

# THE MISTRIAL OF MARIE ANTOINETTE

## Premiere Chambre, Palais de Justice, Ile de la Cite, Paris, 14 October 1793

### Narrator

I'm your narrator; Sydney Carton's my name.  
You will know me by my fictional fame,  
In a *Tale of Two Cities*, by Dickens ...[Charlie];  
And here I am with you at CLANT, Bali

I was the one who took it in the neck  
(So to speak), my body a wreck!  
But I lived in an era, with much to relate,  
Of how thousands of French met a grizzly fate.

On the one hand, Dickens says, *it was the best of times*,  
With Versailles and artists and poems with rhymes.  
But he also says *it was the worst of times*,  
Once account is taken of the political crimes.

*It was the spring of hope, the winter of despair;*  
Revolutionary freedom, followed by fierce Robespierre!

The Players, you see, will entertain and amuse;  
You may laugh, at times, if you so choose.  
But you will note, I am sure, a supreme lack of justice –  
Which reflects on the times and, perhaps, still on us.

So, we present the Trial [Mis?] of Marie Antoinette,  
The Queen who cared [NOT] for what her subjects eat  
[pronounced: ett]

*Let them eat cake*, it's alleged that she said;  
With callous regard that they couldn't get bread.

[It suited the Citizens to paint her as mean;  
Marie Antoinette was no longer a Queen]

But history shows that this was untrue;  
A century before, the words made their debut.

Somewhat in the form, *mangent de la brioche*.  
So to blame *our* Queen is simply hogwash.  
Another French Princess used the expression;  
And made a very unfortunate impression.

A good source of the truth is philosopher, Rousseau;  
[Don't confuse with Sellars' *Inspector Clousseau*]

Who, writing in 1766, noted the adage,  
When MA [as I'll call her] was just 10 years of age!  
Although extravagant, in her personal life,  
MA was, after all, the French King's wife.

Daughter of an Emperor, married at fourteen,  
She knew nothing except the lifestyle of a queen.  
She nevertheless was sensitive to the poor,  
And did her best, their welfare to ensure.

Donating generously to charitable causes,  
Her contributions earned her much applauses.  
Prior to the Revolution, she had public regards,  
From ordinary people...not the diehards.

So, when her trial was mooted [1793]  
It was necessary to present a flawed history.  
Don't misunderstand me, the Queen was not perfect  
Nor was she evil, or...to that effect.

Her husband, the King, was tried - don't forget,  
Not as the King, but as *Citizen Louis Capet*.  
His Trial that year was a forgone conclusion.  
Madame Guillotine gave a speedy excision.

The Republican Prosecutor has promised the Mob,  
That MA's head into the basket will lob.  
We hope you have read the introductory blurb,

Written by our leader [**nods to the Director**], and, as usual, superb.

It will help you understand the background and plot,  
Of a glorious part of legal history...**NOT!**  
We now take you to Paris, the Palais de Justice,  
Here comes MA, no longer an empress.

She is with a jailer, who treats her quite well...  
**[Aside]** That might lead him to share a cell!

**[Enter stage Right: Marie Antoinette enters the Court, neither proudly nor humbly, accompanied by a jailer; she stands.]**

## **The President**

**[Martial Joseph Armand Herman]**

Are zee members of the jury all ready and present?  
And to zee prosecutor's case prepared to assent?

**[Looking at list, and then towards the juryman, Trichard]]**

I see that you are with us again [**pointing to him**];  
Always good to have you join zee refrain.  
It is you, is it not, Francois Trichard?  
You are usually happy to go in hard!

## **Juror Francois Trichard**

*Oui*, Citizen President, I am one – not zee least,  
Of zee jurors to judge this ferocious beast.  
She devoured most of zee Republic's Finance,  
This former so-called Queen of France.

## **Paris Mob [a group of noisy people, anti MA]**

**Singing [as a repeating chorus, during the trial]**

*Sever zee neck of zee Widow Capet;  
Ensure that her dues to zee people are met.  
Let her blood show that eet's not blue, but red!  
Give us her head; Please give us her head!*

## **The President**

*Oui*, order please, zee trial must be fair – [Looks around]  
Although, God knows, under zee Capets, that was rare.

## **The Prosecutor [Antoine Quentin Fourquier-Tinville]**

Thus, Prisoner number 280 [TWO EIGHT ZERO] from zee  
Conciergerie  
You will now undergo zee Tribunal's surgery!

## **The President**

[To MA, still standing]

Accused! State your name, profession and residence,  
Before zee prosecutor commences his evidence.

