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RENÉ GALAND
FROM FAR, FROM NEAR

II. BACK IN THE HOMELAND

*Im schönsten Wiesengrunde
Ist meiner Heimat Haus
Da zog ich manche Stunde....
Ins Tal hinaus.*

.....
*Sterb' ich in Tales Grunde
Will ich begraben sein
Singt nur zur letzter Stunde
Beim Abendschein*

*Dich mein stilles Tal
Grüss ich tausendmal
Da zog ich manche Stunde
Ins Tal hinaus
(Volkslied)*

Foreword

One often hears mention of the butterfly effect. It is the title of a film which came out in July 2004. It is also the title of a short story by Yann Gerven, “An efed papilhorig” (*Al Liamm*, niv. 342, C’hwevrer 2004). This effect was defined in 1972 by the American meteorologist T. Loenz: it refers to the disproportion, in a series of events, between the insignificance of the initial event and the enormity of the final one. Lorenz gave as example a hurricane in Texas which, if one goes back along the chain of effects and causes, appears as the ultimate consequence of the flutter of a butterfly’s wings in the Amazonian forest. Long before Lorenz, Blaise Pascal had given a characteristic example of this effect, but without giving it a name: “Cleopatra’s nose: had it been longer, the face of the earth would have been changed.” Similar examples may be found in a novel by Gore Vidal, *Myra Breckenridge*, and especially in science fiction (e.g., Ray Bradbury, “A Sound of Thunder”).

Yann-Ber Piriou, in the pages which he devoted to the memory of Ronan Huon, writes: “It is on the threshold of his adult life that man makes his great choices. Choices made with a loyal and straight heart as is generally a young man’s heart. It is according to these choices that everything is guided afterwards” (*Al Liamm*, niv. 345, Eost 2004). But it may also happen that such choices are made without thinking, by sheer chance, and that the man who made them without understanding that his fate depended on them finds himself their prisoner: it is then too late, the path leading back to his point of departure, the only which would enable him to follow another itinerary, is forever barred. Sartre’s play *Huis clos* gives a perfect example of such a destiny. A short story by Borges and a poem by Robert Frost use for their theme the necessity and the inescapability of these

choices. In Borges's story, each bifurcation leads to a different path, and the speaker who, in Frost's poem, has reached a crossroads, chooses the familiar route, will never know the mystery which he might have found in the heart of the dark forest.

But for the individual who finds himself the prisoner of a unique destiny, is there no remedy? Through the miracle of writing, he no longer is the slave of a single choice. The doors which he had not opened are no longer closed to him, the road which he did not explore offer themselves to his discovery, access to the lost paradise is possible again. It is this motif of the return, impossible in the real world but accomplished in and through writing, which, under some form or other, has inspired these works.

Laora

[Explanatory note: American readers may need some background information in order to understand this story, part of which takes place in Brittany during World War II. The Treaty of Union between Brittany and France was signed in 1532: it was forced onto Brittany after a crushing military defeat. Under the terms of the treaty, Brittany was allowed to retain her territorial integrity, her constitution, her Parliament, her legal system and her tax structure, but she no longer had any army or navy, and a governor appointed by the king of France oversaw her administration. She retained her status of "*province réputée étrangère*" (province considered foreign) until 1789, when the revolutionary Assembly unilaterally repealed the Treaty, which no succeeding French government has reinstated. The Breton people, however, have retained their traditional culture, and the sense of their ethnic identity, much like such other Celtic nations as Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. In the twenties and thirties, a Breton nationalist party was actively working for reestablishing Brittany as a state separated from France. During World War II, a few of this party's leaders, inspired by the example of some Irish rebels during World War I, labored under the delusion that by collaborating with the German occupants of France, Germany would give them what they wanted: an autonomous Breton state. Their hope was totally unrealistic, for the Germans had far more to gain from the French collaborationist government of Marshall Pétain than from the Breton people, who were far more hostile to the German occupants than other citizens of France, as is shown by the following figures: at the time, the total population of Brittany was five millions, the rest of France had a population of thirty five millions, but half of General De Gaulle Free French Forces and one third of the Résistance Forces of the Interior were Bretons. Other examples: the Breton nationalist leader Neven Henaff managed to recruit only seventy two young Bretons for his *Bezen*, the militia which was to serve in the German *Waffen SS*, whereas the French fascist Jacques Doriot raised an entire division, the *Division Charlemagne*, which fought with the *Waffen SS* against the Russians. Other French fascists leaders raised 35000 men for the infamous *Milice*, the para-military organization created to fight the Résistance. Why the greater animosity of the Breton people against the German occupiers? I can answer this question with some authority, since I lived in my hometown of Western Brittany through the entire occupation, from June 1940 to August 1944. The reason was simple: there were more Germans around than in other regions, probably because of the strategic importance of Brittany, where the Germans has two naval bases, the ports of Brest and Lorient with their heavily protected submarine vaults, several air bases for their Luftwaffe, and the huge shipyards of Saint-Nazaire, which the British considered important enough to stage a commando raid to destroy them. Practically every Breton town, even small ones, had a German garrison. The Germans requisitioned everything they needed or wanted, housing, cars, horses, food, merchandise

from stores, etc, not just for themselves, but also to send to Germany, and all the expenses were borne by the towns. They also were around to enforce all their petty regulations, the curfew which lasted from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., for instance. This in addition to the fact that they kept hundreds of thousands of French prisoners of war in prison camps in Germany in spite of the slavish willingness with which the collaborationist government of Vichy acceded to all their demands (e.g.. rounding up the French Jewish population to be sent to death camps in Germany and sending French skilled workers and young Frenchmen as forced labor to German war factories, arresting everybody suspected of working for the Résistance, torturing executing, or sending them to concentration camps.). In spite, or perhaps because of all that, most Breton towns, by the end of 1943, had a Résistance group of men ready to spring into action as soon as called on to do so by the Allies. This happened after the Normandy landing. My home town had a Résistance group of around one hundred men commanded by a former career army officer and several former non-coms. They were assisted by a Jedburgh team (one American OSS officer, one Free French officer, and one British radio operator) who had been dropped by parachute along with a plane load of weapons. Between June 6 and August 5, when the American combat command of General Middleton reached my home town, our Résistance group lost ten men killed in action, two men captured by the Germans, tortured and shot, and another one killed while trying to avoid capture. The Germans had also taken our parish priest hostage: he was killed while attempting to escape. When the American advance elements of General Middleton reached my home town, the Germans fought back, killing eight Americans and disabling one Sherman tank. Some of our Résistance men managed to destroy one German armored vehicle and to kill its crew. My hometown later erected a monument commemorating the eight American soldiers killed on its territory. From August 5 to the beginning of September, our Résistance group, along with other similar groups in the area (about three thousand men in all) joined the Americans in the fight against the German *Kreta Korps* which held the port of Brest and the naval aviation base located on the peninsula on the South side of the bay of Brest: the naval base was captured first, by our Résistance men, the port of Brest one week later, by the Americans. The Résistance groups could not have survived without the help of the local population: the farmers who gave them food and shelter, the young women who served as couriers, the doctors who provided medical service, etc.: they all risked their lives . Sadly, their heroism was never recognized by later French governments. This ingratitude on the part of these governments contributed to the revival of Breton nationalism, which has never been stronger among the Breton people, as it is among other ethnic minorities, the Basques and the Alsatians especially.]

Everything is quiet in the mess hall. No wonder, there is nobody at this time of day. All one hears is the voices of waitresses in the kitchen, and the noise of dishes being washed. When will this f-ing sergeant be back with the gasoline? Nothing on the radio, except for the Americans, of course. The AFN, they call it. *Allied Forces Network? Armed Forces Network? American Forces Network?* Yeun did not hear. It's their hit parade, it seems. The song titles are rather bizarre : "*Shoo shoo baby*", "*Pardon me, boy, is this the Chattanooga choo choo?*", "*Straighten up and fly right*". Would this one be about a mama bird giving sound advice to her young ones about to fly off the nest for the first time? Whatever it is, the music is pleasant enough, especially when one has nothing better to do.

Hurry up and wait: every army's slogan, it would seem, especially true of the FFO, the French Forces of Occupation in Germany. At least, you don't get tired when you wait. It was quite another story when Yeun had to run after a battalion lost no one knew where. His major will never believe he needed a full week to go from Paris to Koblenz. In Strasbourg, nobody knows where his half-brigade is located: "Does not matter, they tell him, go to General Headquarters. In Baden-Baden, they are sure to know." And in Baden-Baden they do tell him: "Go to Lindau. That's where you'll find your f-ing battalion." The Bodensee is quite pleasant at this time of year, but no more battalion than hair on a baby's bottom, as the top sergeant used to say so elegantly. It turns out the half-brigade is now part of the 10th Division, in Koblenz. No battalion in Koblenz either, it would have been too easy, but at least the 10th Division Headquarters are there. The battalion itself is ten miles up the Rhine.

Lieutenant Kervern, 8th *Chasseurs*, it sounds good, and Yeun finds he looks pretty good too in his brand new uniform, good enough to impress the local Gretchens, if you can believe everything you hear. The sergeant is taking his time. The car pool guys are rather stingy with their gas, even if you stick a paper bearing the colonel's order under their nose. But the sergeant showed some sense when he took two bottles of Mosel wine with him. Those car pool guys will find them more persuasive than any officer's signature. Wine and gas, nothing better to get soldiers to walk and jeeps to roll.

The Yanks have really funny sounding songs: "*Everything will go right / If you only believe / The gypsy*". It gives you bizarre ideas when you have nothing to do. Gypsies like Carmen? Or rather like the ones he saw in the film *Kapitanskaïa dotchka*. They sang and danced in the tavern visited by young officers. One of them had climbed on a table. She had taken off her blouse, and she danced, her breasts naked and her eyes full of contempt for these officers so elegant in their summer whites, their shoulder pads covered with gold stripes, and their medals on their chests. "*Tzigani poïtie piesnie gromtche*". "*La tzigane savait d'avance / Nos deux vies barrées par les nuits*." Bizarre thoughts.

Koblenz: "*confluentia*". In Breton, it would be "Kemper". It was in Koblenz that the French princes had gathered their army, under the Revolution. Many young Bretons had come, enough to form a brigade. Not only nobles. The Breton people did not especially like the French kings, but at least the monarchy had respected the Breton rights guaranteed by the 1532 Treaty of Union, and Brittany had retained her Parliament and all of her territory. And Yeun thinks of this young Breton, a lieutenant like himself, who fought for French princes whom he despised. And of Libba, the blonde German girl who sobbed, her long hair spread over her shoulders, as she leaned over her wounded lover. The poor girl was deaf and dumb. It was probably shortly after that her lover left her, since the chronicler mentions his marriage with a British girl on the island of Jersey. And what happened to Libba and to the child whom she was expecting? The chronicler does not say. In any case, this did not bring any luck to the unfaithful officer, who was shot by Napoleon's soldiers sixteen years later. When he faced the execution squad, did he have a thought for Libba whom he had abandoned?

Finally, the sergeant arrives. Time to throw the bags into the jeep, and they are off. The Rhine valley: a castle on every hill, and the story of a girl for each castle: Genevieve, chased out of her place by the treacherous Golo; Elizabeth, the virgin who, unbeknownst to her, had married the devil; Angela, exiled by her father because of her love for Eginhard; Lore, who combs her golden hair high above the rocks, Lore whose sad songs are heard on the cliff above the river. Stolzenfels, Rhens, Boppard, Bad Salzig, Sankt

Goar, Oberwesel, Bacharach, Niederheimbach ...: the Rhine is dotted with small towns, all sleepy under the burning sun of June. The grapes are maturing on the slopes. Ideal weather for the wine. And here is Löwenfels, squeezed between the Rhine and the steep hillsides covered with vineyards and topped by a medieval castle. The jeep rolls along ramparts and half ruined towers, passes under an arch, and stop on a square, just in front of the half-brigade headquarters. Time to report to the colonel.

Yeun has not taken long to get adjusted to his new life. Not exactly what he expected, but it could have been worse. He does not have much free time, that is for sure, but the place is rather pleasant with its narrow streets and its ancient houses with their mullioned windows. The three battalions of the half-brigade are scattered in neighboring small towns and villages. In Löwenfels, there is room only for the half brigade headquarters and two companies. The soldiers are housed in local inns, the officers have their rooms in private houses. Life is pretty easy for the soldiers. The half-brigade has only one thing to do: keep guard on the nearby prison camp of Birkenheim. Fifteen thousand German soldiers are kept there, but one single company is sufficient to guard the camp. The companies are rotated each week. One week of service at the camp, and six to eight weeks with practically nothing to do except drink the local wine and chase the local girls. Could be a real holiday, were it not for the head honcho. Colonel de Prémy is a soldier of the old school. He dreams only about parades and maneuvers. Every Saturday, the entire half-brigade (minus the ones on guard duty) marches behind the band along the Kaiser-Friedrich embankment. The colonel has spent every penny he could spare to purchase brand new navy blue uniforms and navy blue garrison caps with jonquil buttocks and edgings. Buttocks: that is what *chasseurs* call the inside fold at the top of the cap. Things have to look real good when the colonel looks at his men marching quick step, as real *chasseurs* are supposed to do, with their white gloves, white belts, white gaiters, and the silver horn shaped insignia shining against the navy blue battle-dresses.

