

La Nouvelle Orléans Pilot

By

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An original story

by

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EXT. A CAMP ON LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN - SUNRISE

"New Orleans, December 20, 1803". A small army of American soldiers load a boat to sail. Though they are dirty, they move with urgent efficiency. Commanding one squadron is CORPORAL ROBERT DAWSON. He is a large, imposing man, 30's.

DAWSON

Let's go men. Get that gear on the boat. We sail on the tide.

One of the soldiers passes Dawson carrying a small chest.

SOLDIER

The city isn't going anywhere, Corporal. Why did they have to get up at the crack of day?

DAWSON

Those were the orders, soldier. They tell me what to do, and I tell you. Now get your ass on the boat.

SOLDIER

What about him. Why doesn't he have to work?

The soldier gestures towards A MAN sitting by himself, staring across the river. He is plainly dressed. Dawson sees the man, marches towards him.

SOLDIER

(CONT)

Have a look lads. This is going to be good.

Some of the other soldiers stop to witness as Dawson approaches the sitting man.

DAWSON

What is your problem Mister? I'll not abide no goldbrickers here.

The man, lost in his thoughts, ignores Dawson.

DAWSON

Don't you rile me. Get to work.

The man turns. This is WILLIAM CLAIBORNE, 28.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIBORNE

I'm sorry. What did you say?

DAWSON

If you don't want my boot up your ass you had better get to work.

Just then, MICAH LEWIS approaches. He is small and thin, in his early 20's.

LEWIS

Almost ready, we should get on board. Is there a problem Governor?

DAWSON

Governor?

Claiborne stands, extends his hand. Dawson takes it.

CLAIBORNE

Yes, I am sorry to say, I am the Governor. William Claiborne.

DAWSON

I'm very sorry sir. You just don't..

CLAIBORNE

Look the part? I dare say you are right. However here I am. How did I end up here Micah?

LEWIS

As I recall, you were appointed by President Jefferson.

CLAIBORNE

Yes. That was it.

LEWIS

The real question is why did I come with you?

CLAIBORNE

Your sister is my wife, she hounded you for many weeks.

LEWIS

Yes. That was it.

Both men laugh, then fall silent. Dawson looks on.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIBORNE

You had best get back to your men,
Corporal.

DAWSON

Yes sir, I am sorry sir.

Dawson turns, returns to his duty. Claiborne returns his
gaze across the lake.

CLAIBORNE

Good man. There it is, Micah.

LEWIS

Do you think what they say is true,
about New Orleans?

CLAIBORNE

What do they say?

LEWIS

That it's wild and
licentious. Drinking, gambling,
bawdy houses. I heard the slaves
go about half naked.

CLAIBORNE

I imagine that like most rumors,
there is more exaggeration than
fact.

LEWIS

Yes. Most likely.

CLAIBORNE

Disappointed?

LEWIS

No. I..wouldn't mind something a
little bit different, something
exotic.

CLAIBORNE

Be careful what you wish for. You
may just get it.

They fall silent.

LEWIS

It is warm though. At home they
will be lighting the yule logs.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIBORNE

Home? Our home is now across this lake.

LEWIS

That is of course if we ever get there.

CLAIBORNE

Very well, Mr. Lewis. I will get on the damn boat.

They walk off together.

LEWIS

Thank you, Governor Claiborne. I hope that I don't get seasick.

EXT. CHARLES LEVEAU'S FARM, NEW ORLEANS 1803 - SUNRISE

It is a well tended homestead, a small house and barn. CHARLES LEVEAU hitches a mule to a wagon. Mid 30'a, Leveau is muscled, darkly tanned. As he works, he whistles "**Lavender's Blue**". His task complete, he turns to the house.

LEVEAU

Marie! Dépêchez-vous Marie, ou je pars sans toi!

The door flies open. Nine year old MARIE LEVEAU, runs out. Her mother, MARGUERITE LEVEAU follows carrying a basket.

MARIE LEVEAU

I'm here Papa. Don't leave me!

LEVEAU

No, you are too late. I think you do not really want to go.

MARIE LEVEAU

No, please Papa. Take me with you.

MARGUERITE

Charles, stop teasing the child. Of course he is going to take you.

Marie reaches Charles, he scoops her up, puts her up onto the seat of the wagon.

(CONTINUED)

LEVEAU
 (laughing)
 Here you go my girl.

Marguerite takes a leather pouch from her pocket, puts it into Charles' hands .

MARGUERITE
 Keep this with you. It will bring you home safe.

LEVEAU
 Really Marguerite, voodoo charms? I will trust more to my musket.

Leveau climbs up onto the wagon. Marguerite hands him the basket.

MARGUERITE
 Do as I say, you keep the gris gris with you. There is roasted pork and vegetables. When will you return?

Leveau takes up the reins and a whip.

LEVEAU
 Who can say? Mr. Treme has invited us to the ball. Late, but not too late. Get up now Jessy.

He flicks the whip towards the mule and the wagon pulls away.

MARGUERITE
 Good-bye Marie. Be good and listen to your Papa.

MARIE LEVEAU
 I will Mama.