## **Marie Antoinette [MA]**

Marie-Antoinette-Josephine- Jeanne-de Lorraine,  
Archduchess of Austria [Ostreea]

## **The President [interrupting]**

No archduchesses here – no room for such mania! [mayneeee]

**MA** [continuing]

Widow of zee King Louis Sixteen and 37 years old.

## **The President**

Please now listen to what you are told.  
You should lend an attentive ear  
And of your criminal offences you will hear.

**MA**

And for zee first time, that will be.  
Neither I, nor my lawyers, have been advised of zee plea.  
You have assigned, only yesterday, Messieurs Ducoudray and  
Lagarde,  
As my legal defence; and in that regard,  
Fifteen minutes I have had [it's all I'm allowed],  
With them and your papers – I'm under a cloud.

[MA sits]

**Defence Counsel:**  
**[Claude Francois Chauveau-Lagarde**  
**(speaking) and Guillame Alexandre Troncon-**  
**Ducoudray]**

Oui, Citizen President, we must have more time,  
If we are to properly defend zee alleged crime.

## **The President**

She is lucky to have any representation.  
[Sarcastically] You will no doubt provide extemporisation!  
We will allow another 15 minutes at zee end of zee day.  
And, perhaps, 15 more – before your final say

**[Now, the President addresses the Jury and the assembled Paris Mob]**

You have come to judge a woman, more like a crone,  
Than one who once sat on zee French throne.  
Now she sits before you on zee common bench,  
Reserved for great criminals; a mere wench.

*Mais*, **[pausing, and for effect, showing clean hands]**, this Tribunal  
is always equitable;  
And its members will become very irritable,  
**[Waves to indicate his brother judges]**  
If in your conduct you appear unfair,  
To zee Widow Capet's trial and her welfare.

**[To the prosecutor]**

Citizen Prosecutor, you may now present your case  
Outlining all of this woman's **disgrace**.

## **The Prosecutor**

Zee Widow of Louis Capet, since she came to France,  
Her conduct should be treated askance.  
She has been zee scourge and bloodsucker of zee  
French people.  
Her head should be placed on zee highest steeple.

## **Paris Mob**

**[Chorus...Give us her head! Etc]**

## **The Prosecutor**

**[Waves to *his* audience with his hat, warming to his task]**

Well was she called *l'Autrichenne*

## **The Narrator [interrupting quickly...to introduce a rhyme]**

Which translates as *the Austrian bitch*.

## **The Prosecutor [continuing quickly]**

In an earlier day, she would have been burnt as a witch.

!

I wrote zee presentment with a great deal of pleasure.

One day it might even be a national treasure?

But for now, I'll ask you to treat it as read.

We have important issues to do with a head!

## **[Paris Mob support! Hear! Hear!]**

*Mais*, I'll provide a short summary, if you don't mind.

I am sure when you hear it, that you will find

It speaks zee truth of this woman's depravity,

And behaviour of extraordinary gravity.

You now know this woman as *Widow Capet*;

She was once well known as *Madame Deficit*.

For her profligate and wicked expense,

Causing a national insolvency...immense!

Since coming to France, she's been a bloodsucker and scourge,

Corresponding with foreigners with invasions to urge.

Encouraging soldiers to sing in Royalist praise[d],

And for this purpose further funds being raise[d].

She opposed zee Revolution of 1789,

And sought means by which it could be undermined.

She caused a false famine in Paris that year

The new Government could not cope, so it would appear.

In 1791, she attempted to escape with her family,

Thus not accepting zee new authority.  
There was a massacre at the Champ de Mars for which,  
She should bear responsibility, along with zee rich.

Furthermore, zee Swiss Guards fired on zee people at Tuileries,  
Obviously as instructed by zee Capets, MA and Louis.  
Finally, like a modern Agrippina, immoral and dissolute,  
She has prostituted herself with her son – young and irresolute.

I call zee first witness, Le Cointre...[Laurent].  
It will become clear what money was spent,  
From zee coffers of France and eets economies,  
Unfortunately bringing zee Country to eets knees.

## **Laurent Le Cointre**

Might I read my own statement, prepared for the Court?  
To ensure I forget nothing, and include all I ought.

## **The President [looks around his brethren; then nods]**

Well, against legal tradition, we will allow,  
Providing zee evidence is subject to vow.  
But remember, please, witness, we much prefer  
Rhyming couplets [pause, addressing the Audience],  
I'm sure you concur.

## **Le Cointre [obviously reading]**

I was a Deputy to zee National Convention.  
In that capacity, I gave close attention  
To zee behaviour of zee Capets in Paris and Versailles [Ver-si];  
Particularly, their efforts zee finances to misapply

In orgies of spending and military parades



Designed to enhance zee Royal charades.  
At times they depleted zee Nation's wealth,  
While encouraging troops to drink to their hhealth.