The colonel must spend his nights dreaming up maneuvers. As soon as one is over he assembles all his staff and put them to work on all kind of situations: what if the enemy armor was to launch a sudden attack, how would the half-brigade react? And what if the left wing hot heads in Paris were to start riots? And what if the Allies started quarreling? Nobody asks who are the enemy, the hot heads, or the quarreling Allies, so as not to annoy Major Diry, a former FTP who somehow has managed to be placed in command of the 9th battalion, but everybody understands (1). They study the map, make an estimate of the opposing forces, examine every possibility, and, at 3 a.m., when everybody is fast asleep, the bugle calls, and all privates, non-coms and officers are running around through the countryside, digging fox-holes, building machine-gun nests, setting up mortars, burying field mines, sweating under the burning sun, and, worst of all, are deprived of sleep, white wine, and love.

Yeun does not have to take part in these festivities. As penance for his sins, he has been given another kind of job. He works with Captain Klossmann. The captain has found out that Yeun was fluent in German, and he has commandeered his services. The captain's mission has top priority: he is the one who, among the 15000 war prisoners in the camp, must find the ones who are guilty of war crimes. Something to laugh about, considering that the captain's own hands are far from clean. He is an Alsatian. He was completing his graduate degree in math when, after the French defeat in June 1940, Alsatia was returned to Germany and he became a citizen of the Third Reich. He was immediately called up by the *Wehrmacht*. After a few months of training, he was sent to the Russian front with the rank of second lieutenant, and soon was promoted:

"Oberleutnant Klossmann, 2. Batterie Panzerabwehrkompanie. Infanterie Regiment 3." But he did not shoot just at Russian tanks. Once in a while, instead of armor-piercing shells, his guns were loaded with explosive shells, and pow! on peasants' villages, and if a moujik had been dumb enough to remain behind instead of running away, well, he asked for it. Klossmann was taken prisoner after the battle of Stalingrad, and he had a tough time in a Russian prison camp. He owed his life to de Gaulle, who persuaded Staline to free the Alsatians conscripted by the Nazis and immediately incorporated them into his Free French Forces. Three months of training in a camp in Scotland, and there was Klossmann, who had earned the Iron Cross on the Russian front, ready to fight his former German comrades. The BCRA dropped him in the South of France, in Corrèze, where the Résistance was particularly active, with a payload of Sten guns, Enfield rifles, BAR's and enough plastic to destroy each bridge and cut every railroad track between Ussel and Brive-la-Gaillarde (2). The SS who are kept prisoners in the camp of Birkenheim are easy to identify: Klossmann has them take off their shirt, and there is their blood group tattooed below their armpit. For others suspected of war crimes, things a bit more tricky: a file has to be opened for each prisoner, listing the units in which he served with places and dates, and these files have to be compared with the information which arrives everyday from the commission in charge of investigating war crimes. "3. K.D.", "Pak. Kp. I.R. 12", "F.A.R. 15", "A.O.K. 4", "Pi. 8", "R.I.R. 7", "Funkabt. 3", usw, usw.: it is enough to drive you crazy. Nearly every morning, the captain takes his jeep to Birkenheim to interrogate some suspects. He shows them little mercy, apparently, but the suspects probably don't find his slaps, blows and kicks too terrible: they probably feel like they are back with their *feldwebels*. Yeun stays in the office, sweating over the files. There is a secretary, a rather pretty one in spite of the unbecoming AFAT uniform, but hands off! (3) She is the captain's personal property. Yeun might as well be a clerk in some civilian office. From Monday to Friday, always the same routine: 6.30 am.m.: jump out of bed, shave and shower, and quick to the officer's mess; 7 to 7.30 a.m.: breakfast; 7.30 a.m. to 8 a. m.: salute to the flag and changing of the guard; 8 a.m. to noon: work in the office ; 12 to 1 p.m. lunch; 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. : back to the office. 5 p.m.: at last, Yeun can leave the office and go to the *Kurhaus*. This is where the famous hot springs are located. They were already known in Roman times. One of the pools is reserved for the officers. The water is bubbling, you'd think you are taking a champagne bath. Yeun enjoys swimming back and forth from one end of the pool to the other, and how pleasant, after one's swim, to dry in the sun, and after putting back one's uniform, to have a cool glass of Rhine wine, sitting at a table under a linden tree, listening to the music. Klossmann and his girl often come to join him..

The young woman at the piano plays mostly Viennese waltzes by Franz Lehar or Johann Strauss. She occasionally sings a song which had been popular during the war, sad songs about parted lovers mostly: "*Zum Abschied reich'ich dir die Hände, / Und sage leis 'Auf Wiedersehen'...*", "*Ein paar Tränen werd'ich weinen um dich, / Doch wirst du es nicht sehen ...*", "*Stern von Rio, du könntest mein Schicksal sein ...*", and, of course, the unavoidable *Lilli Marlen*. Yeun can't get rid of the thought that he has seen her before. Where could he have met this woman with her eyes of black velvet. He searches though his memory: nothing comes to him. And then, all of a sudden, he has got it: she looks like the girl who danced on the table in *Kapitanskaïa dotchka*. Around seven, back to the mess: the colonel does not like anyone to be late, but at 8, everyone is free. Many have a local girl, and the ones who don't go hunting. There is plenty of game in a town where the most eligible men are the French officers. Yeun does not take part in the hunt,

undoubtedly because of the pianist in the *Kurhaus*. He knows her name: Erika Steeg, but he has not found out much more about her. Apparently, she lives alone with her little daughter. She is a war widow. Her husband was killed on the Russian front. Yeun knows she has been pursued by others, but in vain, he has been told. Yeun would like to try, but he would find a failure too humiliating. At any rate, now that his evenings are free, he ought to get back to his studies. It has been more than two years since he has done any serious work. He had just taken his last exams for his *licence* in German, but going back to the university in the fall to work on his *mémoire de Diplôme d'Études Supérieures*; was impossible: the *STO* was watching for him, and he had no wish to be sent to forced labor in a German war plant (4). He had gone into hiding, in his uncle Job's farm at first, and shortly after, he had joined the local *Résistance* group. The chief was good. He was not inclined to gamble with his men's lives. Still, there were some losses. Two of this men had been captured by the *Feldgendarmarie*, tortured an entire night, and executed at dawn: they had not talked. Five others, while on patrol, had been ambushed by a stronger force: not a single one had survived the encounter. Finally, in early August 1944, shortly after their junction with the advance guard of General Middleton's combat command, two more had been killed while attacking a German position protecting an enemy's naval aviation base: one had stepped on a land mine, the other had been killed by a mortar shell which had exploded next to him. Yeun had been lucky. The Germans who held the position and who had survived an artillery bombardment had surrendered. And then, instead of being sent to fight against the last positions held by the Germans on the Atlantic coast, he had been sent as an officer candidate to the *EMIA* (5) This is where Yeun was when the war ended. A few weeks later, he graduated with the rank of second lieutenant, Infantry. The war continues in Indo-China, but only officers assigned to the colonial troops are sent there, As soon as the war is over in the Pacific, Yeun will go back to civilian life. Why not use his free evenings to work on his *mémoire de diplôme*? If he can finish it by the time he is discharged, he will be ready to prepare for the *agrégation* (6). He is twenty-three. Having the *agrégation* at twenty-four, why not? One of his university professors had got his at the age of twenty-five, and was so proud of it he would not let any of his students forget it. With the *agrégation*, Yeun will teach in some *lycée*, it does not matter where as long as there is a decent university library nearby where he can work on the doctoral thesis which will earn him a chair in some university. The topic of his *mémoire* has already been approved: *Verwandlung und Verichtung als Dichtung in Rilkes Sonette an Orpheus*. Obviously, it was not in the *Résistance* nor at the *EMIA* that he could have worked on it. In L□wenfels, it is different.

Yeun has a room in the house of a wine merchant who also own some vineyards in the area. Herr Hentzler and his wife look quite pleasant. They must be well off, judging from their house. Yeun's room is small, but quite comfortable, and there is a library where the Hentzler's children did their homework. Yeun can hardly believe his eyes when he sees the books on the shelves: Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Hebbel, Hoffmann, Novcalis, Tieck, Jean-Paul, Achim von Arnim, Brentano, Eichendorff, Chamisso, Hölderlin, Nietzsche, George, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Rilke, of course, and even Trakl and Gottfried Benn. Who can read these books in this house? The Hentzler's daughter, apparently. Her name is Laora. She was studying German literature at Heidelberg when she was diagnosed with TB. Since then, she has been staying in a sanatorium in the mountains, near the Austrian borders. The Hentzlers have had no news from her for the past three months. The sanatorium is located in the American zone, but the postal service is expected to return to normal in a few weeks. Through the Red Cross, they have

received a message from their son, Karl, who served in the *Afrika Korps*. He is well. He was captured by the Americans, and he is in a prison camp in Tunisia.

The work in the office is less killing, now that Yeun is used to it, but he finds it harder to keep away from Erika. He never had real opportunities to meet girls, and he is a bit scared at the thought of finding himself face to face with her, unable to find a work to say. After all, she is only a woman like so many others. But that just it, for him, she is not like any other. In a dream, he hears her sing his favorite songs from *The Blue Angel* and *The Three Penny Opera*. How many of his Thursdays and Sundays did he spend listening to them with his friend Bertrand? More than he can count. Both were crazy about Marlena Dietrich and Lotte Lenya. They were still crazier about American blues. Bertrand spent all of his pocket money on records. He had quite a collection: "*Saint-Louis Blues*", "*Baby, won't you please come home*", "*Southern Blues*", "*Down-hearted Blues*", "*I ain't got nobody*", "*Rocking chair Blues*", "*Misery Blues*", "*Empty bed Blues*".... Yeun did not own any record player, of course, nor did he have any money to buy records. What did they do? Bertrand noted down the music, and Yeun the lyrics. It was not easy. Like many other kids who only spoke Breton at home, he had learned French in school, and after this painful apprenticeship, the Latin, English and German which he studied at the *lycée* were not so difficult. And maybe it was these Thursdays and Sundays which had influenced their choice of a career, Yeun as a language specialist, and Bertrand as a trumpet player in the *caves* of Saint-Germain-des-Prés (7). Which is what gives Yeun the idea: he'll ask Bertrand to send him the lyrics and chords of their favorite pieces. And Yeun loses himself in a dream where Erika sings for him the blues they liked so much, those blues in which the hearts of forsaken women were breaking: "*Nobody knows you when you're down and out*", "*I hate to see the ev'nin' sun go down*", "*Can't help loving that man of mine*". And Yeun lets his mind wander instead of concentrating on his work.

The general has decided there will be a big parade for Bastille Day. The entire division has marched through the streets of Koblenz. The *chasseurs* were there, of course, and the colonel has been congratulated by the general for their impressive appearance and for the precision of their marching. So happy was he that he has given the battalion three days off. Klossmann likes hunting, and he has invited Yeun to go with him. There is plenty of game in the forests of Heimbacherwald and Bingerwald. They have to get up early, at 4 a.m., Klossmann knocks on his door. They leave the jeep on the road to Erbach, and walk up to the *Jagdhütte*, a wooden watchtower built in the middle of a clearing. It is at least 30 foot high. There is a small ladder for climbing up to the small hut perched on pine trunks. One has to be there way before dawn. It is the middle of summer, but it is quite chilly, and Yeun is sorry he did not dress more warmly. It is understood that he'll shoot at the biggest beast on the right, and Klossmann at the biggest one on the left. They have been waiting for three quarters of an hour. It is almost daylight when they catch sight of a large buck behind the pine trees. Four does follow, as light and graceful as ballerinas. They begin to graze at the edge of the forest, where the grass is greener. The hunters have selected their prey. Yeun does not move, his finger on the trigger. The doe appears clearly in the eyelet. Klossmann nods. The two shots are simultaneous. The buck falls down, as thunderstruck. The doe still stands on her two forelegs, she tries to move: the bullet must have broken her spine. The other deer have vanished into the forest. Yeun feels a wild joy: he is as happy as a child, proud to have destroyed the beauty of the world. And immediately he is submerged by disgust and shame as he sees the poor beast covered with blood, vainly struggling in her death throes. Quick, a second shot: it is all over. And Yeun swears to himself that he will never again go hunting. .

And yet, he did not think that he was so sensitive. He had not felt any scruples in following Klossmann in his black market deals. Klossmann collects whatever the prisoners have managed to keep. For a pack of cigarettes or a flask of schnapps, they are ready to give up everything: watches, binoculars, Leicas, medals, and even their gold wedding rings. Yeun does not smoke. His cigarette rations go to Klossmann for his business. The Americans are always looking for souvenirs, and Klossmann has made friends with the officer in charge of the PX on the American base in Wiesbaden. Yeun goes with him: he is the interpreter. The transaction does not take long, and they drive back, their jeep loaded with American cartons of cigarettes, chocolate bars, chewing gum, sugar, coffee, and jerricans full of gasoline.