As they drive away, Leveau starts singing "**Lavender's Blue**". Marie quickly joins in, savoring the moment.

LEVEAU/MARIE LEVEAU
*Lavender's blue, dilly dilly,
 Lavender's green When you are king,
 dilly dilly, I shall be queen*

*Who told you so, dilly dilly, Who
 told you so? 'Twas my own heart,
 dilly dilly, That told me so.*

EXT. THE MARIGNY MANSION - EARLY MORNING

It is a large two storied house. The exterior is white brick. A coach and horses waits. From the house PIERRE LAUSSAT, 50's and BERNARD MARIGNY, 20 walk to the coach. Holding the coach door open is JEAN BLANQUE early 30's.

LAUSSAT

It is madness! He is so obsessed with war on England that he will give up the entire western empire.

MARIGNY

Is it certain that Saint Dominique is lost?

BLANQUE

Completely. Rochambeau was forced to surrender. He has ten days to depart.

LAUSSAT

While I am commanded to give away our largest possession and return to France.

MARIGNY

Until then, I insist that you and Madam Laussat remain here as my guests.

LAUSSAT

You are too generous, Bernard. Your father would no doubt be proud of you. However I think he might question your extravagance.

MARIGNY

Of what use is money if one does not spend it on the pleasures of the world? Which includes hosting an honored guest.

LAUSSAT

There is no use in arguing with you. Come, let us attend to this fools errand. My God it makes my blood boil.

They step into the carriage.

INT. THE CARRIAGE - FOLLOWING

The three men seat themselves, and Marigny raps on the wall,
The coach lurches forward.

MARIGNY

The thing that bothers me most, is
being sold to the Americans. They
are young, loud, and so arrogant.

Laussat laughs.

MARIGNY

What is so funny?

LAUSSAT

You could almost be speaking of
yourself.

MARIGNY

They have no culture, no art. They
have no romance. Could we not
forestall the transfer just a brief
while? Perhaps Bonaparte can be
made to see reason.

LAUSSAT

The first consul believes he is
guided by God. His own brothers
tried vainly to change his mind.

MARIGNY

Yes, I heard the story. They
confronted him in the bath and he
threw the soap at them.

BLANQUE

More is the pity that he did not
drown at the time.

LAUSSAT

Be careful what you say, Jean!

BLANQUE

Forgive me Minister.

Laussat waves it off.

LAUSSAT

What does it matter? After today
this will all be a part of America.

(CONTINUED)

MARIGNY

Perhaps, but I will fight them
tooth and nail. I will not become
a Yankee doodle dandy.

They sit in silence.

EXT. A SMALL CREEK - EARLY MORNING

A flatboat makes it's way through shallow water. It is laden with crates, burlap sacks and TEN NEGRO SLAVES in chains. At the keel RENATO BELUCHE 20's, steers.

The boat moves slowly past a rock outcropping, A DIRTY MAN in a tattered hat, jumps up on top of the rock. He points a long barreled musket at Renato.

DIRTY MAN

Good morning Monsieur.

Renato appears startled. Two more men emerge from the woods on shore. One is a BALD MAN, smoking a pipe, and holding a rusted sword. The other is CHULA HUMMA, a Choctaw Indian with a war club. Renato reaches for a pistol on his waist.

DIRTY MAN

(continued)

Just take it slow, my friend. We are taking them goods. Only question is if we have to kill you to do it.

CHULA HUMMA

(in Choctaw)

Where is the other man?

DIRTY MAN

What that he said?

BALD MAN

He says there were two men. Where is the other?

JEAN LAFITTE

(O.S.)

I am here.

The bald man and Chula spin around. There stands JEAN LAFITTE. He holds two flintlock pistols. Lafitte pulls the triggers. One FIRES, hits the bald man, he falls into the water. The other MISFIRES.

(CONTINUED)

The dirty man turns his musket towards Lafitte. Renato pulls his pistol, FIRES. The dirty man falls onto the rock.

Chula realizing Lafitte is unarmed, advances with his club. Lafitte turns his pistols in his hands to use as weapons. They stand and eye each other.

JEAN LAFITTE

Chula Humma? Is that you?

CHULA HUMMA

Jean Lafitte. That is why I did not hear you.

JEAN LAFITTE

I am glad that I did not kill you, Chula.

CHULA HUMMA

I am happy as well. I would not want to die with these two.

JEAN LAFITTE

Renato, look here. It is Chula Humma.

Renato turns the boat towards the shore. The dirty man rises up on the rock. He levels the musket at Renato. Below him a young slave girl, MATILDA, pushes the barrel of the musket up as it FIRES.

MATILDA

FAIRE ATTENTION!!

The shot flies inches from Renato's head. From shore, Chula throws his war club, hits the dirty man square in the face, killing him. The dirty man falls half in, half out of the barge.

Renato stands still, looks to the Matilda. She looks away quickly, going into the arms of her brother, CHARLES DESLONDES. Lafitte runs to the barge.

JEAN LAFITTE

Renato, are you shot?

RENATO

The old river rat missed me, thanks to this slave girl. Hello Chula Humma. I cannot say I like your choice of friends.