Zee new national cockade was trod under boot;  
All the while, zee Capets counting their loot!

## The President

Widow Capet, you have heard what he's read,  
Do you have any response to the evidence led?

## MA

Evidence, Monsieur? Psshaw! I'd not call that vague piece,  
Anything but gossip. Really!! Please!!

## The President

[**Petulantly**] I decide what's evidence, Widow Capet,  
And no further such comments will I [**heavily accented**] *tolerett*.  
For what purpose, did you use zee enormous sums  
Given you by Ministers? What were zee outcomes?

## MA

No such sums were handled by me.  
Money provided went to an employee.

## Citizen Therese Defarge

[**Sotto Voce**]

See how proud this woman is!  
Above us all...a real Miss.

## Defence Counsel [Chaveau-Lagarde]

[Rises] We seek leave to challenge these lies.  
They catch our client completely by surprise.

## The President

Silence, Citizen! sit, do not rise!  
Your protestations must be just surmise.  
How do you know that zee witness is false.  
Has Widow Capet led you a waltz?

*Mais*, you have no instructions – we saw to that.  
You will ask NO questions; I am wielding zee bat!  
This is Inquisitorial French crick-et!  
To strike at and question zee Widow Capet

## MA

[Question in private to Defence Counsel, Troncon-Ducoudray;  
calling him over]

Do I speak with too much dignity in my voice?  
I heard a woman criticize my poise.

## Defence Counsel [Troncon-Ducoudray]

Just be yourself, Ma'm, and you will be fine.  
They drink ale, while you drink wine.

## The Prosecutor

I call Citizen Didier Jourdheuil [pronounced *Jordwee*]  
To give evidence of letters that he did see.

## Didier Jourdheuil

I was an usher with zee Swiss Guard.  
Louis d’Affry, zee Colonel, was a Royal diehard.  
I found many papers – a big stack.  
In zee house of zee Colonel – they were out zee back.

One was a note from this woman [**indicating MA**], I remember.  
This was last year, 92... perhaps September?  
*Can we count on zee Swiss?*, I think it read.  
Her direct plea for a rescue was left unsaid.

*Will they put on a brave front, when it is time?  
Or will they dissolve as if into quicklime?*  
[**As an afterthought, tapping his chin**]  
Unfortunately, zee letters were later mislaid.  
And no copies of this one was ever made. [**shrugs shoulders**].

## **MA**

I have never, ever written to Colonel d’Affry  
I would have thought it quite unnecessary.  
His loyalty to zee Crown was beyond question;  
Au contraire, it was never a suggestion.

*Mais*, grievously he has paid for that bond.  
He has gone on to zee big beyond. [**wrings hands**]

## **Madame Defarge**

[**Rising from among the Paris Mob, speaking harshly...no need  
for microphone; looks around those assembled**]

And not soon enough, some would say.  
For his crimes against zee people, he had to pay!

## **Defence Counsel [Chaveau-Lagarde]**

Citizen President, what about a fair go?  
A missing document has nothing to show!

## **The Prosecutor [interrupting]**

Ah! I have seen zee letter to which zee witness refers.  
As I was involved in zee Colonel's trial, as it t'were.  
**[twiddles fingers...twirls moustache – if he has one!]**  
Unfortunately, when that trial didn't persist,  
The document was confiscated, and no longer exists  
**[shrugs shoulders].**

## **The President**

Tch! Tch! It would, naturally, have been much better  
To see zee original of this important letter.  
Still, we've head from the Prosecutor, an impeccable source,  
Truth, by hearsay, which we accept, of course.

## **Defence Counsel [both]**

**[Throw up hands in frustration, very obviously...gesture noted by  
President and Prosecutor, exchanging knowing looks with hand  
gestures towards Counsel]**

## **The Prosecutor**

I call Antoine Roussillon, zee surgeon who found wine,  
Under zee zen Queen's bed, on August Nine.

## **Antoine Roussillon**

Empty and full bottles of wine were found, as I said,  
At zee Tuileries Palace, under zee Queen's bed.  
Obviously used to make Swiss soldiers drunk,  
So they might slaughter zee people, and not do a bunk.

I say all of zee facts alleged against her are true.

**[Addressing himself to the Jury, directly, pointing dramatically]**

They are so notorious publicly, they need not trouble you.

Excessive sums were passed to zee Austrian Emperor;

Or... so I was told by an honest Court labourer.

And she was told by a favourite of zee Royal Court.

Once again, zee alleged facts find strong support.

