has some talent for writing
- Lammerding Sgt Jungen? Yes, apparently so. I think his writing is probably better than his soldiering
- Mdme L I wonder if you could do me a favour. I too try to write a little in my spare time. We have our own drama group here in Pompadour - nothing pretentious, you understand, but we think we're quite professional in our own way. I wonder if you could take this to your sergeant and ask him for his comments
- (She hands him a large envelope)
- Lammerding But of course
- Langouste It must be such a responsibility being in charge of so many men
- Lammerding Not at all - its just a question of setting the ground rules - once they know they rules they are like dogs, they know where they stand
- Langouste And if they break them?
- Lammerding If they break them... they have to take the consequences (he smiles as they exit)
- Beatrice (To Angeline) Wasn't Captain Pfenig just adorable? Such broad shoulders and narrow hips ... and those eyes, such come-to-bed eyes - he was just nice enough to eat
- Angeline Ah, but who did he want to talk to?
- Beatrice He might have been talking to you Angeline, but what you don't know is that the whole time he was actually looking at me
- Angeline You can't mean that
- Beatrice I can and I do
- (Cross fade to soldiers standing to attention in the room at the back of the hotel. Schlater and Pfenig are briefing them)
- Schlater Nobody told you to move
- Schultz I thought you'd finished Sir
- Schlater I'll tell you when I've finished, all right

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Schultz Sir!

Pfenig Are there any more questions?

Kranz While this is all going on, sir, while you're mixing with the local dignitaries, what will we be doing?

Pfenig You'll have to amuse yourselves as best as you can

Kranz I thought as much

Schlater What did you say?

Kranz I said, "Thank you very much" Sir
(Pfenig and Schlater leave)

Kranz A dance, that's all we needed

Schultz If I'd known I would have brought my dress suit

Muller The boss was right, they don't even know there's a war going on. They're in their own little world

Jungen It's probably the mayor's way of showing off

Schultz Perhaps he's trying to marry off his daughters

Kranz He'll have to try harder than that, they've both got faces like bags of nails

Muller And the figures to go with them
(They all laugh)

Kranz Perhaps the boy fancies one of them. What do you say son?

Peter No thanks

Muller They could make a man of you, you know

Jungen Leave him alone

Kranz You what?

Jungen I said, "Leave him alone". Why do you always have to bring everybody down to your own level?

Kranz I wasn't talking to you, I was talking to the boy. Let him answer for himself

Jungen He doesn't want to answer, you're embarrassing him

Kranz Are we? Are we embarrassing you son? What's up then, are you still a virgin?

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Muller He is, look, he's going all red

(Peter goes outside to escape and Jungen follows)

Jungen Are you O.K?

Peter Why do they have to be so hurtful and coarse?

Jungen You don't know what you've let yourself in for Peter. You're very young and naive. I know you joined for the best of reasons but things aren't always what they seem. Something happens to a man when you take him away from his home and you put him in this kind of situation ... when you give him control over the lives of others and he finds he isn't answerable to anyone the possibilities are endless. You're creating either a god or ... the situation dehumanizes people, it allows them to do things that they didn't ever think they were capable of

Peter What kind of things?

Jungen It takes them down to their lowest level. Once the machinery of war starts up its like a great animal careering down a hill out of control. If you're on the back of it you just have to hang on and go along with it - there's no turning back ... there are some foolish individuals along the way who try to stop it, to stand in its way - like the Maquis - they snap at its ankles and nip at its tail, blowing up a bridge here and a railway line there, but the creature isn't bothered by such minor irritations, they're like annoying flies that have to be swept aside and crushed underfoot. Do you understand what I'm saying?

Peter If we should catch somebody blowing up a bridge what do we do with them? Where do we send the prisoners?

Jungen That isn't something you need to worry about...

(The scene changes to Langouste showing Lammerding around the town)

Langouste So there you have it, Major, a guided tour of Pompadour. I know it's not much but we have everything here that you could want in the largest of cities - the whole cross-section of humanity. I'm just sorry there isn't more to see

Major L On the contrary, I'm very impressed. You own the bakery, the bread shop, the hotel. Is there anything in Pompadour, Monsieur Langouste, that you do not own?