The week days are filled with work, but Saturdays (after the regular parade) and Sundays are free. Yeun had thought that it would be easy to go sightseeing in a region where tourists used to flock. He had not taken the shortage of gas into account. Fortunately, this has been taken care of by Klossmann's dealings with the Americans. Now they can drive around. They have visited the abbey of Maria Laach, the monuments erected for two of Napoleon's generals, Hoche and the cavalry man Marceau, the Nahetal as far as Idar-Oberstein, driven down the Mosel valley from Kochem to Koblenz, and they plan to visit also Baden-Baden, Aachen, Trier, Speier, Kϰln and Heidelberg.

A parcel from Bertrand has arrived, giving Yeun a good reason to talk to Erika. On that day, she wears a white blouse and a black skirt: *gwenn ha du*, black and white, the colors of Yeun's native Brittany. Is that a favorable omen? His mind is made up: after the final Viennese waltz, he'll talk to her. She looks quite surprised when she sees the chords and lyrics. Yeun feels embarrassed: she is there, next to him, so close. He was right to memorize his lesson. If he hadn't, he would be standing there, mute under her questioning look: "It has been quite a while since I wanted to compliment you, and to show you how grateful I am for the pleasure I had listening to you." What can she answer? Just "*Danke schϰn, Herr Leutnant.*" He spreads out the pages on the piano: «I believe these songs are no longer available here. I hope you'll like having them.» She takes a look: *Barbarasong, Rϰuber Jenny, Havanna-Lied, Ich bin von Kopf bis Fuss auf Liebe eingestellt... Wenn ich mir was wϰnschen dϰrfte...*, plus a thick bunch of American songs (8). Now she is truly astonished "It can't have been easy to get all of these songs, Herr Leutnant, I am very grateful." Yeun just says: "*Bitte schϰn.*" She looks at him standing there, unable to find anything else to say, hoping she won't find him too ridiculous, and finally she says: "*Heute abend, Herr Leutnant, Friedrichsstrasse 33.*" She has spoken so softly that he is not sure he has heard, She is gone, but he is still standing there, unable to move, completely stunned..

Friedrichsstrasse 53. A chain with a handle. The door opens as soon as he has rung the bell. "*Kommen Sie 'rein, Herr Leutnant.*" She has put on a white and blue checked cotton dress. A little girl hides her face in the folds of the dress: "*Komm, Minna, sag 'Gutan Abend'.*" Minna does not want too. But the Herr Leutnant has chocolate bars to give her, and very soon they are the best friends in the world. The house is small, like most of the houses on this street: a corridor, the stairs leading up to the bedrooms, the living room on the left. The dining-room and the kitchen must be on the right. Yeun is in Erika's house, he is playing with her little daughter. Minna is not five years old yet, and she goes to bed at 9: Erika takes her up to bed. Is Yeun really there? He can't believe it. And yet her piano is there: it takes up most of the space. There is hardly enough room left for a couch, a small coffee table, and two small arm-chairs. It looks quite comfortable, *gemϰtlich* as they say here. She is back. They are alone. Is he going to lose

it ? Will she notice he is half paralyzed ? But she sits at the piano, places the music sheets in front of her, and starts playing. He is saved. And he sits on an armchair, and she sings for him, and his dream has come true as she sings, just for him: "... *Und ein Schiff mit acht Segeln / Und mit fünfzig Kanonen / Wird entschwinden mit mir... Ja da kann man doch nicht bloss hinlegen / Ja da muss man kalt und herzlos sein / Ja da könnte so viel geschehen / Aber da gibt es überhaupt nur 'nein'... Wenn ich mir was wünschen dürfte / Möchte ich etwas glücklich sein / Denn wenn ich gar zu glücklich wär' / Hätt'ich Heimweh nach dem Traurigsein...*" She is done with the German songs. Now she opens the music sheet for an American one, *Summertime*, and she asks: "For this one, I shall need some coaching with the pronunciation." Yeun is only too happy to oblige. She is a quick learner: no wonder, she is a musician. And soon she is singing: "*Summertime, and the livin' is easy / Fish is jumping, and the cotton is high ...*" In the warm July night, Yeun walks back to his room, as happy as a newly crowned king. It is late, after midnight. He has found the joy that no woman gave him before: he loves her, and she loves him.

Time weighs heavy on him during the day. He is lucky to be kept so busy at the office: without his work, he would go crazy counting the hours and the minutes. He no longer loses time in the pool. Sitting at his table under the linden tree, he listens to Erika as she sings for him songs from her new repertory. He somehow feels that they give strength and violence to their passion. In his mind, each of them seems to mark a new stage in their love. Desire, hope, joy, jealousy, despair: through these songs, he learns what it would be like to be under their power.

At the *Kurhaus*, Yeun never talks to Erika. Apparently, wives and fiancées of men stationed in Germany have heard of many of them having affairs with German girls. They have complained to their representatives, who have told the Minister of War that it was a scandal to see French soldiers fraternizing with girls whose fathers, brothers or husbands were still killing Frenchmen a few months earlier. The Minister has forwarded the complaints to Baden-Baden, with instructions to take care of the problem. The matter has been passed on down the chain of command, and the colonel, who is a realist and doesn't give a damn about his *chasseurs'* sex life, has issued his order: no officer, non-com or private may be seen in public with a *Fräulein*. This does not bother Yeun: he does not go near Erika at the *Kurhaus*, he sees her only in her own house. Of course, he knows that this cannot last forever, and that he won't be able to ask her to follow him to Brittany until he makes enough money to give Minna and her mother a decent living. And that won't happen for quite a while: the war has to end first, and then one more year to prepare for the *agrégation*. Not to mention the legal problems which will have to be solved before he can marry her and bring her across the French border. For the time being, they have their nights. It has become a ritual: each evening is like the other. He entertains Minna until the sandman arrives. Then come his favorite songs. He loves to hear her sing "*All of me, why not take all of me...*", "*I got it bad, and that ain't good*", "*I'm in the mood for love ...*", Sometime they turn on the AFN station and they dance. After making love, they remain in bed, talking softly in the silent house. Yeun has to be back in his room by midnight, in case there should be an emergency call. On Saturday and Sunday, he spends the morning and the afternoon working on his *mémoire de diplôme*, analyzing poems until it is time to go to Erika. "*Tanzt die Orange*": through the girls' dancing in celebration of the fruit, the orange is transformed. The poet reveals the secret flavor hidden under the bitter rind. Similarly, the sculpted mouth of the fountain gives a voice to the mute earth. It is the genius of the artist which makes manifest what men can

perceive only through the medium of art. Is it not by erasing what was visible that he unveils and creates what would otherwise have remained unseen? The artist creates the surreal beast which has no existence in ordinary reality: the unicorn. How does the artist manage to transcend reality while retaining in his work the hard kernel of “*la réalité rugueuse*”, the rough-surfaced reality praised by Rimbaud? Is it not through destruction, negation, and death that life can be transformed, receive form, meaning, and beauty in the poem? Yeun strives to define the dominant concepts of his essay, and, by the end of August, his *diplôme* is well on its way. He does not want to waste any time, and he no longer follows Klossmann and his *AFAT* in their excursions. It would be another story if Erika and Minna could come with them, but that, obviously, is out of the question.

Erika lived in Hamburg before the war, but she had to leave when the city was constantly bombed by the Allies. She had found a refuge in L□wefels, in her grandmother’s house. The old lady died in 1943, she was in her seventies. Erika went on living in the house which she had inherited. She earns a living by giving piano lessons to the town children and by playing in the *Kurhaus*. In L□wefels, one could always find something to eat, fresh milc for Minna, cheese and potatoes. Yeun has noticed that she never mentions her husband, which, after all, is easy to understand. Sometimes, when she finishes up in the kitchen, he tells a story to Minna. The little girl pays close attention as he talks about the knight Lohengrin, who came on a boat dragged by a snow-white swan to rescue Priiincess Elsa, or Siegfried, who so loved Brūnnhilde and was murdered by the treacherous Hagen. Sometimes, she asks him a story from his own country. His favorite one is the story of the man who never slept.

Many and many years ago, there was a castle overlooking the bay of the Loc’h. It was the residence of a widowed nobleman, who lived there with his only child, a daughter. The mother died while giving birth to her, and the child never was very strong. Her father had called the most celebrated physicians, and they had prescribed the costliest remedies, without success. It was a pity to see the child get weaker and weaker from day to day.. The poor father did not know which saint to pray to when he heard of a healer so expert that no illness could resist him. He immediately sent him a messenger with a purse full of gold coins, promising him a second purse if he could cure his child. She lay in her bed, reduced to skin and bones, and her face was as white as her sheets. The healer looked at her, and right away gave his opinion:“Only the power of the sea can overcome the strength of the sickness which has sapped her health.” He had her put on a stretcher. She was carried to the shore and the healer gave the order to bathe her, and then to lay her down on a blanket and to let her dry in the sun, facing the sea. After a few weeks, she had regained enough strength to play on the beach and she had learned how to swim like a fish.

They lived happily, father and daughter, in their castle by the sea. From the top of their tower, hey enjoyed looking at the ocean, the white foam on the blue water, the forse and the heather in bloom on the cliff, the gulls flying above the shore. And when the weather was rough, the little girl felt joy in her heart as she watched the boundless power of the sea, this power which alone had succeeded in overcoming her sickness. Every day she went swimming, even in cold weather. Never did she fail to do so. She had celebrated her fifteenth birthday. She was very beautiful, the most beautiful girl one might have found in all of Brittany, and she was her father’s pride when, on Sundays, he led her on his arm to the parish church. He was not the wealthiest man around, but he owned many farms, pastures and woods, and he lacked for nothing. He liked hunting, and his daughter helped the servants, especially the woman who had been her nurse. The nurse’s husband

took care of the park and of the horses. They lived happily, until the day when the girl did not return from her swim in the sea. She was found lying on the beach, her body all black and blue. She had fainted. When she regained consciousness, she was unable to explain what had happened, but never again did she go near the sea.

Shortly thereafter, the nurse noticed that the girl to whom she had given breast was pregnant. The poor father was overcome with sorrow and shame. He ordered his daughter never to leave the castle, and he himself no longer dared show himself in the village. The parish priest had to come to the castle to say mass in the chapel. And yet, the girl was innocent: she had nothing to confess. She had sworn on her mother's soul that she was without sin. And no man, anywhere around, would have dared lay a hand on the daughter of the master of the castle. The child was born, and the old master died shortly thereafter, killed by age and heartbreak. His daughter remained, alone with her baby boy and her faithful servants. The baby was a beautiful child, but somewhat strange: his eyes changed color with the weather: at times, they were as blue as the sea under the sun, at times, as dark as a stormy sky. The most bizarre thing was that he never slept. He was not a cry-baby, far from it, but each time his mother came to feed him, she found him wide awake, all quiet in his cradle, but his eyes open.

The young mother devoted herself to her child's education. She purchased all the books available, and she herself went back to learning so as to be able to teach her child. By the age of eighteen, he was as well educated as any college graduate. The old servant who had accompanied his master in all his campaigns, had taught the boy all the skills required of a knight; The young man was an expert swordsman. Riding his horse at a gallop, he could hit the center of a shield with the tip of his lance and unsaddle his opponent, and when he went hunting with his bow, his arrows never failed to kill a leaping deer. But he had soon realized that he was not like other people. Early in life, he had seen other children flee from him, and he had decided that it was better for him to keep alone rather than scare everybody off. No one ever visited the castle, except travelers who happened to pass nearby. For the most part, these were sailors and soldiers returning home from the wars, beggars, pilgrims, and monks. They were kindly received, and none went away without a good meal in their stomach, a new coat on their back, and a gold coin in his purse.

The mother knew that they would not be able to live forever away from the world. She saw that her son was not happy. He had reached the age when he should have occupied at the king's court a place worthy of his lineage and of his rank, but she felt a pang of anguish when she thought of the reception that a bastard might get: would any nobleman ever be willing to give his daughter to her son? So she let time go by without coming to a decision. The rumor of her charity had spread, and it was to their castle that travelers in search of a shelter for the night were directed. Thus, one evening, a monk came, returning from a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. The holy man was very old, and the following morning he was too exhausted to pursue his journey. He had to rest for a few days so as to regain enough strength to go on his journey, since his abbey was still quite far. He soon noticed the sadness which weighed on his hosts, and he decided not to leave until he had brought them some peace of mind. One evening, when the young man came to ask him whether he needed anything before retiring for the night, the old man began to question him. The young man was quite willing to share his concerns with the monk, who soon understood how much the mother had suffered. He talked to the young man, and his voice trembled with pity: "My poor boy, I wish to God that I could reward you for your goodness and your charity towards the poor and the men of God

whom you welcome. But this is beyond the power of any human being, no matter how close to God he may strive to be. Your father, I am afraid, was not a man, but a merman. It happens that mermen feel desire for the daughters of men, just as it may happen that men may feel desire for mermaids. Ask your mother to tell you as exactly as she can what occurred before she lost consciousness on the beach.” The young man revealed to his mother what the old monk has told him. She sighed:

-- Never, she said, did I break the law of God. Never did I yield to any carnal desire. There is only one thing of which I never spoke. The sea was clear, on that day, and just before I lost consciousness, I thought I saw, on the white sand below, a shadow next to mine.

-- Thank you, mother. I know you tell me the truth. My heart breaks at the thought of leaving you, but on the land of men, there can be no room for someone like me. I have to go in search of my father.