(CONTINUED)

CHULA HUMMA

I did not care for them myself.
They smell bad, and drink much
rum. The bald one I knew from my
days tracking for the Spanish.

JEAN LAFITTE

We travel into the city. My
brother waits for us. Will you
come with us?

CHULA HUMMA

No. We made camp on the small
lake. All mine now.

JEAN LAFITTE

Then we will say adieu.

CHULA HUMMA

Until the next time. No ill
feelings Beluche?

RENATO

No ill feelings Chula Humma.

Chula goes into the woods. Lafitte gets into the barge. He
looks down at Matilda and Charles, then to the dead body.

JEAN LAFITTE

Merci boucoup.

He kicks the rest of the dirty man's body into the water.

JEAN LAFITTE

(CONT)

The bayou lies just ahead. Almost
home. It will be good to wash and
shave.

The barge continues on it's way.

INT. DANIEL CLARK'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Morning sunlight cuts through the room. On the bed, DANIEL
CLARK and ZULIME CARRIERRE engage in rough, fevered
sex. Clark cries out with an thick, Irish accent.

CLARK

Oh God in heaven!!

(CONTINUED)

Clark collapses on top of Zulime. His face between her breasts as he catches his breath. He crawls off her, reaches under the bed for a chamberpot, pees. Zulime lies on the bed, flushed and sweating.

ZULIME

Must you be so savage with me?

Clark sets down the chamberpot, and leans back over Zulime.

CLARK

I am sorry Darlin'. You do bring out the beast inside of me.

Clark covers her mouth with a kiss. Zulime responds with passionate hunger. Clark pulls away, gets off the bed. He begins to dress.

ZULIME

You will be gone all day?

CLARK

I am afraid so. This turn of affairs is very important to me. And the city of course.

ZULIME

You will speak to this new Governor? This Claiborne?

CLARK

I certainly mean to size him up.

ZULIME

It should have been you Danny. If you were not with me.

CLARK

Nonsense. It has nothing to do with you. These Virginians resent me. I would not be their puppet.

ZULIME

Perhaps you could speak to Claiborne about our case?

CLARK

Today is not the time for that, love. There are much more pressing issues to discuss.

ZULIME

More pressing for you. You are not the one thought of as a whore.

CLARK

No one dares say that of you.

ZULIME

I see it in the eyes. Men leer at me. Women look away. Even the slaves look with disdain. I am your wife. Everyone should know.

CLARK

Soon, Zulime, I promise. We need the documents that will annul your first marriage.

ZULIME

But why? Jerome was convicted of bigamy.

CLARK

But he's escaped and fled. We need those records. Once this new government is set, I will obtain the papers and proclaim you as my wife. Mrs. Daniel Clark.

Clark takes her in his arms, kisses her. They hold a moment. Zulime's eyes full of love and doubts. Clark's are devoid of emotion. Clark breaks the embrace and leaves. Zulime places her hand onto her belly closing her eyes.

ZULIME

Mrs. Daniel Clark.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS, THE CALBILDO -FOLLOWING

A large crowd of people have assembled to witness the transition. They talk in groups. Children run and play. then the air is filled with MILITARY DRUMS SOUND. Everyone turns towards the sound.

EXT. THE RIVER ROAD - FOLLOWING

ONE HUNDRED AMERICAN SOLDIERS on foot, armed with muskets followed by three canons, march down the river road.

Leading them on horseback are CLAIBORNE and JAMES WILKINSON, in uniform. He is a large heavy-set man in his 50s.

(CONTINUED)

Behind them are LIEUT. MATTHEW SHAMBAUGH, a young American officer. CORPORAL ROBERT DAWSON, and MICAH LEWIS.

CLAIBORNE AND WILKINSON

CLAIBORNE

I am happy for the fair weather
General. The cold, wet air of the
past week had begun to dampen more
than just clothes. A good omen.

WILKINSON

I would think it a better omen had
you permitted me to bring the four
hundred men and rifles garrisoned
at Natchez.

CLAIBORNE

My instructions are to avoid the
appearance of an occupation. We
must win their hearts with American
ideals, not the barrel of a musket.

WILKINSON

Noble sentiments I'm sure,
Claiborne, but I know these
people. The French resist change
of any kind, the Spanish cannot be
trusted. Ideals carry little
weight here.

CLAIBORNE

I appreciate your concerns, but my
orders come from the President, and
your orders come from me. I would
have you remember that.

WILKINSON

Now see here Claiborne...

CLAIBORNE

Governor Claiborne. You will
follow my orders or I will arrange
to have you reassigned. Am I
clear?

Wilkinson is shocked and angered by this dressing
down. Stambaugh and Lewis exchange looks as well.

WILKINSON

I meant no disrespect.

CLAIBORNE

Then let us go greet our hosts.

The troop arrives at the Calbildo. The Place de Armes is full of people.

WILKINSON

Lieutenant Shambaugh, deploy the men.

SHAMBAUGH

Yes Sir. Corporal Dawson, deploy the men around this concourse. Face the canon to the river.

DAWSON

Aye Sir. Company assemble in ranks.

The men divide into two halves, forming a semi-circle facing the crowd in the square. There is an air of tension.