Langouste Perhaps the church

Major L Ah yes, the church

Langouste But I do attend most Sundays and I've just paid to have my name put on one of the stained glass windows, so you could say I've left my mark on that

Major L Amazing. As a leader of men and one having some control over the lives of others I have to applaud you for your success - you appear to control the whole of Pompadour - one might say you are Pompadour.

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Langouste Again you flatter me, major. I'll admit I've worked hard to get where I am but I did have a good start from what my father left me.
- Major L And I suppose that like me you have your own share of problems with staff?
- Langouste Of course. Like you I'm obliged to enforce the ground rules - but there are ways and there are ways are there not? Its not always pleasant but it has to be done - who was it who said "The position of the leader is a lonely place"?
- Major From one in a position of control to another there is something I'd like to ask you
- Langouste Ask away
- Major Are you happy monsieur?
- Langouste "Happy," major?
- Major Yes, happy. Do you have a feeling of being fulfilled?
- Langouste I'm not sure what you mean.
- Major Are you pleased to wake up in the morning, to face another day? Or do you ever have a feeling that there's something you've missed? Something not quite within your grasp?
- Langouste You mean a hunger for happiness?
- Major I mean hunger of a sort but not an earthly hunger
- Langouste I can't say I've ever felt like that
- Major Then I'm envious of you
- Langouste Don't you consider yourself successful then, major?
- Major Successful? Do you think the height of my aspirations was to be an army major? How many of us reach our full potential?... So many blocks and barriers in the way, so many individuals and personalities ... having to rely on others for advancement, at least you don't have that problem
- (A group of mourners emerge from the church pushing a coffin on a wheeled bier, [the whole cast barring the Langoustes]. At the front Madame Fabergé is being pushed in a wheelchair by Francine. On seeing the group Langouste takes the major's elbow and makes to turn away)
- Mme Fabergé There he is, the murderer!
- Francine Please, maman
- Mme Fabergé And well might you turn and run
- Langouste Are you addressing me, madame?

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Mme Fabergé You know damned fine I am
- Langouste Then I must ask you to moderate your language and remind you that there are witnesses present
- Mme Fabergé All the better
- Major L Who is she?
- Langouste Just a deranged old woman
- Mme Fabergé "Deranged"? It's not I who is deranged, monsieur, but you - mad for money, profit and greed. If it hadn't been for you my husband would still be alive today
- Langouste It wasn't I who killed him, madame - he killed himself with the drink - ask the doctor
- Mme Fabergé And what was it that drove him to it?
- Villeneuve I think you are a little overwrought Madame
- Sist. Claire She isn't normally like this
- Sister Louise Its understandable in the circumstances
- Francine This isn't doing any good, maman
- Mme Fabergé It's doing me good. I asked you a question Langouste. What drove him to it? Tell them all
- Langouste As far as I'm concerned he drove himself
- Mme Fabergé The doctor will tell you, it's in the records. The day he started going downhill was the day you gave him the sack from your building yard
- Langouste (To crowd) His work was not satisfactory
- Mme Fabergé What you mean is he wouldn't cut corners, he wouldn't fleece people the way you wanted him to
- Langouste That is slanderous, madame - I hope you're listening to this Vendet - I want this taken down for future reference
- Francine Come along, maman, none of this is going to do any good
- Mme Fabergé How that man sleeps in his bed I'll never know
- Langouste If you wish your daughter to be employed in this village, madame, I suggest you moderate your language
- Mme Fabergé You don't scare me, Langouste. You might have the rest of them eating out of your hand but you don't own me

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Langouste I must apologise for this interruption, major, as in all societies there is always a certain 'disruptive' element

Major L. That's quite all right monsieur, I quite understand
(Langouste guides Major L away as they exit)

Francine Why do you always have to show me up?