If my certainty of her guilt is worth any weight,

I commend it to you. Now determine her fate!

## **Defence Lawyer [Chaveau-Lagarde]**

**[Exasperated]** Citizen President, zis is triple hearsay!

## **The President**

**[Waves the objection away]** Let zee Jury make of it what zey  
may!

## **The Prosecutor**

Now let's hear from Citizen Hebert, Jacques Rene **[pronounced  
R'nee]**

To speak of sordid debauchery,

Involving zis woman, zee Widow Capet

And her son zat she treated as a sexual pet.

## **Jacques Rene Hebert**

**[Correcting the Prosecutor]**

Prosecutor, my given names are Jacques Rene **[emphasises  
Renay]**

Please don't change it for your rhyme, I pray.

I visited zee Temple Prison at Simon's request.

He wanted to report what seemed like incest.

He was zee caretaker of young Louis, aged eight.  
He was surprised in lewd acts, which we call masturbate.  
Simon asked who it was taught him zees deed.  
Zee boy said his mother and his aunt gave him zee lead.  
Zey all slept together, before zey were separated.  
And all three, in such activities, participated.

I also give evidence that since his father's demise,  
Young Louis Charles was treated, without disguise,  
By his mother as zee new King of France,  
Contrary to all Revolutionary plans.

## **The President**

[**Grumpily**] *Oui, merci*, witness, can we now move on?  
From zis salacious material, let us begone.

## **The Prosecutor**

Well, I'll call zee next witness,

## **Juror Trichard**

Citizen President, what about zee evidence of zee abuse of zee  
boy?

Widow Capet was not asked and merely appeared coy.  
I ask that she be made to respond,  
Zee report suggests she was, at least, unduly fond.

## **Narrator**

This was precisely what the President sought to avoid.  
A scurrilous story, from Oedipus and Freud.

He went red in the face, and waved his hand,

**[President waves his hand, towards MA]**

Inviting an answer to the juror's demand.

## **MA**

**[Agitated and emotional]**

Nature does not respond to such an allegation against a mother.  
It is worst by far than any other.

**[Standing up, and facing the women in the Hall; dramatic moment!!!]**

I appeal to zee hearts of all mothers who are present in zis room!

**[Silence in the Court; even members of the Mob are impressed; slight pause, then...]**

## **Narrator**

If the trial had stopped then, she may have escaped doom.  
The Hall was silent...Hebert regarded with disgust.  
Not a man in whom the Mob would place their trust.

## **Paris Mob**

**[Audible hiss, directed at Hebert; he looks suitably abashed, but takes a seat in the Court.]**

## **Pierre Manuel**

I am zee next witness to be heard[s]  
I am called to give evidence of zee former Queen's words.  
But there ees nothing to say by me against her,  
Why am I called? - I cannot infer.

I was at Tuileries in August last year  
On police duty, but little did hear.  
I know that zee soldiers fired at zee people, yes;  
But who gave zee order, I could only guess.

## The President

Listen up, Citizen, and tell us on oath,  
There must have been words between you and her both,  
That speak of what happened on zee ninth of Aug-ust,  
At zee Palace, when Frenchmen died, to our disgust.

## Pierre Manuel [cont.]

I cannot assist you, I left not my post,  
What I can tell you, and this is zee most,  
I was told by others that zee order to fire,  
Came from those wanting to maintain zee Empire.

## The President

Pshaw! Citizen Manuel, you say you love equality,  
But you are not loyal to republican polity.

## Pierre Manuel [cont.]

[speaking stoutly]

May I tell you, President, and the people [**Gesturing to the Mob**],  
assure,

My intentions to zee Revolution were always quite pure.  
Only when excesses were made in eets name  
That I retired; I was not going to share in that blame.

## The President

Citizen Prosecutor, another witness, if you please,  
One who is better versed in his Q's and P's.



## The Prosecutor

*Oui*, and I call, Citizen Jean Sylvain Bailly,  
Zee former Mayor of zee City of Paris [**Pron: Pahree**]

## Jean Sylvain Bailly

Might I say at zee outset, zee allegations are false, and they're  
mean  
Against Widow Capet, as both her son's mother – and as Queen.

## The Prosecutor

[**Up Quickly**] We won't trouble you further, Citizen Bailly,  
You have been got at, it's obvious to see.

## The President

Prosecutor, see if I can balance zee books,  
And get over zee negativity of these last two crooks.  
Ex-Mayor! Didn't your Council an assembly promote  
And have many patriots murdered and smote?

## Jean Sylvain Bailly [cont.]

We certainly did not encourage zee carnage that followed.  
But it's true that some ruffians in zee blood wallowed.  
Alas, it is true that 12 or 13 men were dead:  
Good men, who never returned to their bed[s].