CLAIBORNE

Micah, convey our greetings to the French delegation. Tell them we await their pleasure.

LEWIS

I don't think that will be necessary, William.

The crowd opens up. LAUSSAT and BLANQUE appear along with ETIENNE DEBORE. DeBore, the Mayor of New Orleans, is short, rotund with a dour expression.

DEBORE

Gentlemen, Monsieur Laussat does not speak English, and has asked me to speak for him, if you have no objection.

CLAIBORNE

No objection, Mayor DeBore. Although I am certain Mr. Laussat's English is far better than my French. Is everything prepared?

DEBORE

Everything has been arranged as agreed upon. If you will accompany us into the Sala Capitular, we are ready to proceed with the transfer.

INT. THE SALA CAPITULAR OF THE CABILDO - AN HOUR LATER

A large room filled with mostly men, but some women. Divided into three groups, THE FRENCH on one side, THE SPANISH on another, THE AMERICANS still another.

At end of the room is a large table. At the center of the table stands DEBORE. With him stand LAUSSAT, MARIGNY, BLANQUE and other FRENCH MEN. On DeBore's left are CLAIBORNE, WILKINSON and LEWIS.

Nearby stand DANIEL CLARK, RICHARD RELF, BEVERLY CHEW, and EVAN JONES. Relf and Chew are in their 30s. Jones, his 50's. The signing has just concluded.

DEBORE

The transfer is complete. The territory of Louisiana is now the property of the United States.

The small group of Americans, applaud loudly and shake hands. The French and the Spanish clap weakly, or not at all.

Mayor DeBore goes to the Americans, gesturing to the group of Frenchmen, who step forward. Claiborne greets them in turn. Off to the side, Clark looks on with Relf and Chew.

CLARK

You would think they were meeting the fucking Pope. Poydras, Treme, Destrahan even young Marigny. All in line to kiss Claiborne's ass.

RELF

Treme is giving a ball tonight in Claiborne's honor. Everyone in the city will be there.

CLARK

So I heard. Treme's not stupid.

CHEW

Have a look at the Spaniards. They look like they're smelling farts. What do you think they're going to do?

The Spanish contingent: CASA CALVO, a wiry man in his 40's. ex-spanish governor JUAN SALCEDO a porty man of 60, his son MANUEL SALCEDO, 20's, RAMON ANGULLO, 30's and PERE ANTOINE, a hawk nosed priest in his 50's.

(CONTINUED)

They speak in urgent fashion while keeping their eyes on the proceedings.

CLARK

You can bet they aren't going to just pack up and leave. Not after sixty years, boyo. Not on your fucking life.

RELF

So are we going over Danny?

CLARK

I suppose we'd better. Pucker up lads.

They move towards the Americans. Charles Leveau steps up to Claiborne with Marie. CLAUDE TREME puts his hand on Leveau's shoulder.

TREME

Governor, I would like you to meet Charles Leveau. He is one of our finest farmers.

CLAIBORNE

Mr. Leveau. My pleasure. Who is this lovely young lady with you?

LEVEAU

This is my daughter, Marie. Marie say hello to the Governor.

MARIE

Bonjour, monsieur le gouverneur.

CLAIBORNE

Hello, Marie. She is a treasure, Mr. Leveau. I too have a daughter. She is almost two years old. Perhaps you will advise me in the future.

LEVEAU

Merci, Monsieur. I would be honored.

Leveau leads Marie away, beaming with pride. Marigny steps forward.

TREME

This is Bernard Marigny. His family is one of the oldest in the city.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIBORNE

Mr. Marigny, I deeply wish that we shall be good friends.

MARIGNY

Je vous suggère d'abord apprendre à parler français. C'est la langue de mes amis.

CLAIBORNE

I am sorry, I don't understand.

Marigny laughs at him, turns away to a group of friends.

MARIGNY

Il est un imbécile.

His friends roar with laughter. The older men are embarrassed by his disrespect.

TREME

My apologies. Bernard is a hot-headed young man.

CLAIBORNE

No apology is needed. I am aware that many have no love for us. But I will gain at least their respect.

TREME

In time Governor, I am certain that you will.

CLAIBORNE

(purposely loud)

President Jefferson has great plans for Louisiana, gentlemen. We wish that all the people will benefit from being Americans.

Daniel Clark with Chew and Relf approach Claiborne and Wilkinson.

CLARK

Congratulations Governor Claiborne.

CLAIBORNE

Thank you Mr. Clark. I am happy that you came today.

CLARK

I would not have missed it. We should speak together after we have

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CLARK (cont'd)
concluded here. I can give you the
lay of the land.

CLAIBORNE
That will not be possible. I shall
be exceedingly busy for some
time. Perhaps we can arrange
something in the new year.

Clark is stunned by this snub. Wilkinson smiles. There is
an awkward silence. Mayor DeBore steps forward.

DEBORE
Governor, it is time for the
Proclamation. The people are
waiting.

CLAIBORNE
You are quite right Mr.
Mayor. Please lead the way.

DeBore leads Claiborne. The French and American contingents
follow. The Spanish hold back. CASA CALVO reaches out,
touching Wilkinson on the arm.

CASA CALVO
General Wilkinson, I would like a
word with you.