Mme Fabergé The truth will always come out

Francine But today of all days

Mme Fabergé Your father wouldn't have forgiven me if I'd let him go to his rest without having my say

La Terre When madame is ready ...
(The cortege moves off towards the churchyard)

(The next scene sees the two Langouste girls dressing in front of a mirror for the dance with the help of their mother. Angeline tries in vain to tighten a corset on her well-endowed sister)

Angeline Hold still

Beatrice I'm holding still

Angeline Are you breathing in?

Beatrice Of course I am

Angeline Then breathe in more

Beatrice I can't breathe in any more

Angeline You want to look your best for Captain Pfenig don't you?

Beatrice Of course I do

Angeline Then you must try and breathe in more

Beatrice If you pull it any tighter I won't be able to breathe at all

Angeline There wouldn't be any of this trouble if you simply ate less

Beatrice I do not eat too much, ask maman. Maman, she says I'm eating too much

Mdme L You're a growing girl

Beatrice There you are

Angeline Yes but she's growing the wrong way. That's it, I can't pull it any tighter

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Beatrice Help me on with the dress then

Angeline I can't, I've got to get ready myself

Beatrice Maman? Can you help me with the dress?

Mdme L Of course ... hold still then

(She helps her daughter on with her ball gown but has great difficulty in fastening the ties at the back.)

Mdme L I can't seem to fasten ...

Beatrice The stupid thing must have shrunk

Angeline It's not the dress that's shrunk, its you that's swollen!

Beatrice I don't understand, it used to fit me perfectly

Angeline Now do you believe me when I say you've put on weight?

Beatrice I can't have, there must be some other reason

Angeline There's only one reason - the hole in your face underneath your nose

Beatrice Now what am I going to do? I can't let Captain Pfenig see me like this - I look like a bag of old potatoes

Angeline I disagree, potatoes are much prettier!

Mdme L Quiet Angeline (To Beatrice) You're just going to have to wear a stole to cover the back

Beatrice In summer? I'll be roasted

Angeline Then we'll have roasted potatoes!

(Scene change as music is heard coming from the dance and a light shines from the nearby open door of the village hall. The following characters come from the hall at various times to get some fresh air as others walk past occasionally to and from the hall)

(Schlater appears looking fed up, with Pfenig following shortly afterwards)

Pfenig (Somewhat inebriated) Here you are. I wondered where you'd got to. Why aren't you dancing?

Schlater I don't feel like it

Pfenig What's wrong?

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Schlater Nothing's wrong
- Pfenig You've got a face like thunder
- Schlater Have you heard about Lessing?
- Pfenig Franz Lessing? In B company?
- Schlater They've promoted him
- Pfenig You're joking
- Schlater It's true - I heard it on the radio
- Pfenig Whatever next - there you are then, there's hope for anyone if they'll promote the likes of him - even you - now come and have a dance with these Langouste girls and get them off my back - they're following me everywhere - you don't want to let it spoil the whole evening
- Schlater You don't understand, do you? You've got no idea how it feels
- Pfenig All I know is that whatever is going on inside your brain is eating you away, making your life miserable. Lighten up a bit for heavens sake
- Schlater It just makes me so angry, being passed over all the time ... watching them all getting on ... people younger than me and not half as bright. What have I got to do? I've been on all the right courses, passed their damned examinations. It's as though my face just doesn't fit.
- Pfenig It's not the be-all-and-end-all, believe me
- Schlater It just feels so unjust. It wasn't supposed to be like this. I had such plans, dreams, hopes and expectations ... I think about it all day, you know, promotion - it's always on my mind. When I go to bed at night I can't sleep for thinking about it and when I do sleep the first thing that comes to my mind in the morning is the same feeling of anger and unjustness
- Pfenig There are some things Schlater we can't control, we just have to accept ... now come and have a dance and a drink and for goodness sake try to relax
- (He puts his arm round his shoulder and guides him in. As they go they pass Jungen coming out. He lights a cigarette then Madame Langouste follows)
- Mdme. L Sgt Jungen! There you are
- Jungen Madame Langouste
- Mdme. L Have you had time to read my play?
- Jungen Er ... yes, this afternoon
- Mdme L And ... ?