## **Juror Trichard**

Might I interrupt? I was there that day.  
At least 17 or 18 were killed, I can say.

## **The President**

*Oui, merci*, Citizen Juror, as usual you've done well.  
Unlike the Mayor: **[To Bailly]** You may return to your Cell!

## **Jean Sylvain Bailly**

I'm not in a cell; You must be mistaken.

## **The Prosecutor**

**[To Bailly]** One's been arranged. That's where you'll be taken

## **[Bailly escorted, unhappy, from the Tribunal]**

Not merely for play-reading-gender-equality,  
But hopefully, also for evidential quality,  
I call zee first woman witness, Reine Millot,  
To speak of money, and perhaps a plot.

She was mentioned in evidence earlier today.  
Her story of exported Francs might come into play.  
I have sent for her quickly to tell what she knows.  
As zee Capets reaps, so will they sows.

## **Reine Millot**

I was a domestic servant in zee Queen's Court.  
I often hear things, much more zan I ought.

I told Doctor Roussillon some of what I'd heard.  
From zee Duke de Coigny. I remember each word.  
200 million Francs was sent to Emperor Joseph,  
To fight zee Turks and for other mischief.

**[The whole cast bursts into laughter and catcalls]**

## **The Narrator**

This was an enormous monetary sum.  
More than France's entire wealth and income.  
The prospect of this Royalist Duke, already long gone,  
Giving the domestic this news was a trillion to one.

## **Reine Millot [cont.]**

You laugh at me, a poor servant; I do my best,  
To help put zee royalist villainy to rest.  
I heard also that zee Queen had a plot,  
To assassinate zee Duc de Orleans, another of zeir lot.  
But zee King stopped this ploy and had her arrested.

## **The President**

**[To MA]**

Is this allegation also contested?

## **Reine Millot [cont.]**

**[interrupting the President's question]**

And she was found with two pistols in her po  
**[Cast note: chamber pot],**  
And locked up in her quarters, for a fortnight or so.

## **The President**

*Oui*, very well, citizen. What do you say, widow?

Is this zee truth, or another long bow?

## **MA**

The King may have instructed me to stay in my room.  
But only at a time when disaster did loom.

## **Citizen Madame Defarge**

Can zee Widow stand up? We can't see her from this row.  
How are we expected to enjoy zee show?

**[The President invites MA to stand up, by a wave, and she reluctantly obliges.]**

## **Defence Counsel [Chaveau-Lagarde]**

And, in any event, Mr President, may we please ask?  
Where from comes this allegation? Out of some cask?

## **The President [brusquely]**

Zee short answer, Citizen, is you might **not** ask!  
Be content with your allotted task[s].  
I remind you zis trial is in zee inquisitory mode  
We will ask whatever questions zat discommode.

Prosecutor, forgive zee complaint zat's just been raise[d]  
Call another witness that assists your case[d]  
**[pauses, looks at some timing piece]**  
Ah! I see zee time, Eleven pm, at night.  
We might adjourn at this time, and start when its light.

## **[Cast goes into tableau, temporarily]**

**[Next witness, Antoine Simon, moves to witness box]**

## The Narrator

Did I tell you? The trial started at 8 in the morning;  
Fifteen hours of evidence, [all without warning];  
And continued, next morning, October 15,  
When once again, it's Tribunal vee Queen.

## The President

Well, here we are again, all assembled.  
Let's hope yesterday no witness dissembled.  
Now, prosecutor, whom do you call?  
Someone from whom useful facts will fall?

## Antoine Simon

That would be me, Citizen President!  
I will tell what I saw, and what it all meant.  
I was mentor to young Charles Louis Capet.  
I was able to see zee persons he met.

He told me zee official Dange had kindness shown,  
And told him he wanted him on zee dead King's throne.  
In his arms, Dange had taken him, zee boy said,  
And, figuratively at least, put a crown on his head.

Zee Royal family had a network of informants and spies,  
All discrediting **OUR** Glorious Revolution, with their lies.  
There were other things that I told Citizen Hebert  
**[indicating the earlier witness, Hebert, by pointing]**  
About zee boy's behaviour, that I discover[t]

## The President [holds up hand]

We won't trouble you for zat; it's mill to zee grist.

[Addresses MA]

Did you not receive money from zee Civil List?  
And give to zee Treasurer some receipts and orders?  
And did some of zat money travel outside our borders?

**MA**

The answers to your questions are *Non, Non* and **No!**

**The President**

Your denials will become useless in a moment or so.  
Orders signed by your hand have been found among papers,  
As evidence of your diverse money capers.