WILKINSON
Would you? When we last met you
had no such interest.

CASA CALVO
We were perhaps too hasty,
General. Much has changed.

WILKINSON
It has indeed. Now is not the
time. You are attending the ball
this evening at the Treme
Plantation?

CASA CALVO
I am sure that I can. We can speak
then, Thirteen?

Wilkinson reacts, looks around to be sure no one has heard.

WILKINSON
Perhaps. It will of course depend
on what you have to say. Right now
sir, we have a territory to claim.

(CONTINUED)

He leaves. Casa Calvo returns to the other Spanish.

(Spanish with subtitles)

SALCEDO

What did he say?

CASA CALVO

He is still a pompous boar. He is delighting in his new promotion.

PERE ANTOINE

Do you think he will be pliable?

CASA CALVO

A leopard does not change his spots. The man is as corruptible as ever. It is only a matter of price.

ANGULLO

Be wary, he is as like to turn on us, as on Claiborne.

CASA CALVO

True, Ramon. We must be prepared to pay more for his confidence.

PERE ANTOINE

I will speak with Mr. Clark. He appears none too happy with the new Governor.

SALCEDO

Agreed. For the time being we shall have to remain observers. Let's how the crowd respond.

EXT. THE PLACE DE ARMES - FOLLOWING

The delegations on the balcony take their places. Claiborne follows Mayor DeBore to the center. The crowd is loud and unruly. DeBore raises his hands to try and quiet them.

DEBORE

(subtitled from French)

Please, ladies and gentlemen. The transfer of the territory is now complete.

This is met with jeers and catcalls. DeBore tries to shout over them.

(CONTINUED)

DEBORE

Please, I implore you. Governor Claiborne wishes to address you. Please give him your attention.

The crowd gets louder. DeBore turns to Claiborne, unsure what to do. Claiborne smiles, then steps up, removes a parchment from his coat. Without preamble, he begins.

CLAIBORNE

Whereas, by stipulation between the governments of France and Spain, the latter ceded to the former the Colony and Province of Louisiana...

The words are lost in the sea of jeers and insults. Claiborne pushes on. Clark turns towards Chew and Relf.

CLARK

He's addressing them in English?! How fucking stupid can he be?

CHEW

Arrogant, stupid and incompetent. He will not last a week.

RELF

A week! I will be surprised if he lasts the night.

Behind them, Shambaugh, and Lewis overhear them.

SHAMBAUGH

Then you clearly don't know William Claiborne.

CLARK

Just who the hell are you?

KENNER

Lieutenant Matthew Shambaugh. I have served with the Governor since he was in Virginia. He is a natural leader.

CLARK

You know nothing of New Orleans. These people are not Virginians.

(CONTINUED)

SHAMBAUGH

People are the same everywhere. He is a true man. In time they will accept him.

LEWIS

He is a good and honest, should come as a breath of fresh air here.

CLARK

I am not sure I like your insinuation.

LEWIS

And I do not like your attack on my friend. Everyone knows that you petitioned to be named Governor.

CLARK

You dare to challenge my integrity?

LEWIS

I merely state facts.

CLARK

Let me state a fact, Mr...?

LEWIS

Lewis, Micah Lewis.

CLARK

It is unwise to step on my toes.

EVAN JONES steps in between them. Puts a hand on Clark's shoulder.

JONES

Please gentlemen, this is not the place.

CLARK

Get your hands off of me, Jones. We all know where you stand.

JONES

We need to be united. The Spanish seek any reason to disrupt this transition.

Clark and Lewis slowly move away from each other. Claiborne continues his proclamation. The shouting continues.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIBORNE

Making known the premises, and to declare that the government heretofore exercised over the said Province of Louisiana,

Standing apart, DEBORE addresses TREME, LAUSSAT, MARIGNY, BLANQUE

DEBORE

(In French)

Well gentlemen, now we are in the hands of the Americans.

LAUSSAT

Perhaps you are Etienne, but I am a citizen of France. I return soon.

MARIGNY

That is well for you, but this is my home. These Americans are boars. They cannot last here.

DEBORE

I agree. We resisted the Spanish for many years. We will resist these Americans as well.

TREME

I would not be so sure. The Americans are people of great resolve. Also Claiborne may be young, but he is no fool.

BLANQUE

I agree. A man does not get this kind of responsibility easily.

At center stage, Claiborne reaches the end of the proclamation.

CLAIBORNE

I do hereby exhort and enjoin all the inhabitants and other persons within the said Province, to be faithful and true in their allegiance to the United States, and obedient to the laws and authorities of the same under full assurance that their just right will be under the guardianship of the United States, and will be maintained from all force or

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CLAIBORNE (cont'd)
violence from without or
within. In testimony whereof I
have here unto set my hand.

His proclamation finished, Claiborne is greeted with jeers and catcalls.

CLAIBORNE
Gentlemen, let us change the flags.

The French flag lowers, the crowd grows quiet. Many weep. Corporal Dawson then attaches the American flag, raises it. Wilkinson signals to the canons. They BOOM across the Mississippi. Various faces reflect the different moods. The Americans jubilant, the French uncertain, the Spanish anger.