He gave his mother a tender kiss and he took the path toward the cliff. For one moment he stood, looking at the horizon, cast a last look towards the tower where his mother was watching, and jumped into the sea. Never did he return.

It has taken Yeun three evenings to finish his story. Minna listens, her eyes wide open. She resembles her mother. At times, Yeun has the impression that he sees Erika as she was twenty years earlier, and his love takes a new dimension, it goes back in time, and he almost feels tears forming in his eyes as he looks at the trusting face of the child. “*Onkel Yeun*”, that what she calls him now, and not “*Herr Leutnant*”. Yeun does not know why Erika chose him, rather than someone else. Not that he is so bad-looking: he is tall enough, slim, and his Breton eyes shine blue in his face tanned by the African sun, but girls never galloped after him, as his uncle Job would have said.

When Yeun was left an orphan, after the accidental death of his parents, it was uncle Job who took care of him. Uncle Job and his wife Naïg had no children, and Yeun had filled this void in their life. Yeun was a good student, and at the age of eleven he had won a full scholarship for the *lycée*. His schoolteacher had explained that the scholarship would take care of tuition, room and board, but that the family was responsible for such costs as the required uniform, clothing, linen, sheets, and books, but Uncle Job and Aunt Naïg had not hesitated for a single moment, and Yeun had started his schooling at the Kemper *lycée*. During the holidays, he helped on the farm, as he had always done, and at the age of fourteen he worked as hard as the best farmhand. When he came home for the summer, at the beginning of July, the hay had already been put away, but the harvest still remained, and lots of work to be done: sharpen the blades of the harvester, cut open the way for the harvester around the edges of the fields, bind the sheaves and stack them, cart them to the threshing area, feed them into the threshing machine, carry the grain sacks to the granary, and so on and so forth. Mid August was the time for wheat, barley, rye and oats (oats mostly for the horses), late August for buckwheat (used for heavy *crêpes*), September for potatoes (the small ones were kept for the pigs, as was the bran flour), parsnips and beets (food for the horses and cattle), for apple picking, and for making the hard cider. The very best apples were used to make sparkling cider. Some of the hard cider was sent to the distiller so that there would be a few bottles of applejack. Of course, there were the usual daily chores: milking the cows, feeding the horses and the pigs, cleaning the stables and the sty, and spreading straw for litter

On October 1st, Yeun went back to the *lycée*. This is where he had made Bertrand’s acquaintance. They were classmates, but Yeun ranked among the best students, and Bertrand among the last. Bertrand was not dumb, but his only interest was

music: he had studied the trumpet for years, and his only ambition was a career as a trumpet player in a jazz band.: His father was a doctor, and his mother too busy to have him at home when he had no courses to attend, so that Bertrand was a half-boarder: he stayed at the *lycée* for lunch and for study hall, and did not return home until seven thirty in the evening. He had got into the habit of asking Yeun for help with his homework, and finally it had been arranged that Yeun would spend Thursday and Sunday afternoon (the days when there were no classes were held at the *lycée*) at Bertrand's home. When the homework was finished, Bertrand would play his records, and a few numbers on his trumpet. This had gone one for five years. Finally, Bertrand had told his parents that he was sick and tired of the *lycée*, that he did not give a damn about the baccalaureate, that he was interested only in a career as a trumpet player, and that he wanted to go to Paris to try his luck. He had had to repeat a couple of classes in elementary school, so that he was already eighteen at the time. His parents were fairly typical French bourgeois, but they had been unexpectedly understanding (they probably had realized long ago that Bertrand would never make it into one of the *grandes écoles*, and that he might as well take advantage of his talent for music (9). Yeun was more interested in languages and literature. At the *lycée*, his favorite subjects were Latin, Greek, German, and French literature,. On his own, he had studied English and Russian, using first the Assimil records and memorizing the handbooks, and reading whatever Russian and English poems and short stories he could lay his hands on. He had also bought a Breton grammar to figure out the enigmas with which his native tongue was swarming. Yeun was seventeen when France and England declared war on Nazi Germany. Nine months later, in June, the Germans occupied Brittany. The *lycée* was closed. The exams for the first part of the baccalaureate were canceled. A couple of months later, a semblance of regular life resumed, under German occupation. The baccalaureate exams took place in August. Yeun did well. In other times, Yeun would have done what had been normal then. He would have gone to dances, he would have met girls, but dances had been forbidden by the German authorities. Classes resumed in the Fall, and nine months later Yeun passed the second and last part of the baccalaureate. The farm brought in a lot more money, now that the price of butter, flour, eggs, chicken and meat kept shooting up, but Yeun had some scruples about living at his uncle's expense. He would have liked to become a professor of German language and literature, but if he was to go on to the University, his uncle would have to pay for his room and board, and in a city like Rennes, that would mean a lot of money. Everything had been settled when the director of the *lycée* had arranged for Yeun to be accepted in the *Khâgne* of the *lycée* in Rennes, with a full scholarship (10).

There were girls in his class now, and a couple of them were pretty enough to cause a saint to risk damnation. But Yeun was too embarrassed to flirt with them. He was now too tall for his old clothes: sleeves, trousers, jackets, everything was too short or too tight, and with the shortages, you could not find anything in the stores. One would have had to resort to the black market, but no student on scholarship could afford that. He had no money, nor did he have time, with two sets of courses, one in *khâgne*, one at the University. But there were compensations: after two years of study, he had been able to show his Uncle Job and his Aunt Naïg, in his student record booklet, the inscription: *31 mai 1943: Diplôme de licencié*. He could have taken also the entrance exam to the *École Normale Supérieure*, but he had concentrated on studying for the *licence*, and had not had enough time to devote to other subjects required for the *École Normale*, philosophy and history mostly. Anyway, with the *licence*, he could get a job as *répétiteur* in a *lycée*. and

have enough money to live on and to prepare for the *agrégation* (11). Which would have been perfect except for the damn *STO*. Who could have believe, when he left the farm for the *maquis* in the summer of 1943, that two years later he would be in love with a German woman? (12).

Yeun is quite surprised, on Saturday morning, when he enters the library: there is a young woman standing by the bookshelves. She turns around. She is pretty, in her red dress, with her blue eyes and blond hair. A true Rhine maiden. What did the poet say? "*Et mettez près de moi toutes les filles blondes / Au regard immobile aux nattes repliées.*" (13).

-- I am sorry, *Herr Leutnant*, I did not think you'd be up so early.

-- Fräulein Hentzler? Your parents did not tell me you would be home.

-- I had written, but apparently my letter did not arrive. I finally was allowed to leave the sanitarium.

-- Your parents will be happy to have you back. They missed you and your brother.

She has picked up her books, and walks towards him, towards the door behind him, rather.

-- *Auf Wiedersehen, Herr Leutnant*. Sorry to have troubled you.

-- I am the one who should apologize, It is your library.

She nods as she walks by him, and she goes down the stairs.

Things have changed since Laora's return. Little things, insignificant things, but a bit troublesome. Yeun does not find his papers as he had left them on the library table. Laora comes in while he is working, and she starts to talk about Rilke and his friendships with French poets. She happens to be on the stairs just when he is coming out of his room. Little things, hard to pin down, but easy to understand. Yeun does not have any illusions, he knows that he is no Don Juan, but Laora probably feels a bit annoyed that there is young man who lives in her house and sees her every day, but who does not seem to pay any attention to her. This must be hard to swallow for a girl who has been ill for such a long time. She must be impatient to make up for all the years of boredom spent in the sanatorium. Yeun feels sorry for her; he has no wish to play the part of Joseph with Putiphar, but he remembers the famous words of a French general: "With women, the best tactic is flight." So he moves to a room left vacant by an officer who has been transferred as an instructor at the non-com training program in Diez. On the whole, he feels much better about the situation, but he can't quite forget the look on her face when she saw him leave with all his bags in the jeep loaned by Klossmann. A worm in the fullness of the summer.

He can't believe it: the Hairdresser in the officers' mess? And still with his big mouth? As soon as he catches sight of Yeun, he yells:

-- But there is the altar boy! Did you finally lose your ten cent coin? Did you take advantage of your stay among the *bougnouls* to visit the yellow earth? Or perhaps the booted goat or the legionnaire's wife? Wait till they send you to Indo-China and you try it with the Cholon duck.? (14)

And the Hairdresser bursts with laughter. With such an ass-hole, the best is not to answer. At least he has lost two of the three gold stripes he had put on his shoulder boards at the time of the Liberation. This was also the time when he acquired another distinction he would have preferred to do without: his nickname, *le Coiffeur*, the Hairdresser. He had arrested a dozen girls whose heads he had shaved himself. They had been somewhat raped before, and beaten up too, for good measure. Of course, their reputation was not too good. They had slept with German soldiers, no question about it, but they were not

whores. Maybe it would have gone better for them if they had been. The Hairdresser would have found that quite normal: they would have been just doing their job. He had been a *quartier-maître* in the Navy, in the *sacos*, he had recruited a bunch of the worst hoodlums of the neighborhood, and he had set up his own private Résistance group, armed at first with hunting guns, and later with German rifles and submachine guns which they had taken from German whom they had ambushed (15). They also mailed parcels containing tiny coffins to people suspect of collaborating with the German and threatened to execute them if they did not come up with the blackmail money requested. Yeun had also heard about the two young *Breiz Atao* whom the Hairdresser had killed (16). He had heard the story from a fellow who, when he was on the run from the Germans, had sought shelter with the Hairdresser's band. He had seen the Hairdresser torture his two prisoners for an entire night, One of them was eighteen, the other no more than sixteen. In the morning, they had been taken to a meadow, near a small stream, where the soil was soft. They had been forced to take off their uniform and to dig a hole large enough for two bodies. The eldest was exhausted, he barely could stand. He moaned, curled on the ground, and did not even react when he was kicked. Finally, it was the youngest who had had to dig the grave by himself, and the Hairdresser shot the two of them. A burst from his submachine gun, a few kicks to push them down into the hole, some shovelfuls of earth on top, *ha mat pell 'zo*, as the fellow said (17). After this scene, the fellow had had no wish to stay, and he had taken advantage of the first opportunity to take off, and eventually had joined Yeun's unit. The Hairdresser's band had been attached to Yeun's after the surrender of the General Ramcke's *Kreta Korps*. Yeun had just been promoted to the rank of *aspirant*, and he had his meals with the officers (18). He was the youngest, and the Hairdresser had taken him as the butt of his jokes, calling him the altar boy, and expressing doubts about his manhood. The Hairdresser wore three gold stripes, and Yeun raged in silence. Now, they are equal, and Yeun has the means of shutting up his old bully. One word will be enough, as word which he'll whisper in his enemy's ear: *ficher-blev* (19).. It's the Hairdresser who has inherited Yeun's room at the Hentzlers. It has not taken him long to find his way to Laora's bedroom. They have been seen together in the non-coms' mess-hall, which the Hairdresser likes to go to. Both were drunk, and Laora laughed like a madwoman. It's a miracle that the colonel has not hear about it.

It had to be expected. Once in a while, Klossmann catches prisoners who have been guilty of war-crimes. They are sent to Nürnberg in one of the half-brigade GMC trucks. Usually, it's is Klossmann who escorts them with a sergeant and a squad of *chasseurs*. This time, he sends Yeun. It takes only three days. Three days ? Between Frankfurt and Mainz, the truck breaks down. The gearbox needs to be replaced. It takes two days to get the parts, and no way of reaching Erika. It is already dark when Yeun gets back to L□wenfels on the fifth day. Time to report to Klossmann, to shower and change, and he is at Erika's house. She sobs in his arms. Her husband is in a hospital in Hamburg. His feet had been frozen and his legs had to be amputated above the ankle. Erika was alone, and Yeun did not come back. She was going crazy. She is leaving the next day for Hamburg. She won't return. Yeun is thunderstruck. If he had been there, he could have talked to her, he could have persuaded her to wait, he would have thought of something to say, of something to do, he could have.... What? All through the night, their last night, Erika's kisses have the salty taste of tears. He stays until dawn.

Yeun has gone to Minna's room. He has kissed the hair of the sleeping child. He has said his final good-bye to Erika. He has gone to the infirmary, where the nurse has given him a few sleeping pills. He has gone back to his room and swallowed all the pills,

not an overdose, just enough to make him lose consciousness and loosen the iron circle which crushes his chest, at least for a few hours. Then begins the labor of mourning. Within his heart, he knows that he did not fight Erika's decision, and he knows why. He is not a true believer, but something remains of his Catholic childhood, and this is also the case for Erika. For her and for him, there are laws that cannot be broken. One does not take a child away from her father. And a wife does not abandon her maimed husband.