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Jungen Well ... my French isn't all it ought to be but it was very ... very ... (Unsure of how to be tactful) How can I say? It was very 'different'
- Mdme L You think it has possibilities?
- Jungen (Falsely) I'm sure it has
- Mdme L (Relieved) You've no idea what a breath of fresh air it is having someone hear like yourself, who's educated, who appreciates the finer things in life. We have our own local drama group but they're so blinkered, so conformist - I offered it them to perform but for some reason they didn't seem to want it
- Jungen Their loss madame
- Mdme L Yes but it's so infuriating, knowing you have a talent and not being able to find an outlet for it. I'm sure you know what I mean
- Jungen I do, I do
- Mdme L I understand you've had work of your own published?
- Jungen A little
- Mdme L I couldn't ask for a favour? I couldn't ask you to keep my play with you, to take it the next time you see your publisher?
- Jungen But of course, it would be a pleasure ... I can't promise anything though
- Mdme L That's understood ... You don't know how happy you've made me sergeant, what a weight it is off my shoulders, just to think that there might be some hope, a light at the end of the tunnel. When you come back in I must introduce you to my husband, he'll be so surprised when I tell him - between you and I, he thinks that I'm wasting my time
- (She floats back to the dance on a wave of self-delusion)
- Jungen (To himself) He thinks right
- (Peter emerges)
- Peter Sorry?
- Jungen I've just been cornered by Madame Langouste who thinks she can write
- Peter And can't she?
- Jungen Not a bit. She is unadventurous, her characters are two-dimensional, her dialogue flat and her storylines predictable - other than that she has a great future
- Peter Why doesn't somebody tell her the truth?
- Jungen Because like all would-be writers, she's self deluded. She has a hunger for acclaim based on a falsely inflated ego and now she wants me to come and meet her husband so that I can tell him what a great dramatist she is

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Peter What will you say?
- Jungen As little as possible
- (Jungen stubs out his cigarette and returns to the dance leaving Peter alone. After a few moments he is joined by Francine)
- Francine I'm sorry, I didn't know anyone was here
- Peter That's O.K. - don't go. I was hoping to see you again.
- Francine I got in trouble last time for talking to you
- Peter So did I, so that makes two of us. Have you had any more thoughts on what we were talking about?
- Francine My mother's crossed swords with Langouste so I don't know now if I could work in the bread shop even if I wanted to
- Peter Can't you get a job without asking him?
- Francine He has fingers in every pie. If he doesn't own the business, he owns the place where the business is
- Peter Not a nice man to upset
- Francine Not if you want to get on
- Peter Why don't you move away, to a bigger place?
- Francine It's very hard. All the family live here and my mother's not very well. Now that papa's gone I have to stay to look after the children
- Peter You sound as though you're trapped
- Francine Perhaps I am. Why aren't you in there dancing?
- Peter We have orders not to - only the officers are allowed to dance
- Francine That seems a little unfair
- Peter Do you dance?
- Francine I don't know, I've never tried
- Peter Would you like to learn?
- Francine When?
- Peter Now. It's not difficult - all you have to do is count
- Francine I thought you said only officers were allowed

THE POWER & THE GLORY

- Peter In there, yes, but nobody can see us out here
- Francine (Hesitant) I don't know
- Peter (Holding out arms in waltz position) Come on. Just do the opposite of everything that I do. I'll teach you.
- (She is hesitant but moves towards him and takes his hands. There is moment's frisson as their hands meet)
- First the right foot then the left. Ready?
- (She hesitantly moves backwards while he guides)
- That's it - one, two three, one, two, three - now you're getting the hang of it
- (The music stops but they continue dancing slower and slower until they come to a standstill and their faces grow slowly closer for their first kiss. Peter begins to kiss her passionately but she forces herself away)
- Francine NO!
- Peter What's wrong?
- Francine I mustn't
- Peter Why not?
- Francine I can't. It isn't right
- Peter Why isn't it?
- Francine (Moving off) I have to go
- Peter Where?
- Francine Home
- Peter I'll walk with you
- Francine No
- Peter Please? I only want to talk
- (She goes off with Peter following. As they go, from the same direction emerges a couple completely the opposite of the young lovers - Muller and Madame Doucier are arm in arm and both very drunk)
- Muller Did you see that?
- Doucier Bleeding Romeo and Juliet

THE POWER & THE GLORY

Muller No, I'm Romeo and you're Juliet

Doucier Is that right?