[Unfortunately, zey are, at zee moment, mislaid;  
But there will evidence by zee jury to be weighed,  
Of witnesses who saw them in their original form.]

**MA [shrugs with indifference]**

**Defence Counsel [Chaveau-Lagarde]**

More hearsay documents, it's becoming zee Norm.

**The President**

Please do not interrupt, you are here under sufferance.  
I suggest you conduct yourselves with much greater prudence.

**The Prosecutor**

I call Francois Tisset, of zee Public Safety Committee,

His evidence, I suggest, will satisfy zee Jury  
He'll give evidence of zee documents he saw.  
Zee ones whose existence zee accused thought were no more.

## **Francois Tisset**

*Oui*, I've been sitting here in Court throughout this tale.  
I can tell you all of zee accused's money trail.  
I have seen money drafts signed by zee ex-Queen.  
They are temporarily missing, but I know where they've been.

## **MA**

Monsieur, please tell me zee dates of these drafts you have seen?

## **Francois Tisset [cont.]**

One was August 10, zee other I don't remember.

## **MA**

Well, was it September, October or perhaps, November?  
And on August 10, Monsieur, I was at zee National Assembly,  
Facing zee wrath of zee People - all trembly!

## **The President**

[To MA]

Did you not that day receive some money from a friend?

## **MA**

It was a gift, but I called it a lend.

## The President

How much and from who?

## MA

Twenty-five Gold Louis's from Dame Argue[l]

## The Prosecutor

Citizen President, may we shortly adjourn,  
There are some urgent enquiries that are of concern

## [Cast temporarily in tableau]

## Narrator

You will have noticed this is trial by ambush.  
If something leaks out, there is prosecutorial push.  
The gendarmes rushed to Dame Argue[l]'s door.  
But, alas, she had jumped from the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor.

## The Prosecutor

May I approach the Bench? I have a note.  
[approaches the President, hands him a piece of paper]

## The President

[reads note, to himself, and then...]

Oui, apparently Citizen Argue[l], I read and I quote,



*“Has admitted her guilt, and avoids further strife,  
Jumping from her window and ending her life”*

## **MA**

**[audible expressions of anguish and grief]**

Alas! Alas!

No mercy is given to my friends in zis city,  
From zee members of zee Public Safety Committee!

## **The President**

That’s enough, thank you, Widow, can we now proceed?  
Citizen Prosecutor, where does zee evidence now lead?

## **The Prosecutor**

Let’s hear from Augustin Jobert, an officer of sorts;  
Perhaps he’ll tell us of royalist rorts

## **Augustin Germain Jobert**

I’ll do no such thing!  
I am not a bird who can be made to sing!  
I have no knowledge of any facts alleged against the Queen  
I have never heard anything against her, nor have I  
seen...**[continuing]**

## **The President**

**[Interrupting]**

Just a moment, witness, forget zis speech.  
You will very soon find yourself in trouble and breach.  
Did you not have private meetings with zee prisoner?  
Perhaps to help arrange a prison opener?

## **Augustin Germain Jobert [cont.]**

Certainly not, it was not worth my head.

### **The President**

Prisoner, do you persist in saying you have never misled  
This Inquiry about your proposed prison flight?

### **MA**

*Oui*, I do, and I haven't, despite my continuing fright.

### **The President**

Well, you find yourself in conflict with your kingly whelp.  
Who has declared that you were always seeking such help.

### **MA**

What? an 8 year-old boy removed from his mother?  
It would be easy to make him say anything...no bother!

### **The President**

He was made to repeat it, time and again.  
And it always came out exactly the same.

### **MA**

**[in mocking tones]**

What a surprise for your skilful gendarmes,  
To parrot-teach a small boy, using their charms!

## **Voice from the Paris Mob [sotto voce]**

Marie Antoinette will obtain her freedom.  
She has answered very well, and with wisdom.  
She will only be from France bani-shed

## **Citizen Madame Defarge**

[shrilly]

No, that mustn't happen; we must have her head!

## **The Prosecutor**

The next witness, Renee Sevin, known as *zee woman Chaumette*,  
Was at Tuileries, on 9th August, after sunset.

## **Renee Sevin**

I was a lady-in waiting to zee Queen for 6 years.  
I lived through zee times of laughter and tears.  
I hheard no alarm that night; I was asleep in zee attic.  
I was in zee furthest part of zee Palace, as I was sick.

But I did see zee King review his Guards in zee morn.  
In front of zee Palace, out on zee lawn.

## **The President**

Citizen, you are not helping much.  
Surely that night you must have seen such and such?