His work on Rilke is finished. What can he do now that evenings get to be longer and longer? Fall has arrived, but the weather remains warm until the first days of October. The grape harvest is not too abundant, but the wine will be good, a very fine year, according to the vintners. The *Oktoberfest* is celebrated on the first week-end of October. It lasts three days. For this occasion, the colonel has given his men permission to take part in the festivities. For the ball, a dance floor has been built in the Kurhaus park, with a platform for the band. Colored lanterns hang from the linden trees. The colonel himself opens the ball with the wife of the *Bürgermeister*. Yeun did not especially want to come, but the orders were clear: all the officers have to be present. Yeun has come with Klossmann and the Captain's girl. They, at least, know what he is going through (although maybe they think that he is overdoing it, all that heartbreak for a Gretchen?), but they give him what he needs most at this time, their quiet sympathy. At nine, the park is full of *chasseurs* in their dress uniform and girls in their local costumes, white blouses, wide red skirts, and black shoes with silver buckles. All are already warmed up by the new wine. And there is the Hairdresser with the non-coms who are his favorite companions. Laora is with them. She has drunk too much, clearly, and her strident laughter can be heard through the noise and the music. She has noticed Yeun's look. She stops laughing. She runs away. A wounded doe takes flight.

Shodrtly after ten thirty, Yeun goes home. He has done what the colonel expected of him. He has danced with the wives of the *Bürgermeister* and the *Stadtherren* as well as with the *AFAT*'s of the half-brigade. A sad thing, when he thinks that it was Erika who taught him how to dance. From the corner of the street, he sees a woman next to his door. Erika? No, it is Laora, dead drunk, she drools, her blouse is soiled with vomit. No, she is not drunk she is suffocating, leaning against the wall, she faints. Yeun runs to the square where Klossmann parks his jeep, the car is there, he runs up to the office, get the second set of car keys in Klossman's desk. Ten minutes later, Laora is in the hospital. When the doctor arrives, he questions her. What has she taken? She closes her eyes. He repeats his question:

-- *Schnell, bitte, was haben Sie genommen?*

At last, she answers:

-- *Chinin.*

Quinine. The doctor knows how to deal with quinine poisoning.

The next day, Yeun gets the news. In a small town, nothing remains secret: a nurse tells her best friend, who tells her family, and in no time at all everybody knows. Laora was pregnant, and she had a miscarriage. She is recovering, but the worse thing is, her TB has come back. Yeun wonders: why quinine? Taken at high doses, quinine is extremely toxic. Did she want to commit suicide? And why come to his door: did she want to lay the blame on him for her death? Also, it is commonly believed that a high dosed of quinine may induce a miscarriage: is that what she wanted to do? At any rate, as soon as she is able to travel, she will return to the sanatorium. Yeun did not visit her in the hospital. It probably would not be good for her. She must feel guilty and ashamed. But Herr Hentzler has come to see him, and thanked him for saving his daughter's life.

The Hairdresser ignores the whole matter. He has found other distractions. He spends his evenings with his non-com pals in the taverns along the waterfront, where they pick up whores. One morning, he does not show up for raising the flag. He has vanished. The MP has been called: no trace of him. On the tenth day after his disappearance, his body comes up in the basin where barges are moored for unloading. The autopsy shows that he drowned: the tissues are full of alcohol. He was drunk. The police concludes that the death was an accident: the victim stumbled on one of the iron rings attached to the surface of the embankment: and to which barges are made fast, he fell into the basin, and he drowned. The face is horrible, all swollen and purplish. .

In ancient books, one reads the story of Lore. On the cliff, she sings her despair:

-- "My lover has left for a faraway land
Let me die since there is nothing left to love."

She threatens her pursuers:

-- "My father the Rhine shall punish you."

The casts her diadem into the river:

-- "Father, quick, help!

On the wave and the wind

Let the white horses fly!"

The storm arrives, two white horses emerge from the foaming water, they crush the pursuers under their hooves.

December. The Japanese surrendered three months ago, but although the war has been over for quite a while, the government bureaucrats take their time to process the discharge papers. Finally, the orders reach the office of the half-brigade. Yeun is free to leave the service. The jeep takes him towards the west, far from the Rheintal, far from the poisoned pastures of the fall, far from the meadow saffrons as attractive as love, and just as deadly. But often he shall remember the gypsy's prophecy.(20).

(1) FTP : *Franco-Tireurs et Partisans* : the left wing armed force in the Résistance, made up in majority of Communists. After the Liberation of France, in the summer of 1944, the government of General de Gaulle had to integrate them into the regular army, just as he had to appoint a couple of Communists to his Cabinet, In exchange, Stalin helped De Gaulle to keep the FTP under control. De Gaulle was smart enough to give the Communists he had had to appoint the most unimportant posts in his Cabinet.

(2) BCRA : *Bureau central de renseignements et d'action*. Founded in 1940, this was De Gaulle 's organization for intelligence and clandestine operations in occupied France.

(3) AFAT: *Auxiliaires féminines de l'Armée de Terre* (the French equivalent of the WACs)

(4) *licence*: the French equivalent of the *M. Phil.*; *mémoire de Diplôme d'Études Supérieures*: the French equivalent of the M.A. thesis; *STO*: *Service du Travail Obligatoire*: instituted in June 1942 by the collaborationist government of Marshall Pétain. All young Frenchmen who reached the age of twenty had to report for a medical exam. If their physical condition was satisfactory, they were sent to work in German war plants. Many young Frenchmen did not report, and used every possible means to escape detection by the authorities (forged ID papers, hiding in the countryside, joining Résistance groups....). Older skilled workers whose experience was deemed useful to the German war effort were also sent to work in German war plant.

(5) EMIA: *École Militaire Inter-Armes*. During World War II, when General de Gaulle's Free French Government gained control of North Africa, the French Military Academy

was reestablished in December 1942 in the military camp and barracks of Cherchell, located on the Mediterranean coast halfway between Algiers and Oran. It remained there until June 1945, when it was relocated back in metropolitan France, in the military camp of Coëtquidan. It trained officers for the following branches of the armed services: Infantry, Armor, Mounted Cavalry, Artillery, Anti-aircraft, Engineers, Signal Corps, Supply.

(6) *agrégation*: competitive exam required of professors for teaching in the upper classes of the *lycées* and in universities.

(7) *cave*: cellar, basement. In the years following WWII, many night clubs where jazz musicians performed were opened in the basements of buildings in the quarter of Saint-Germain-des-Prés.

(8) The first three songs are by Kurt Weill, the last two by Friedrich Holländer. These Jewish composers had to leave Germany when Hitler came to power. Their music was banned by the Nazis.

(9) *grandes écoles*: the élite schools accessible only by extremely difficult competitive exams (e.g., *Polytechnique*, *Normale supérieure*, *Hautes Études Commerciales*, *Centrale*, *Saint-Cyr*, *Navale*, *Mines*, *Chimie de Nancy*...)

(10) *Khâgne*: preparatory class for the entrance exam to the *École Normale Supérieure*

(11) *répétiteur*: study hall monitor and tutor

(12) *maquis*: word commonly used to refer to clandestine Résistance units operating in the countryside, forests or mountains

(13) “And place next to me all the blond girls / With their motionless eyes and their folded tresses” (Guillaume Apollinaire, *Alcools*)

(14); *bougoul* : slang for African natives ; ten cent coin (Fr. *pièce de dix sous*): virginity; yellow earth (Fr. *terre jaune*), booted goat (Fr., *chèvre bottée*), legionnaire’s wife (Fr. *la femme du legionnaire*), Cholon duck (Fr. *le canard de Cholon*): allusions to sexual practices supposed to be common among colonial troops

(15) *quartier-maître*: the lowest non-com rank in the French Navy; *sacos*: slang for fusiliers serving aboard Navy ships.

(16) *Breiz Atao*: Brittany For Ever, in the Breton language. This was the title of the newspaper published in the thirties by the *Parti National Breton (PNB)*, a title which was commonly used to designate all Breton nationalists. In the late thirties, the pro-Nazi leaders of the *PNB* hoped that a German victory would enable them to create an independent Breton state, but the victorious Nazi government found that the collaboration of the French government of Marshall Pétain was more to their advantage. As a consequence, the *PNB* got rid of the pro-Nazi leaders. A small minority, led by Neven Henaff, decided to continue to serve the Nazis; they even created an armed militia affiliated with the *Waffen SS*, the *Bezen Perrot*, which counted only seventy two members. The two *Breiz Atao* mentioned in Laora are members of this militia. Seventy two out of a population of five millions Bretons: an insignificant number when compared with the forty thousand Frenchmen who volunteered to serve in the German armed forces, many of them in the *Waffen SS*, and to the twenty five thousand members of the *Milice française* who fought against units of the *Résistance*, a total of sixty five thousand out of a French population of thirty five millions. It should be added that a large number of Breton nationalists the *Résistance*, and that the leaders of the *PNB* did offer their help to the American authorities (significantly, not to the Free French government of General de Gaulle: they probably felt that the General would not have been inclined to listen to people who wished to do what Ireland had done after WWI, The Americans did not

accept). It should be added that one half of de Gaulle's Free French Forces and one third of the French Forces of the Interior were Bretons. Accusing all Breton nationalists of having collaborated with the Nazi government during WWII, as it still is often done in the French press, is a bare-faced lie. .

(17) A Breton expression meaning "*and that's good enough*".

(18) The lowest officer rank in the French Army.

(19) *ficher-blev*: hairdresser

(20) Allusions to poems in *Alcools*, by Guillaume Apollinaire

Those of Ar Gistinid

[This novella is the story of a Breton family named Rosparz, who live on the farm Ar Gistinid (The Chestnut Grove). The second chapter recounts the childhood of Jobig, the grandson of Ewen and Maï Rosparz, and the son of Laorañs Rosparz. His mother died of an infectious fever shortly after giving birth to him, and his father never remarried. He lost two uncles, who served in the infantry, inThere WWI. His father, who was in the artillery, and thus less exposed, survived.]

Chapter I. A child's paradize

Chapter II. The School of Sant-Alar

A little boy must learn that he has not been put on earth just to eat and lay, and Maï has made her grandchild Jobig memorize his praHe hasthey yers. She also tautht him the beautiful Breeton hymns which they have inherited from their ancestors, *Aeled eus ar baradoz* , *Diskennit eus an Neñvoù*, *D'hor mamm Santez Anna* , *Anjeluz Pask*, *Kantik ar Baradoz*, *Itron Vari ar Porzoù*, and many more (1). Ewen also develops Jobig'smemory by having him memorize the lyrics of traditional Breton songs. There is an ancient song, *An Alarc'h*, which tells about the return of an exiled Breton duke who is going to defeat the French army which has invaded Brittany . There are the gavottes which are danced after the harvest, *Me 'zo ur serjant-major*, *Metig*, *Va c'halon a zo frailhet....* Later, Jobig will learn that the lyrics are a poem by Prosper Proux, *Kimiad ur soudard yaouank* (2). There are tunes which are quite joyful: *Ar Pilhaouer*, *Matelin an Dall*, *An hini gozh*, *Koad Keryann*, *Me 'zo bet en ifern*, *Julig ar Ververo*, and others which are rather melancholy: *An hini dilezet*, *Silvestrig*, *Kouskit buan*, *va bihannig....* (3) To reward Jobig for his efforts, Ewen tells him beautiful stories, like the ones of *Katell Gollet* and of *Yann ar Vec'h Lann* which show how those who yield to their evil impulses are punished (4)..

Katell was the daughter of a wealthy and powerful lord who, after a long life spend weaging war, had returned to his country castle. This did not please his young niece Katell, a pretty girl who thought only of dancing. She was only sixteen, but she could spend entire nights dancing with young men from neighboring castles. Her uncle was too old and weak to make her more obedient, and so he decided to marry her off, but Katell stubbornly refused every suitor. Finally, she told her old uncle: "The one who shall be able to dance with me an entire night, that one shall be my husband." They published the news, and bands of young men flocked to the castle. Each one took her to night feasts. The young man, fascinated by the girl's beauty, danced until he lost his breath, he grew weakere and weaker until, his entire strength was spent, and he fell dead on the dancing floor. Soon, one only saw mourning clothes in every castle of the area, and it was all Katell's fault. But one night a knight presented himself at the castle. He was a dark stranger, and he wore black velvet vestments under his red cloak. That evening, it was this knight who took Katell to a night feast. A piper accompanied him who opened the ball with a gavotte. Katell danced faster and leapt higher than any of the young men she

had led to their death, but the dark knight kept up with her. The piper accelerated the rhythm, the music became shriller and shriller. Katell began to weaken, but neither the piper nor the knight seemed to tire. How long did the dance last? The knight's hand was like a steel glove around the girl's waist, and she was forced to keep dancing and leaping until dawn. The angelus' bells put an end to the diabolical gavotte. A clap of thunder was heard, the floor opened and swallowed the dark knight and his piper. The only thing left on the dance floor but the lifeless body of Katell and the blackened marks of two forked feet. Since that time, it is her name which is given to lost girls.

Yann was a poor peasant who was jealous of his wealthy neighbor. The latter had a stable full of beautiful well-fed horses. Yann had a nag which was only skin and bones: one could count each of her ribs. Unlike his neighbor, he did not have any large field of gorse which he could chop her to feed her. One night, under the moon light, pushed by the Evil Spirit, he took his and went to cut a good load of gorse in his neighbor's field. But as soon as he put his bundle on his back, the moon swallowed him. This is why, on the nights of full moon, one can see on the bright surface of the moon the shadow of Yann with his bundle of gorse on his back. Ewen has also a Breton novel, *Emgann Kergidu*, which tells the story of Yann Pennorz, a Breton peasant who, during the Revolution of 1789, leads his neighbors in their resistance against the conscription forced upon them by the new government of France.