EXT. RUE BOURBON - DAY

The street is almost deserted as two wagons make their way up. JEAN LAFITTE and RENATO BELUCHE drive the wagons. The first wagon is loaded with goods, the other carries the slaves.

EXT. PIERRE LAFITTE'S BLACKSMITH SHOP - DAY

It is a one story building standing alone on the corner. It is square, around 50 feet by 50 feet. The front doors stand open to Rue Bourbon. Horses, mules and wagons surround the building.

INT. THE BLACKSMITH SHOP, THE FRONT - DAY

The front of the shop is divided in two stations. Each with a forge and anvils. The SMITHIES work on horse shoes and wagon wheels. There are few CUSTOMERS. Towards the back, a wall separates the building. One closed door permits access to the back.

INT. THE BLACKSMITH SHOP, THE BACK - DAY

The activity here is frenzied. WORKERS move crates and bundles from one side of the building to the other. They are taken out a side door where they loaded onto wagons. In the center stands PIERRE LAFITTE. Pierre is large, muscled, in his early 30's.

(CONTINUED)

PIERRE

(In French, subtitled)

Be careful with these cases, it is very fragile. Move quickly, we need to clear these goods today.

GASTON, an older creole worker, comes over to Pierre.

GASTON

Pierre we are short of almost everything. We have only one case of rum, and this is the last of our tobacco.

PIERRE

Do what you can, Gaston. We will have to make do until Jean arrives.

JEAN LAFITTE

(O.S.)

You speak of the devil, and then he appears.

Jean enters from the partition door. A relieved Pierre goes to meet him. **(The French is now heard as English.)**

JEAN LAFITTE

There are two wagons waiting at the side door Pierre, and two others on the way.

PIERRE

Are you mad Jean? Bringing in wagons in the middle of the day?

JEAN LAFITTE

There is no one to see. Everyone is at the Place de Armes. Today we are all Americans.

Pierre throws his arms around his brother.

PIERRE

Jean, one of these days you are going to get us in a lot of trouble. Where have you been? I expected you two nights ago.

JEAN LAFITTE

We ran into a Spanish patrol. We found a good place to hide on Barataria Island.

(CONTINUED)

PIERRE

We cannot afford these delays. If we cannot obtain goods for our customers, they will find someone who can.

JEAN LAFITTE

No one can bring in the cargo that we can. We have the advantage.

PIERRE

Yes, but for how long? It is something we must consider. So, what have you brought me.

Jean walks to the sliding door on the right side of the shop. He pulls it open.

JEAN LAFITTE

Come and see. Rum, tobacco, silks and lace.

Jean steps outside followed by Pierre.

EXT. PIERRE LAFITTE'S BLACKSMITH - FOLLOWING

The wagons sit waiting. They stop at the last one with the ten slaves.

JEAN LAFITTE

(continued)

Two cases of French Champagne, and of course the Dominican slaves.

PIERRE

This is very good Jean. But there are only ten. There were supposed to be fourteen.

JEAN LAFITTE

Two of them died on the ship, two more on the island. All children. They were not feeding them. There was nothing we could do, we saved what we could.

PIERRE

Such a waste. Four children, worth five thousand francs easily. Still, this is good. What is on the other two wagons?

(CONTINUED)

JEAN LAFITTE

Mostly bolts of cloth and dishes
and plate. Some perfume as
well. I brought the most pressing
items.

PIERRE

Renato, take the slaves to the
pens. See they are fed. I will
arrange for their sale tomorrow.

RENATO

I will see to it. Jean, I need
some money.

JEAN LAFITTE

Of course. Meet me at Les Portes
du Ciel. You certainly earned it.

RENATO

I know. Jean. Pierre.

Renato leads the wagon away. TITUS, a large, well dressed
black man in his 50's comes out the shop door.

TITUS

Mr. Lafitte.

Both brothers turn to him.

PIERRE

You are Treme's man?

TITUS

Yes sir, Titus. Mr. Treme sent me
to pick up his order.

PIERRE

Yes, my men are putting it together
now. It is quite a large order.

TITUS

Yes sir. He is giving a ball
tonight for the new
Governor. Going to be a fine
soiree.

JEAN

You say the Governor, Claiborne
will be there?

(CONTINUED)

TITUS

Oh yes sir. The guest of honor.

JEAN

No doubt.

PIERRE

Come inside Titus. Jean, are you coming?

JEAN LAFITTE

After a week in the open. I need a hot bath and a large drink.

Jean unties and mounts his horse.

PIERRE

Stay out of trouble, will you?

JEAN LAFITTE

Pierre, you know me.

Jean rides away. Pierre leads Titus inside the shop.

EXT. THE SLAVE PENS - DAY

Renato drives the wagon of slaves to the pens and climbs down. The pen OVERSEER walks over to the wagon.

OVERSEER

What do you have here?

RENATO

Ten slaves to be auctioned. Owner is Pierre Lafitte. Feed them and treat them well. He will come tomorrow to arrange for their sale.

OVERSEER

Pierre Lafitte? Get them down, let me see what we have.

RENATO

Come on down now. You will stay here tonight. Come on get moving.