## **Renee Sevin [cont.]**

I did not leave my room nor go downstairs.

## **The President**

What about for your meals, or to test zee airs?

### **Renee Sevin [cont.]**

I did not leave my room; a servant brought my meal.

### **The President**

But they must have told you of zee downstairs ordeal?

### **Renee Sevin [cont.]**

We spoke not at all that night; I was ill.

### **The President**

[visibly frustrated, throws up his hands]

Then, Prosecutor, I give up; zis witness's a dill.

### **[Some laughter in the Tribunal led by Paris Mob]**

[Cheers and laughter]

### **Narrator**

There was some amusement in the Tribunal at this Q & A session. You might think that Renee was the soul of discretion. Some further witnesses were called, but as midnight approached, It seemed unlikely that further matters be broached

### **The President**

They are zee witnesses regarding your offences. Have you anything to add to your defences?

## MA

Until, yesterday, of zee witnesses I was not even aware.  
Nor what was zee evidence they would bear.  
But none has provided anything to my cost.  
All documents, it seems, have been conveniently lost.

I finish by saying I was wife to a king;  
My duty was to defer to him in everything.

## The President

It is now past midnight on zee trial's second day.

**[Addressing Defence Counsel]**

We will allow you 15 minutes, and then hear what you say.  
To prepare what you can in your defence speech.  
You may leave zee Hall, but please stay in reach,

You won't need to speak to Widow Capet;  
Zee case is so clear, you will no doubt accept.

**[Defence Counsel depart the Bar Table, temporarily, to an adjacent area, pausing in amazement as they hear the next words. They signal their concern towards the President, but he dismisses them with a wave]]**

**[Turning to the Prosecutor]**

*Oui*, Citizen Prosecutor, address the zee jury if you wish.  
It will speed up zee process, and avoid later anguish.  
Defence Counsel can get on with their job,  
And you can make good on your promise to zee Mob.

## Paris Mob

**Cheer, cheer, rhubarb rhubarb!**

## The Prosecutor

[Jumps energetically to his feet, addresses jury AND the wider audience]

I curse zee Royal family and its evil conduct,  
Designed zee glorious Revolution to destruct;  
And Widow Capet's incessant manoeuvres  
(For which she was zee major mover) [**wags finger**],

Against Liberty...which, in my view,  
She did her very best to subdue.  
She wanted its destruction at any price;  
And would commit, as she did, any vice.

You will pardon zee following mixed adages,  
But zee English is not my first language[s],  
So, zee die is cast – she's made her bed!  
Zee price she'll pay must be her head!

## Paris Mob

[Sings Chorus...Give us her head, etc]

[Defence Counsel return]

## The President

I see Defence Counsel are back in zee hall.  
We'll listen to what they say to this all.

## Defence Counsel [Chaveau Largarde]

We were given little time to prepare zee defence.  
But it's too late to take further offence.  
But zee truth is there is just no material  
Either in testimony or pictorial.

That is to say, no documents have been shown,  
Only hearsay...are they all out on loan?  
Zee most serious issue related to finance.  
And this was a frivolous charge, not just by chance.

Relying on zee prosecutor's own statement  
And zee women Millot; of her, I lament.  
You all laughed at her story when told before you.  
And zee Prosecutor – is he both witness **and** *j'accuse*?

In examining all zee facts set out in zee indictment,  
I suggest evidence in support is ridiculously absent.

## **MA**

**[Rises and touches Counsel's arm]**

I thank you, Monsieur Chaveau-Lagarde, for your trouble.  
After two hours, you must be tired...your efforts noble.

## **Defence Counsel [Troncon-Ducoudray]**

I address members of zee jury in similar vein.  
There is scant evidence of any wrong gain.  
Zee prosecutor's case is full of huff and puff.  
You should reject it with a complete rebuff.

You have heard from 39 witnesses, women and men,  
And only one-third were able to pretend  
To support zee prosecutor, but without any worth.  
You should really treat all of their evidence with mirth.

## **Narrator**

They spoke for three hours; they really tried hard.  
To their own safety, they played little regard.

It was now 3 o'clock in the early hours, Day 3,  
Of the trial, perhaps, of the century?

For reasons unclear, at this space in time,  
The accused was removed and the President spoke of crime.

**[MA leaves temporarily with jailer]**

## **The President**

Normally I'd sum up in detail, but here's there no need.  
It's a story of disloyalty to France, with evil and greed.  
There are 4 Questions to answer; I'll give you them straight:--

1. Did zee exist manoeuvres with any foreign States?
2. Was zee accused party to such manoeuvres by choice, and not chance?
3. Did a plot and conspiracy exist to start a civil war in France?
4. Is zee accused convicted of that plot or having a share?