Muller Its right

Doucier (Indicating dance) Are you going in?

Muller What for?

Doucier For something to eat

Muller Nah!

Doucier Why not?

Muller I've got something to eat here in my pocket

Doucier What is it?

Muller Have a guess

Doucier I don't know

(Muller pulls out a German sausage)

Doucier A bleeding sausage! Where'd you get that from?

Muller Never you mind. (Leerily) Here - do you fancy a bit of my sausage?

(she laughs)

Doucier It's big i'n't it ? Bloody enormous. I've never had one as big as that

(They laugh)

Muller (Lustily) I'm going to give it to you

Doucier (Still laughing) Are you?

Muller (Leery) Yeah. All of it

Doucier I don't know if I can manage all that

Muller Go on, try a bit

(She opens her mouth and he slowly moves the sausage towards it. She caresses it sensually with her lips before biting a great chunk off)

You greedy pig!

(She runs off laughing with him in hot pursuit)

THE POWER & THE GLORY

(As they go Schultz and Kranz come on. They too are drunk)

- Kranz Where's he gone?
- Schultz Don't know but I can guess ... to enjoy himself
- Kranz Everybody's enjoying themselves - he's enjoying himself, (indicating dance) they're enjoying themselves - everybody's enjoying themselves ... everybody except us ... are you enjoying yourself Schultz?
- Schultz No
- Kranz No, neither am I. It's always the same - the officers get the best and we get the rest - it isn't fair
- Schultz Its not
- (At this point Yvette the serving girl walks past towards the dance with a bottle on a tray)
- Kranz (To Yvette) Hey! (She doesn't hear and keeps walking)
- Hey you! (He rushes across and grabs her arm) I'm talking to you ... don't you know its rude to ignore people.
- Schultz She can't hear you
- Kranz Eh?
- Schultz She's the one who's deaf and dumb
- Kranz Really?
- Schultz That's what I've been told
- Kranz (Still holding her arm) Well, well, well ... and such a fine figure of a woman (He caresses her body and she withdraws at every touch) ... A pity to let all that go to waste ... so if you can't hear and you can't speak you're really what every man is looking for, aren't you? You can't complain, can't nag and above all you can't tell tales (She tries to pull away) Hold still you little vixen! Schultz! Hold her (Schultz pinions her arms backwards round the base of the cross) I know what you want - all you girls like soldiers don't you? The uniforms? Especially the officers - well why should they have all the fun? I'm going to show what it's like, young lady, to have a real soldier (The audience see her struggle as Kranz unfastens his flies and thrusts himself into her. The rape is brutal, violent and short lived and done to a background of music from the dancehall highlighting the pathos. Once finished, they leave her sobbing beneath the cross as they walk away laughing. On the floor next to her one of the soldiers has dropped his sheath knife. She wipes her face and seeing the knife picks it up. It glistens in the light as hatred and anger burn in her eyes. From the dancehall emerges Pfenig. He sighs with boredom, lights a cigarette and looking for some fresh air talks to himself)
- Pfenig God, this place will be the death of me

THE POWER & THE GLORY

(Then he sees Yvette who holds the knife behind her back. She smiles weakly at him and gestures for him to follow her as she walks off. He puts out his cigarette and does so)

(Lammerding emerges looking for Pfenig)

Lammerding Pfenig? Are you out here?

Schlater What's up sir?

Lammerding I wanted a word with Pfenig but he's disappeared. I thought I saw him coming out here. If you see him tell him I want him, will you (He goes back in)

Schlater Very good sir

(He begins to look for Pfenig calling to him)

Pfenig? Are you there old man?

(He goes off calling into the darkness where Yvette took Pfenig. There is a short pause then...)

(Running back in panic) Sir! Sir! Major Lammerding!

(End of Act One)