The slaves are slow to move. The Overseer removes a whip from his belt, CRACKS it in the air.

OVERSEER

Move you bunch of donkeys. Get out, or I'll open your backs.

(CONTINUED)

The slaves now hurry to get out of the wagon. CHARLES DESLONDES holds the hand of his sister MATILDA. The Overseer raises his whip again, Renato grabs his hand.

OVERSEER

I must be firm with this chattel. Otherwise they will become unruly.

RENATO

Firm yes, not brutal. I advise you not to anger the Lafitte brothers.

Renato eyes the man down.

OVERSEER

As you say. Come on you lot, inside.

The slaves go into the building. As GEORGE and MATILDA pass by the OVERSEER, he looks the slave girl up and down. He then checks to see if anyone has detected him.

EXT. THE PLACE DE ARMES - FOLLOWING

The crowd has begun to disperse. Daniel Clark walks from the Cabildo. From the shadows, Pere Antonio emerges.

PERE ANTOINE

Mr. Clark, a word if you please.

CLARK

I really don't think is wise for us to be seen in the public eye.

PERE ANTOINE

Why not? We are just two citizens talking on this joyous day.

CLARK

Joyous day, ha. What in bloody hell is Jefferson thinking? This man Claiborne is a weak fool.

PERE ANTOINE

Then he should be easily guided to a course that is best for all. You need to be close to him.

CLARK

What course might that be Pere?

(CONTINUED)

PERE ANTOINE

We can speak more tonight at the
Treme ball? You will attend?

CLARK

I will. I do hope that you will
say something worth the
hearing. Good day Pere.

Clark walks away. Pere Antoine walks quickly the other way.

INT. LES PORTES DU CIEL - DAY

Les Portes du Ciel is a dance hall/brothel. TWO YOUNG WOMEN
sit at a makeshift bar, ANOTHER dances alone to the music of
a FIDDLER. On a staircase, MARIE VILLARS, a voluptuous
woman late 20's descends with a YOUNG SPANIARD in uniform.

MARIE VILLARS

I hope that you enjoyed your visit
with us. You enjoyed the dancing?

SPANIARD

The dancing was delightful. The
young lady was very accomplished.

They stop at the door, Marie kisses him quickly on both
cheeks. The door opens, JEAN LAFITTE stands there.

JEAN LAFITTE

What is the meaning of this? Sir,
how dare you insult me in this
manner! And you, you strumpet, in
the embrace of another man!

MARIE VILLARS

Lafitte, don't do this.

SPANIARD

Please my friend, this is not what
at all what it appears.

JEAN LAFITTE

It appears that you are in the arms
of my woman. Honor requires that I
kill you for your insult.

Jean pulls out his sword and advances towards the Spaniard.

MARIE VILLARS

Lafitte, that is enough.

(CONTINUED)

Marie blocks Jean's advance, the Spaniard quickly runs out the door, looking back to see that Jean is not pursuing him.

JEAN LAFITTE

Yes, run you coward!

Marie closes the door, punches Jean on the shoulder. Jean laughs heartily.

MARIE VILLARS

That was not at all funny. The poor man will never come back, good customers are hard to come by.

JEAN LAFITTE

Good riddance. The Spanish are done here. You will have Americans now. Your ladies will soon be dancing to Yankee Doodle.

As he speaks, Lafitte scans the room. Searching.

MARIE VILLARS

Catherine is not here.

JEAN LAFITTE

Oh?

MARIE VILLARS

She went to the ceremony. She does not want to see you anyway, Jean. She is very angry with you.

JEAN LAFITTE

Really? Fine. I will find amusement elsewhere.

Lafitte walks to the two women at the bar. SOPHIE, in her 20's, blond and lithe. NATALIE, a pretty quadroon, also in her 20's. Her breasts spill out of her blouse.

JEAN LAFITTE

Ladies, I require a bath and company. I have gold coins for you both. Marie, please see that we are not disturbed.

Lafitte gathers the two women, escorts them up the stairs.

INT. THE HOME OF EVAN JONES - LATE AFTERNOON

The Jones house is large, spacious. It speaks of wealth and power. JONES AND CLAIBORNE enter from the front door.

CLAIBORNE

I must thank you for hosting my family and I until we are situated.

JONES

Nonsense. It is my honor. Besides, this way you first see New Orleans through friendly eyes.

CLAIBORNE

Eliza and my daughter have arrived safely?

JONES

Hours ago. They are upstairs. Brandy?

CLAIBORNE

A large one, I think.

Jones goes to a table laden with decanters and glasses. He picks up one of each, and pours.

JONES

So, how do you find New Orleans?

He hands a glass to Claiborne.

CLAIBORNE

I am a bit surprised at the ease of the transition. I half expected to fight our way into the city.

JONES

The transition is not over. There are many aligned against you. You have dark days ahead. Cheers.

CLAIBORNE

This is friendly eyes?

JONES

You will also find supporters. Tonight I shall make you aware of them, and who to beware. Come, your wife and child are waiting.

Jones takes the glass from Claiborne's hand, and leads him up the stairs.