As part of your task, you may ask did she care?

The whole French nation accuses Marie Antoinette.  
The political events prove the guilt of Capet.

## **Narrator**

The jury were out for an hour, that's all it took,  
Remember, by now it was past 4 o'clock.  
MA was brought back, the verdict announced.  
It would still remain for sentence to be pronounced.

**[MA returns with jailer, during Narrator's remarks; she stands]**



## **Juror Trichard**

We find the prisoner guilty of each charge.  
In our view, her culpability looms large.

## **The Paris Mob**

[Give us her head, etc]

## **The President**

Zere will no doubt be vocal condemnation!  
But, in terms of zee verdict and its presentation,  
I have prepared some words which speak of pity.  
But whether history views them with humanity.  
I know not. But I say that there should be some dignity,  
In zee process which is now called for by society.

## **The Prosecutor**

In conformity with zee Penal Code, I demand zee penalty of death  
For conspiracy with zee enemy and plotting by stealth,  
To trouble zee State with a Civil war.  
A woman who forsook her country and zee law.

## **The President**

Prisoner, do you object to zee sentence demanded?  
If not, you'll shortly be remanded.

**MA**

[shakes her head]

## The President

Counsel?

## Chaveau- Lagarde

[shakes his head, also]

## Troncon -Ducoudray

Citizen President, Zee jury's verdict is concise,  
Zee Penal Code is formal and precise.  
My professional duty to zee Widow Capet,  
Is terminated. May she have no regret.

## Narrator

The President collected the judges' ballot papers  
And at 4.30AM, announced the sentence [without vapours].  
Please listen carefully; as you soon will have heard,  
It's delivered without rhyme, in its original words.

## The President

*Zee Tribunal, after zee unanimous declaration of zee jury, in conformity to zee laws cited, condemns zee said Marie Antoinette of Lorraine and Austria, widow of Louis Capet, to zee penalty of death, her goods confiscated for zee benefit of zee Republic, and this sentence shall be executed at zee Place de la Revolution.*

## The Prosecutor

Now please remove zee lawyers, for further interrogation.

We need to know whether Capet gave them information,  
For possible evidence in another trial of weight;  
For thees purpose we will number them witnesses 38 and...oh, 38!  
[Holds up hands and gives silly grin to his fans]

[Defence Counsel depart, wearily]

## Narrator

Marie Antoinette showed little emotion, fear or weakness,  
On the contrary, she held her head high, with no meekness.  
She made no speech at the end of her sentence,  
[But **WE** have written some words that show great prescience]

She was to be executed at noon on that very same day,  
Travelling, at the Prosecutor's insistence, in a public dray,  
To the place of execution, where the guillotine fell –  
The end of an age! But, on that... [pause]... let's not dwell.

## The President

[Addresses MA]

I understand you are *scripted* to make some remarks,  
Although history does not record such a walk in the park.  
Please proceed with what you want to say –  
It is, after all, your very last day.

## MA

I will make some predictions for *apres ma mort*.  
Your grand revolution will all come to nought.  
Robespierre and others will follow my lead.  
Their heads will be severed...dead indeed!

A little-known soldier and Corsican upstart,  
By name **Capitan** Napoleon Bonaparte  
Will lead a merry military dance,  
And by 1804 [**eighteen 04**] will be Emperor of France.  
No more Republic...his family, queens and kings  
All over Europe; they will rule everything[s]

**[Pointing to each of them in turn]**

My predictions include you, M'sieur **P**resident,  
Zee Prosecutor against me who doesn't relent,  
Zee witness Hebert, his source Simon, so unfair;  
You will all lose your heads in Revolution Square.

I now say goodbye to zee country I love.  
I will watch it with joy from some place up above.  
I have suffered grievously for what it's said that I did [??]

**[Holds up hands as if to express surprise]**

Of my husband, my son and of me you'll be rid.

But I wish you no evil; I am quite forgiving.  
I will go to my husband with no misgiving.

**[Looking around the audience]**

Having read that script, **Y**our forgiveness, I pray,  
For there are some other things I wish to say.  
My next words, which contain no rhyme,  
Follow verbatim, what I said at zee time.

*I was a queen, and you took away my crown;  
A wife, and you killed my husband;  
A mother, and you deprived me of my children.  
My blood alone remains:  
Take it, but do not make me suffer long.*

## The President

*Tres bien...*zee prisoner is remanded to face execution.

And to meet her final retribution.  
Thees Tribunal's work ees done.  
We'll adjourn for coffee, and a sit in the sun

\*\*\*\*\*Finis\*\*\*\*\*