The time comes nearer when Jobig will have to go to school. In Sant-Alar, as in all the small towns of Brittany, there are two public schools, one for boys and one for girls, since the sexes are kept separated, and also two Catholic schools. In the public schools, the boys are taught by men, except for the first two grades which are taught by the wives of two other schoolteachers, and the girls by women. In the Catholic schools, the boys are taught by Christian brothers, and the girls by nuns. The children who go to Catholic schools come mostly from peasant families, who are staunch Catholics and reluctant to send their children to what they call *skol an Diaoul*, the devil's school. This does not mean that public school teachers are members of Satanic cults. In fact, nearly all of them were brought up as Catholics. It is just that they no longer go to mass, do their Easter duty, or send their children to catechism. It is also that some do not behave as good people should: A couple of men teachers are divorced and remarried. And one woman in the public school for girls has a child although she is not married. She has been heard to say that a woman who has not found a husband should not be deprived of the joy of giving birth to a child. The most shocking thing about this situation is that she has not been fired immediately. The mayor and the town council do not have the authority, since the public schools are run by the Minister of Public Instruction in Paris, and all public school teachers are civil servants protected by their status. A good number of the children who go to public schools speak only French. They are mostly the sons and daughters of people who work for the government, the justice of the peace, the tax collector, the postmaster, the railroad station master, the *gendarmes*, and all other employees of the state, the letter carriers, the road menders, the lock keepers, and also the children of professional people, like the doctor, the dentist, the notary, the veterinarian, the bank manager (5). The French-speaking boys have no trouble understanding the teacher, so that they always do much better on every test, whereas the boys who barely understand a few words of French when they come to school lag behind, although most of them are just as bright, and manage to catch up with the town boys by the end of first grade.

In spite of their reluctance to do so, there are peasant families which send their children to public schools, which are free. Only farmers who own their land or are able to

rent a fairly large farm because they own enough farm equipment, horses and cattle can afford to pay the fees for Catholic schools:, only those who own their land or rent a large enough farm can manage to do so. Small farmers and day laborers cannot. Most of these families only speak Breton, woe betide the five and six year old Breton boy who has not been taught any French by his parents. He will be the target of constant snubs and mockery. for the French-speaking boys. In order to make Jobig understand better the kind of humiliation he will have to suffer if he does not learn French, his father gives him an example. In the classroom, a little Breton needs to go out to the outhouse. So he raises his hand, and asks the teacher in broken French: "*Permission aller dehors*". The teacher asks him: "*Pouvez-vous me dire pour quelle raison ?* » The boy does not understand and casts desperate looks around the class. A charitable classmate whispers: "*Perak ?* » And the boy finally answers, mixing up Breton and French: " '*Vit aller chier.*" Of course, the poor fellows knows only the gross words he has heard from the town boys. The teacher has understood what he means, but he does not want to miss this opportunity to poke fun at this ignoramus and to display his wit in front of his class, and so he says, with fake kindness, and pretending that the boy said the French word "*vite*" and not the Breton word "'*vit*": "*Puisque c'est si pressé, allez, mais venez me parler à la fin de la classe.*"(5) And after the class, the teacher explained to the poor boy that he should have said: "*S'il vous plaît, Monsieur, permission d'aller au cabinet*", and, as a punishment for using an unseemly word, gave him a week of detention, so that the poor fellow, for an entire week, had to spend all the time of recess standing with his nose against a wall, while his class-mates were playing(6)..

There is another reason for poor peasants to send their children to a public school. For all their faults, the public school teachers do a pretty good job of educating their pupils, who successfully pass the state examination for the *Certificat d'études primaires* by the end of the 5th grade, a degree which has great practical value for those who do not study further. More important, the brightest of them successfully pass the all-state exams for scholarships which will enable them to go the state *écoles primaires supérieures* and *lycées*. There are around twenty students in each class, and every year, there are four or five of them who have the potential to do well on the scholarship exams, and it does happen that, of these four or five, one or two come from very poor families.. It is somewhat ironical that a boy who, in first grade, was severely punished when he used a Breton word because he had not yet learned the French one, becomes one of the favorite pupils of the fifth grade teacher, who cannot do enough for him just because he is a good prospect for a state scholarship. There is nothing the teacher won't do to help. He talks to the parents, explaining all their options. If they can manage to keep the boy in school just for four more years instead of hiring him out to watch for sheep or cattle, he can go to the *école primaire supérieure* and get his *brevet élémentaire* , and pass an exam which will give him an office job in some government office: he can, for instance, sell tickets and make reservations for the state railroad system, or sell stamps and weigh parcels for the postal service. The salary will be far more than what he could ever get as a farm hand, and he will have a pension. If they can keep him in school for a couple more years, he can get his *brevet supérieur*, which will guarantee him a job as an elementary school teacher. And if they can send him to the *lycée*, he will be prepared, first for the *baccalauréat*, and then for the entrance examinations to one of the prestigious *grandes écoles*, which will give him access to a top position in industry (*École Polytechnique, École Centrale, École des Ponts et ÉlChaussées, École des Mines, École Supérieure d'Électricité, École de Chimie...*), in business (*École des Hautes Études Commerciales, École Supérieure de*

Commerce....), in government (*Institut d'Études Politiques....*), in the armed forces (*École Polytechnique, École Spéciale Militaire de Saint-Cyr, École Navale, École de l'Air*), in the universities (*École Normale Supérieure*). The teacher will also prepare the boys who have a chance at a scholarship: he gives them extra tutoring, makes them practice with questions and problems which have been given in previous exams, drives them in his car to Kemper where the exams take place, takes them for lunch after the morning session, takes them back for the afternoon session, and drives them back to Sant-Alar after the exams is over. Every year, in a class of twenty, there are four or five boys who are good prospects, and few are the failures.

Of course, Maï, Ewen and Laorañs do not want Jobig to suffer any humiliation in school, and as soon as he is able to speak Breton, they start to teach him French. On Sundays and Thursdays, they only address him in French, and after a while, as his French improves, they ask him every now and then to repeat in French what he has said in Breton. Eventually, the year before he enters first grade, Ewen explains to him the main differences between Breton and French. The most important one is the way some initial letters change, depending on different factors. Thus, if a word begins with K, T, P, G, D, B, or M, K could change into G or C'H (pronounced as CH in the German word *nach*), T into D or Z, P into B or F, G into K or C'H, D into T or Z, B into P or V, M into V. The change is affected by the kind of word which precedes (definite or indefinite article, pronoun, possessive, preposition, or by such numbers as 2, 3, or 4), by the gender (is it masculine or feminine?), by the number (is it singular or plural?). In words such as *kiger* [butcher] and *kigerez* [lady butcher], for instance, in Breton, the butcher is *ar c'higer*; the lady butcher, *ar gigerez*; the butchers, *ar gigerien*; the lady butchers, *ar c'higerezed*; your lady butcher, *ho kigerez*. The second major difference is the use of the verbal particles *a* or *e*, depending on structure of the sentence, as in "*An amzer a oa brav*" [The weather was beautiful] vs "*Brav e oa an amzer*" [Beautiful was the weather]. A third big difference: the grammatical structure of a Breton sentence is quite complicated, as in this example: "*Anavezout a ran an itron a skrivas Yann ul lizher dezhi an deiz all*"; the literal translation is: "Know I do the lady who John wrote a letter to her the day other", i.e., "I know the lady to whom John wrote a letter the other day".

Ewen also teaches Jobig how to count, to add, to subtract, to multiply and to divide. For this, he uses bundles of small sticks, hardly bigger than kitchen matches, helot together by rubber bands. For adding 9 and 7, he tells Jobig to place a set of 9 sticks on the kitchen table, another set of 7 sticks below the first one, and he makes him count the total. For subtracting 7 from 9, he tells Jobig to put 9 sticks on the table, to remove 7 sticks, and to count how many sticks are left. To multiply 3 by 6, he tells to him to put 6 sets of 3 sticks on the table, and to count the total. To divide 18 and to remove as many sets of 4 as he can. Jobig finds himself with 4 sets of 4, and 2 sticks left over. So the result will be 4, plus $\frac{1}{4}$ of 2. But then one gets into fractions, and for that, Jobig will have to wait till he is in school. After a few months of practice, Jobig no longer needs the sticks, he can do all the additions, subtractions, multiplications and divisions in his head. To sharpen his wits, Ewen asks Jobig the answers to the traditional riddles used to develop a child's imagination, like: "I throw one up in the air, it falls on the ground and there are three. What it is?" Jobig can't think of anything, and then Ewen tells him: "An egg". When it breaks on the ground, one sees the shell, the white and the yolk". Another example: "The more you take from it, the bigger it gets. What is it?" A hole, of course. And a final one: "What goes from Ar Gistinid to Sant-Alar without moving." This time, the answer is easier: "The road." Ewen has dozens like that, some of which would shock

his grandma, but Ewen is an old sailor, and as boy has to be ready to hold his own in the company of other boys. He also teaches Jobig dozens of proverbs and sayings which have been transmitted from one generation to another for hundreds of years.

In school, most of the town boys wear wool jackets and pants, wool socks and leather shoes. The farm kids wear the same kind of clothes: a black cotton smock over dark beige corduroy jacket and short pants, wool socks, and a pair of wooden clogs. To make the clogs last longer, they are circled with a metal band and steel nails are hammered into the soles, making a lot of noise when the kids who wear them run through the streets of the town. The problem with clogs is that, when one runs, the tip of one clog often hits against the opposite ankle. In Jobig's case, it is always the right clog which hits the left ankle and makes it bleed. The sock sticks to the dried blood, and when Jobig takes off his sock, the dried blood sticks to the sock, and the ankle starts bleeding again. This is why, all through the year, Jobig wears a cotton pad under his sock around his left ankle. Another problem: in winter, since no one ever wears gloves, and one gets for some kids, the chilblains are so bad that their hands get swollen, the skin cracks, there is bleeding and some time the cracks get infected, and this condition can last till spring. In Jobig's case, this never happens, but the chilblains, when the hands are warmed up, cause terrible itching. When it rains or when the weather is cold, Jobig puts on a *kabig*. This is a short hooded coat much like the ones worn by Breron fishermen and clam-diggers. The wool is woven so tight that it is practically waterproof.

To walk to school, Jobig does not go through the road to Kerdraon and the road to Kersulio. He takes a path behind the house which goes up the hill and down to the river, turns left along the south bank, on to the path parallel to the river until it reaches Skluz ar Veilh, the dam which powers the mill. On the other side of the river is the lock which allows the horse-drawn barges to ascend from one level of the river to the next, the tow path, and the house of the lock keeper. In the middle of the dam, there is a special ladder so that the salmons can return to the stream where they were born. Just after the dam, Jobig follows the path around the mill until its junction with the access road between the mill and the highway which, towards the South, goes to Laz, Kore and Kemper, and, towards the North, across Pont an Dugez to Sant-Alar. The Froudig joins Ar Stêr Vras a quarter mile below the bridge. Pont-an-Dugez is where Jobig usually meets with the children of the lock keeper. There are five of them, three boys, aged ten to fourteen years, and two girls, one of which is his age and the other two years older. They all go to the public schools. He knows them well, since their parents often come to help when extra workers are needed at *Ar Gistinid*. In exchange, Ewen and Laorañs plough, harrow and roll their three fields, help with the harvest, and mow their pastures. They don't have to cart the hay, since the lock keeper and his sons pile it up on their boat which they manoeuvre like a gondola. The hay covers the entire boat, and it looks like an enormous hayrick floating down the river (7)..

Pont-an-Dugez is also where Jobig might expect to meet with the Derrien children coming from An Ti-Plouz, who have taken the unpaved road to Kerdraon. There are three of them, two boys and one girl. The eldest boy, Pierig, is the same age as Jobig, but they don't see much of each other since Pierig's parents work at the Kerdraon farm, and Pierig goes to the Catholic school, and so do the Kerdraon children. They all continue together on the unpaved road until its junction with the Kemper highway and turn towards Pont-an-Dugez. But by the time they get there, Jobig and the lock keeper's children are long gone. The public schools start at 8, but the Catholic schools start only at 8.20, because most of the pupils live on farms which are located pretty far from the town, some of them

more than five miles away

To go to school, Jobig carries a satchel which will become heavier and heavier from year to year. At the beginning, all he has to carry is a slate, a rag to wipe it clean, a piece of chalk, and bundles of sticks for counting. He also has his lunch, bread with slices of ham or , one apple, and a small bottle of sweet cider. Like most farm boys, he eats his lunch at an inn near the school where it has been arranged that he also gets a bowl of hot soup. In later years, the satchel will contain only textbooks, notebooks, a ruler, and a box containing pens, pencils, eraser, compasses, protractor, square, and the textbooks needed for the subjects studied that day: geography, history, science, grammar, and French.

The French textbook contains excerpts from works deemed suitable for children, by writers like Alphonse Daudet, Erckmann-Chatrion, André Theuriet, Maurice Genevoix, Alain-Fournier, Henry Bordeaux, René Bazin,... A surprising thing: in a French textbook, one also finds translations from works by foreign writers, George Eliot and Tolstoï. There are also fables by La Fontaine, *Le corbeau et le renard* and *Le loup et l'agneau*, and poems like *Pâle étoile du soir, messagère lointaine...*, by Alfred de Musset, and *Il pleut: j'entends le bruit égal des eaux....*, by Sully-Prudhomme. Victor Hugo is well represented with *Mon père, ce héros au sourire si doux...* and *Ô combien de marins, combien de capitaines...* This last poem is titled *Oceano nox*. It is Latin, it means *Night on the ocean*. Why a Latin title for a French poem? Maybe the author wanted to show off. But every child in school knows about Latin. They hear it at mass every Sunday morning, from *Asperges me* to *Ite missa est*, not to mention all the hymns and psalms which they have had to memorize, *Tantum ergo*, *O salutaris hostia*, *Ave Maris Stella*, *Pange lingua*, *Adoro te devote*, *Rorate coeli*, *Dixit Dominus*, *Laudate pueri*, *In exitu Israël*, *Veni Creator Spiritus* for Pentecost, and *Dies irae* for funerals. Victor Hugo is also the author of a hymn which school children sing every year on Armistice Day in front of the monument for the soldiers killed during the war, *Ceux qui pieusement sont morts pour la patrie...*(8) All the school children go to the annual ceremony, two by two, accompanied by their teachers. All the veterans are there. Laorañs does not much like this kind of celebration, but he goes anyway to honor his two brothers killed on the front, Lan and Kaou. Their name is engraved in the granite, but instead of Lan and Kaou Rosparzh they have written ROSPARS Alain and ROSPARS Corentin. Ewen also goes. Laorañs wears the medals he earned in battle, and Ewen the ones he got for his campaigns in Mexico and Indo-China.

The geography text book gives a summary for each lesson, just simple questions and answers. For example: *D'où provient la pluie? – La pluie provient des nuages* [Where does rain come from? – Rain comes from the clouds]. The teacher explains about the climate, about continents, seas, and islands, about rivers and lakes, mountains, volcanoes, plains, valleys, and marshes, about earth, rocks and sands, about flora and fauna.... The history books have all been written by the same man: Ernest Lavisse. He says that two thousand years ago France was called Gaul, but that Gaul was conquered by a Roman army commanded by Jules César who defeated Vercingétorix in Alésia. Later came the Franks. They gave their name to France. They founded the first dynasty of French kings, the Merovingiens, but their descendants grew so lazy that they were replaced by Charles Martel, Charles the Hammer, who defeated the Saracens, Muslims who came from Africa and who had reached the city of Poitiers. His grandson Charlemagne conquered a vast empire, and his descendants were called the Carolingians. They were unable to preserve the integrity of their empire, which disintegrated, and in 987 they were replaced by the third and last dynasty, the Capetians, which was founded

by Hugues .Capet. His dynasty remained in power until 1848, with an interruption between 1789 and 1814, during the First Republic and the First Empire. Hugues reigned only on a small part of present day France, but he, his descendants, and later governments gradually added, through military conquests, marriages or other means, neighboring kingdoms, duchies and counties to their own possessions: Normandy (1204), Anjou (1205), Languedoc (1271), Champagne (1285), Poitou (1369), Aquitaine (1453), Picardy (1477), Bourgogne (1477), Provence (1487), Maine (1481), Auvergne (1527), Brittany (1532), Navarre (1589), Alsace (1648), Roussillon (1659), Lorraine (1766), Savoie (1860).

Many kings were given a nickname: Louis I le Débonnaire [the Debonair]; Charles II le Chauve {the Bald}; Louis II le Bègue [the Stutterer]; Louis VI le Gros [the Fat]; Louis VII le Jeune [the Young]; Jean II le Bon [the Good]; Philippe II le Conquérant; [the Conqueror] Louis VIII le Lion [the Lion] ; Philippe III le Hardi [the Bold]; Philippe IV le Bel [the Handsome]; Louis X le Hutin [the Rowdy]; Charles V le Sage [the Wise] , whose son, king Charles VI I, went mad, Louis XIII, le Juste [the Just]; Louis XIV le Grand [the Great] Louis XV le Bien-aimé [the Beloved]. But as soon as they stopped having a nickname, things went bad for them: Louis XVI lost his throne and his head to the guillotine. His son Louis XVII never reigned; he spent most of his childhood in prison, where he died; Louis XVIII, a brother of Louis XVII, became king of France after the defeat of Napoleon in 1814 and reigned only ten years, until 1824, when he died at the age of 69. The second brother of Louis XVI succeeded Louis XVIII and was dethroned by the Revolution of 1830, which put Louis-Philippe, a member of the Orléans branch of the royal family, on the throne of France, which was taken from him by the Revolution of 1848. Jobig also learns also about the wars waged by France, the conquest of colonies: (Canada, the islands of Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, the Louisiana Territory which extended well into the Far West, Haïti, Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, India, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, French Congo, Gabon, Madagascar, Indo-China, Tahiti). By the time Jobig was in school, France had lost Canada, the Louisiana Territory, India with the exception of five cities on the coast, and Haïti.

Jobig knows that what Monsieur Lavissee has written in his books is not the entire truth. He remembers the song *An Alarc'h*, about the Breton duke who defeated the invading French troops, and the curse the author of the song pronounced against the enemies of his country. He also remembers the story of Yann Pennorz, and the atrocities committed in Brittany by the *Armée noire*, the Black Army which the revolutionary government has sent to crush the Breton peasants who had rebelled against forced conscription. The Black Army was worse than the French dragoons who, one century earlier, had come to quell the revolt of the Breton peasants against the new illegal taxes imposed by the King of France: they hanged them from trees or sent them to row on the King's galleys. The revolutionary government had adopted as a motto the words Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, but its leaders certainly did not respect the liberty of the Breton people, nor did they treat them like equals or brothers. They had passed a law forcing priests to swear allegiance to the government. The refractory priests would be sentenced to death. To their honor, almost all of the Breton priests had refused to take the oath: to do so would have men putting mere men, the Paris politicians who were the enemies of the Church, above God. Many priests, with the help of their parishioners, had gone into hiding or escaped to England or Spain. But many had been arrested and executed. And Jobig has seen a house in town with a small panel which simply states that a priest of

Sant-Alar was born there, that he was guillotined under the Revolution, and that he was later elevated him to the ranks of the Blessed. Jobig also remembers what his father has explained to him about the long list names engraved on the memorial monument for the Breton soldiers killed during the Great War: why are there so many of them? The Breton regiments suffered far more casualties than any other unit :because the French high command always placed them in the most dangerous positions.

In school, Jobig also studies arithmetic and geometry. This can be quite useful. One thus knows, for instance, how much money one needs to buy seven marbles and two pieces of chocolate in Marjann Barazher's shop. One also knows how many slates one need to cover the roof of a barn after one has measured the length and the width of the roof. Of course, one has to take into account the number of slates which get broken during the work, and one never knows how good the day laborer is at this kind of work. But the problems given by the teacher to calculate the time at which the train which leaves Sant-Alar at 8.17 a.m. will arrive in Karaez is pointless. He must think his pupils are idiots, good only to wipe cows' asses. They know what a train is. The railroad line which goes from Kastellin to Karaez and Gwennkamp pass through Sant-Alar, and one has only to take a look at the hours posted in the station to know all the hours of departures and arrivals. And it is the same thing in every railroad station. And it is equally pointless if one is asked to compute the time it takes the train to cover a distance of 37 miles when one is a speed for the train. Everybody knows that the speed of the train is never the same: it goes more slowly when it climbs, more quickly when it rolls on the flat or downhill. It changes also with the day: on market days, the locomotive has to drag three or four additional wagon-loads: this is the day when cattle dealers come to buy lots of animals for the Paris slaughter-houses, and the engine takes a lot of time to climb the hill of Lann-ar-Groaz.

In geometry, there are some funny things. The teacher says that in order to compute the circumference of a wheel, you have to multiply the diameter by the number π , which is more or less equal to 3.1416. It is a Greek letter, but no kid knows about about Greek, not like Latin. It was an ancient Greek mathematician named Archimedes who managed to calculate the value of π . The teacher asks the pupils how they think that Archimedes went about it? Jobig, who on occasions can be clever (thanks to Ewen who has done all he could to sharpen his wits), raised his finger, and the teacher asked him what he thought. Jobig explained: " I would have measured the circumference of the wheel with a tape, and I would have divided it by the diameter of the wheel. Then I would have taken round things, a bottle, a glass, or a pot, and done the same thing, and I would have found the same number, or close to the same number every time." The teacher said that this is not a bad idea, but that Archimedes used only geometry and arithmetic. When the boys are more advanced in these subjects, they will be able to understand his method. It involved the use of inscribed and circumscribed polygons, starting with a square, then doubling the number of the sides of the polygons, octagons, polygons with sixteen sides, with thirty two sides, and with sixty four sides, then calculating the length of each side, then multiplying it by four, repeating this operation for the other series of polygons, and dividing the perimeters of the polygons by the length of the diameter. The value of π would fall between the results obtained for the inscribed and the circumscribed polygons, and for each series of polygons it would come closer and closer to the actual value of π . The teacher draws a big circle with a few inscribed and circumscribed polygons on the blackboard, but he does not make the calculations required to get their perimeter: it would be too complicated for them. They will get to that if and when they go to the *école*

primaire supérieure.

There are also lessons about science. What is most interesting are the experiments. With a prism, the teacher decomposes the light of the sun, and he gets the seven colors of the rainbow. With electricity, he decomposes water and he makes two gases, hydrogen and oxygen. How do you get two gases from water? The teacher did not say, but Jobig thinks that electricity must act fire: when you boil water in a pan, it turns into a gas: you can see it floating up above the pan. Apparently, air is made of oxygen and nitrogen, but they are not actually combined. Without oxygen, nothing can burn. The teacher makes an experiment with his punk lighter: when he pulls the lighted wick, it goes back into its tube, and a small piece of metal covers the tube. A couple of minutes later, the teacher pulls the wick out the tube: it has gone out. It is also impossible to survive without oxygen. When you breathe in, you bring oxygen into your lungs, and the blood absorbs the oxygen in the air. This is why there are people who commit suicide by shutting off the exhaust pipe of their coal stove and closing all the doors and windows to keep fresh air from coming in. As it burns, the coal absorbs all the oxygen in the room to form carbon monoxide, and there is no oxygen left for the lungs.

But the subjects which Jobig finds most interesting are spelling and grammar. Dictation is the most common exercise, and it can be quite tricky. French is full of traps. Different words have the same pronunciation, and if the context is not clear how can one now whether one is to write *sain* (sane, healthy), *saint* (saint), *sein* (breast), *ceint* (belted), or *seing* (signature)? Whether to put an *s* at the end to indicate the plural or not, since the *s* is not pronounced? And what about the conjugation of the verbs, which have so many different forms, depending on the person (first, second or third), on the number (singular or plural), on the mode (indicative, conditional or subjunctive), on the tense (present, future, anterior future, simple past, compound past, anterior past, imperfect, pluperfect).? And what of the spelling of the past participle in the compound tenses? This is where they really catch you. First, you have to know which auxiliary to use, *être* (to be) or *avoir* (to have). With *être*, the past participle takes the gender and number of the subject: *il est allé faire ses courses* (he has gone shopping); *elle est partie ...*(she has gone...); *elles sont parties...* (they have gone...). With the auxiliary *avoir*, the past participle takes the gender and the number of the direct complement of the verb, provided the complement is placed before the verb in the sentence: *C'est la diva que j'ai entendue* (This is the diva whom I have heard); *ce sont les chansons que j'ai entendues* (These are the songs which I have heard). But it can get more complicated, if one compares the following two sentences: *C'est la diva que j'ai entendue chanter* (This is the diva whom I heard sing); *ce sont les chansons que j'ai entendu chanter* (These are the songs which I have heard sing). In the first sentence, the direct complement, *que* (representing the diva, a feminine singular noun) is placed before the verb; in the second, the direct complement, *chanter*, is placed after the verb; *chansons* is not the direct complement of the verb, it is the direct complement of *chanter*). It gets still trickier in the two sentences: *C'est la compagnie de soldats que j'ai vue defiler* (This is the company of soldiers which I have seen marching), and *C'est la compagnie de soldats que j'ai vus se battre les uns contre les autres* (This is the company of soldiers whom I have seen fighting). In the first sentence, the emphasis is placed on the company, taken as a unit. In the second sentence, the emphasis is placed on the soldiers, taken as separate individuals acting each one for himself.

For fun, and to show how his students all the kind of problems involved in the spelling of French, the teacher has dictated to his students the famous text which the French writer Mérimée gave as a test to Emperor Napoleon the Third, the Empress

Eugénie, and his guests during a small intimate party : They had asked him to prepare it for their amusement. It turned that the emperor had made seventy-five mistakes, the empress sixty-two, and the famous playwright Alexandre Dumas fils (the son of Alexandre Dumas père, the author of *The Three Musketeers*) twenty-four. The winner had been a foreigner, Prince Metternich, who was then the ambassador of Austria in Paris, with only three mistakes. How could the Emperor have made as many as seventy-five mistakes in such a short text? It is quite possible that he made a good number of them on purpose, possibly so as not to embarrass some of his guests, or, more likely, the Empress, who was Spanish and could not be expected to know all of the intricacies of French spelling and grammar.

Pour parler sans ambiguïté, ce dîner à Sainte-Adresse, près du Havre, malgré les effluves embaumés de la mer, malgré les vins de très bons crus, les cuisseaux de veau et les cuissots de chevreuil prodigués par l'amphitryon, fut un vrai guêpier.

Quelles que soient et quelque'exiguës qu'aient pu paraître, à côté de la somme due, les arrhes qu'étaient censés avoir données la douairière et le marguillier, il était infâme d'en vouloir pour cela à ces fusiliers jumeaux et mal bâtis, et de leur infliger une raclée alors qu'ils ne songeaient qu'à prendre des rafraîchissements avec leurs coreligionnaires.

Quoi qu'il en soit, c'est bien à tort que la douairière, par un contresens exorbitant, s'est laissé prendre un râteau et qu'elle s'est crue obligée de frapper l'exigeant marguillier sur son omoplate vieillie. Deux alvéoles furent brisés, une dysenterie se déclara, suivie d'une phtisie, et l'imbécillité du malheureux s'accrut.

-- Par saint Martin, quelle hémorragie, s'écria ce bêtête ! À cet événement, saisissant son goupillon, ridicule excédent de bagage, il la poursuivit dans l'église tout entière. (10)

The teacher was helpful : he dictated very slowly, and repeated each sentence several times, so that the students could think about the traps hidden in them. When the exercise was over, the teacher copied the text on the blackboard, so that each student could see for himself how many mistakes they had made. It turned out that all of them had done better than Napoleon III and his guests, with the exception of Prince Metternich. The losers had made seventeen mistakes. Jobig was among the three winners, who had made only six mistakes. Jobig had written:

1. *amphitriion* instead of *amphitryon*, a borrowing from the Greek with which Jobig was not familiar
2. *cuissots* de veau, instead of *cuisseaux*: this part of the body is designated by different names, depending on the animal from which it comes: *cuisseau*, for veal; *cuisse*, for humans, frogs, *cuissots* for big game like deer or stags; *gigot*, for mutton; *gîte à la noix*, for beef, *jambon*, for pork
3. *laissée.*, instead of *laissé*: the subject of *s'est laissée* does not make the action of the infinitive *entraîner*

4. *brisées* instead of *brisés*; Jobig took *alvéole* for a feminine noun, probably because most of the French nouns ending in *-ole* are feminine (there are dozens of them: *aréole, auréole, obole, métropole, école, gondole, sole, rigole, rougeole, rubéole, parabole, escarole, étrole, coupole, hyperbole, parabole, farandole, variole, vérole, viole, casserole, parole, acropole, nécropole, babilole, cariole, banderole, yole, firole, systole, diastole*). whereas there are hardly more than half a dozen of masculine: nouns with that ending: *alvéole, symbole, pétrole, pétiole, taurobole, Capitole, Pactole*.

(5) *imbécilité* instead of *imbécillité*. Jobig had been influenced by the spelling of *imbécile*.

(6). *toute* instead of *tout*; here, *tout* is an adverb, not an adjective

Most of the mistakes made by Jobig's classmates occurred in the spelling of words unfamiliar to them (*cuisseaux* or *cuissots, arrhes, marguillier, douairière, quoi que* which they wrote as though it were the single word *quoique, dysenterie, phtisie, imbécillité, hémorragie*), in the gender of *effluves, arrhes, alvéole*, and especially in the use of accents, particularly in the past participles of compound tenses.

Since he goes to school, Jobig has not had as much time to spend with his grandfather. His only free time has been Thursday afternoon, since the morning is taken up by the catechism lesson, and Sunday afternoon after Vespers, since the morning is taken by Mass. This does not mean that Ewen does not think of Jobig: he has spent many evenings sculpting a magnificent top for his grandson. He has taught him how to roll a long piece of string around the top, to roll a small length of the other end of the string around a finger, to hold the top firmly in his hand, and to throw it quickly on the ground while pulling quickly on the string. When you do it right, the top will keep turning for several minutes before it slows down, stops, and falls on its side. But Ewen's masterpiece is a bow and arrows. To make them, he has waited until Jobig has reached the age of reason: it would be unthinkable to place such a weapon in the hands of a boy who would not know how and when to use it properly. Yew was the wood preferred by ancient bowmen. Ewen has selected a branch a bit taller than Jobig, not too thick so that he has enough strength to bend it, but sufficiently resistant so that it is powerful enough. At each end, Ewen has made two small notches: they will keep the metal ring to which the bowstring will be attached from sliding. Making the arrows is a delicate operation. In order for the arrow to fly straight to the target, you have either to glue feathers to the back end, or to make the tip heavy enough. The second method is more efficient, since a steel tip serves two purposes: making the tip heavier, and enabling the arrow to kill or to cause a mortal wound to a bird or a rabbit. For this, Ewen takes a long nail and saws off the headed fastener. With a hammer, he flattens the tip and shapes it into a pointed triangle with a file. Then he heats it up until it is red hot and dips into cold water. Finally, he sharpens it on the grindstone. The rear end is flattened with a hammer. He then tacked a branch which is straight, dried and with the bark stripped off. On one end, he removes a length of wood equal to the rear end of the metal tip, places the rear end of the tip against the part of the arrow from which the wood has been removed, and binds them together with a strong metal thread. On the rear end of the arrow, he makes a small notch into which the bowstring will be placed. The bow is ready: Ewen teaches Jobig how to place the arrow on the bow, how to bend the bow, how to aim, how to release the string. He practices with a parsnip stuck into a branch in front of a hayrick. When Ewen deems that Jobig is ready, he gives the boy his permission to use the bow against the only animals which farmers want to get rid of: the pigeons. They come to steal the grain distributed to the hens, and they leave their droppings everywhere. Against Jobig's arrows, they are defenceless. Plucked and cut up into small pieces, they will be served up to Dick, and to

Loeroù Gwenn (9). After a few weeks, no pigeon dares to come near *Ar Gistinid*. Jobig tries to find rabbits, but the few he catches sight of are much too quick to be caught. The bow and arrows will serve only for target practice. Eventually, they will join in the barn all the toys which have been discarded: they no longer are appropriate for a boy who will one day be responsible for a farm.

On Thursdays, during the school year, and nearly every day, during the holidays, it is Jobig who takes the cows to pasture and who brings them back to their stable. He is now able to give a hand to his grandfather with the thousands of jobs which he takes care of. Soon, he will even be big enough to hitch up the buggy or the cart and drive them to town, to the mill, or to the fields. He is also strong enough to help with gathering the hay, to weed the beets and the parsnips, to pick the peas and the green beans, to help with the harvest, to dig up the potatoes, to pick the apples, and so on. Little by little, Ewen shares the fruit of his experience with him? In which parcels of land and when will they seed wheat, barley, rye, oats, black wheat? Where shall they plant potatoes, beets, parsnips, green beans and peas? What will sell best next year? How many bags of fertilizer will they need to purchase? Will next winter be very cold? If it is, how many faggots and cords of wood should they cut? Since it takes seven years for the cut bushes and tree branches to grow back, how will they organize the rotation so that every year there will be enough fuel available? At what time of the year will it be preferable to sell a colt, a calf, a bullock, a heifer or a pig? Learning all of this does not leave much time for playing.

Every year, in June, the school director organizes a day trip to the seashore: he rents buses to take the boys to the beaches of Penn Traezh or Konk-Kerne. But this is the time for haymaking, and the farm kids can never participate. To make up for it, Ewen teaches Jobig how to swim the big pond of Prad-ar-Poullig (11). Jobig will thus be able, on Sunday after Vespers, to join his class mates on the banks of Ar Stêr Vras and, on the final Sunday of August, to take part in the swimming competition organized by the town council: distance, speed, time spent under water, and the most entertaining event, the duck chase: ducks whose wings have been clipped so that they cannot fly away are released in the river, and all the boys try to catch them. The winners will take them home for the family dinner.

Jobig thus has reached the time for the *certificat d'études*, which is also the year of his solemn communion and his confirmation. In Breton, the certificate is often called, jokingly, *ar santificat*, probably because it is considered a profane equivalent of the sacraments which are given at the same time.. Jobig has also taken the state scholarship examination, with success. In the fall, he starts as a boarder at the *École primaire supérieures*, where he will be a student until the age of sixteen. There he will continue to study math, science, history and geography, and tackle new subjects: French literature, English, and German. In history, they will learn not only about kings, statesmen, and military leaders, but also about men who achieved fame in different fields, writers, artists, composers, explorers, scientists... Thus, if they ever hear talk of Pascal's wager or Newton's apple, they won't look as dumb as the fellow who asked how much money did Pascal bet, or what was so special about Newton's fruit. But Jobig has no intention of continuing much beyond the *brevet élémentaire*. At the age of sixteen, he will be a fully grown man, ready to take his share of responsibility for the management of Ar Gistinid. As it is, Ewen has fulfilled the mission which he had taken upon himself: he has transmitted to his grandson all that he needs to know to keep alive the sacred flame kept burning through the centuries in the ancestors' brazier, their attachment to the soil, their language and their traditions. Ewen die shortly after the beginning of Jobig's first

trimester at his new school, on November 5, 1928, just after All Soul's Day. At lunch time, he is not there. Laorañs finds him near the barn, next to a barrow full of hay, dead, struck down by a massive heart attack. The *Ankou* has surprised him just as he was on his way to feed the horses (12). Poor Dick, desperate at having lost his master, will soon join him.

NOTES

(1) *Aeled eus ar baradoz*: Anges du paradis; *D'hor mamm, Santez Anna*: A notre mère Sainte Anne; *Anjeluz Pask*: Angélus de Pâques; *Kantik ar Baradoz*: Cantique du Paradis; *Itron Vari ar Porzoù*: Cantique de Notre-Dame des Portes

(2) *Me zo ur serjant-major*. Je suis un sergent-major; *Metig*: La petite Mette; *Va c'halon a zo frailhet*: Mon cœur est brisé; *Kimiad ur soudard yaouank*: Adieux d'un jeune soldat;

(3) *Ar Pilhaouer*: Le Chiffonnier; *Matelin an Dall*: Mathurin l'Aveugle; *An hini gozh*: La vieille; *Koad Keryann*: Le bois de Kerjean; *Me zo bet en ifern*: J'ai été en enfer; *Julig ar Ververo*: Petit Jules de Ververo; *An hini dilezet*: L'abandonné; *Silvestrig*: Petit Silvestre; *Kouskit buan va bihannig*: Dors vite, mon petit;

(4) *Katell Gollet*: Katell perdue; *Yann e Vec'h-Lann*: Jean à la charge d'ajonc

(5) "Permission aller dehors" : May I go out ? : "Pouvez-vous me dire pour quelle raison ? » : Can you tell me for what reason ? ; "Perak ? » : Why ? ; " 'Vit aller chier.' : 'Vit' : abbreviated form of "Evit" , Breton «in order to » ; French 'aller chier » : to go shit ; "Puisque c'est si pressé, allez, mais venez me parler à la fin de la classe." French : « Since you are in such a hurry, go, but come and see me after the class. """

(6) notary : the *notaire* is a graduate of the *École de Notariat*; he is not a full fledged lawyer, but he is authorized to write wills, to draw up contracts for the sale of houses, farm land, etc, and to serve as a tax consultant and a financial adviser.

(7) *Skluz Ar Veilh*: the Lock of the Mill; *Pont an Dugez*: the Duchess' Bridge

(8) *Le corbeau et le renard*: The crow and the fox; *Le loup et l'agneau* : the wolf and the lamb ; *Pâle étoile du soir....* : Pale evening star, far away messenger.... ; *Il pleut....*: It rains. I hear the equal noise of the waters....; *Ô combine de marins....*, O how many sailors, how many captains...; *Ceux qui pieusement....*: Those who piously have died for the homeland

(9) Dick: the dog; Loeroù Gwenn: the cat, so named because his paws are white. Loeroù Gwenn means white paws.

(10) Here is the translation:

To speak without any ambiguity, this dinner in Sainte-Adresse, near the Havre, in spite of the balmy fragrances from the sea, in spite of the wines from excellent vintages, the thighs of veal and of deer served in abundance by the host, was a real nest of wasps.

Whatever are and however small may have appeared, in comparison with the amount due, the advance payments which the dowager and the churchwarden were supposed to have given, it was infamous to bear a grudge on this account to these twin misshapen fusiliers, and to give them a beating when all they thought of was to have some refreshments with their brethren in faith.

Whatever the case, it was quite wrong on the part of the dowager, because of an exorbitant misinterpretation, to let herself be carried away to the point of seizing a rake and to believe herself obligated to hit the demanding churchwarden upon his aged shoulder blade. Two alveoli were smashed, dysentery ensued, followed by phthisis, and the imbecility of the unfortunate man increased.

-- By saint Martin, what hemorrhage , this scoundrel exclaimed! Upon this event,

seizing his aspergillum, a ridiculous excess baggage, he pursued her all through the entire church.

(11) Prad-ar-Poullig: the Pond Meadow

(12) *Ankou*: in Brittany, Death, represented as a skeleton,

TABLE

I. In another country

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The misfortunes of Gordon Thornton Smith III

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Malinal

The yellow blue vase

The little man with the boater

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