INT. A SITTING ROOM IN JONES' HOUSE - FOLLOWING

A spacious sitting room, with two doors leading to other parts of the wing. Jones escorts Claiborne into the room.

JONES

Get some rest. We will speak more tonight. I will have a carriage prepared at nightfall.

Jones claps Claiborne on the shoulder, leaves. Claiborne, alone, lets his weariness and frustration show. The door opens ELIZA CLAIBORNE, 25, comes into the room. When she sees Claiborne, she runs to his arms, kisses him.

ELIZA

I missed you. How was the ceremony? I so wanted to be there.

CLAIBORNE

You did not miss much. The Spanish plot, the French are either blase or insolent. I fear I will never be able to win these people.

ELIZA

You understate your abilities. It was much the same in Mississippi.

He goes to a desk and sits in the chair in front of it.

CLAIBORNE

As different as the moon from the sun. Perhaps more so. No people.

ELIZA

The President thinks you more than able. So do I.

Eliza kisses his neck, gently massages his temples, She pulls his head back between her breasts.

CLAIBORNE

I must write to the President. Give a full report of the day.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA

Not just yet. I have not seen you
for weeks.

Eliza slides Claiborne's coat down his shoulders, kisses his neck and ears, massages his chest and shoulders. Claiborne gives in to her, pulls her around into his lap. They kiss.

CLAIBORNE

You are very wise. Perhaps you
should be the Governor.

They kiss again, undoing buttons and straps. Claiborne pushes down the bodice, kisses her breasts. Eliza opens Claiborne's trousers, puts her hand inside. He moans. Then from the next room.

CORNELLA

(O.S.)

Mama! Mama!!

ELIZA

(whispering)

Perhaps she'll stop.

They hold still and listen.

CORNELLA

MAMA!!!

CLAIBORNE

Damn.

Eliza pushes away from him and fixes her clothing.

ELIZA

I'll be just a moment. Yes daring,
Mama is coming.

Eliza leaves. Claiborne stands alone. He returns to the desk, removes paper from a drawer, dips a quill into a pot of ink. He writes.

INT. A BATHROOM AT LES PORTES DU CIEL - AFTERNOON

The room is full of steam. Clothing litters the floor. JEAN LAFITTE sits in a large tub, NATALIE kisses his chest. After a moment, SOFIE'S head emerges from between his legs.

The door flies open. In the doorway is CATHERINE VILLARS, a beautiful French, Creole woman. Her eyes are wild with anger. Lafitte is unfazed.

(CONTINUED)

JEAN LAFITTE

Ah Catherine, have you come to join us? It think that there is room.

CATHERINE

You two, get out of here!

NATALIE

But Miss Catherine, he has paid for the dance.

JEAN LAFITTE

Yes, I have paid for the dance.

CATHERINE

Get out of here you bitches, or I will rip your tits off.

Catherine charges towards the tub. Natalie and Sofie quickly get out, screaming in terror. Scrambling to retrieve clothing, they run out the door naked, dripping water. Lafitte laughs loudly.

JEAN LAFITTE

Adieu, Belles Creatures. Really Catherine, that was not very nice.

Catherine slams the door after them.

CATHERINE

You pig! If I had a knife I would kill you!

JEAN LAFITTE

But why? I thought you had no desire to see me. Since no one woman can replace you, I choose two.

CATHERINE

You disappear for weeks, and say nothing. There are many men who would happily share my bed, Jean Lafitte. I do not need you.

JEAN LAFITTE

Than why are you so angry?

CATHERINE

I do not have to stand for you fucking other women under this roof. Get out, and stay away!

(CONTINUED)

Jean stands up and gets out of the tub. He goes to Catherine. He reaches to embrace her, but she moves away.

JEAN LAFITTE

Petit amour, can't we speak with reason? Yes, I have been away for weeks. Working far to the south. My life in constant danger. Upon my return, I am told that you won't see me. What am I to do? I am only a man.

CATHERINE

You are a filthy pig! I will not let you treat me like a whore!

JEAN LAFITTE

I have never done that and you know it. Would I consider taking a whore to the Treme ball tonight to meet the new American Governor?

Catherine eyes Jean suspiciously. He moves to her again.

CATHERINE

You are invited to the ball?

JEAN LAFITTE

But of course. Why would I not be?

CATHERINE

Because you are a brigand and a criminal.

JEAN LAFITTE

That is untrue. Pierre and I are not criminals. We are businessmen.

CATHERINE

Ha! The black market business.

JEAN LAFITTE

We supply goods to the public at reasonable prices. Things they could not afford if purchased from the Spanish and French elite.

CATHERINE

Do not try your line of shit with me Jean. I know you too well. Are you really going to the Treme ball?

Jean embraces Catherine, this time she does not resist. He begins to undress her, moving her towards the tub.

(CONTINUED)

JEAN LAFITTE

Yes, of course.

CATHERINE

And you will take me with you?

JEAN LAFITTE

I do not lie to you. I would have you on my arm this evening. But first we must clean you up.

He pushes her half dressed into the tub. He goes in after her. She rises up, swings her fist at him. He catches it, pulls her towards him. He kisses her. She resists for a moment more, then gives herself to him.

EXT. THE RUE ROYAL - EARLY EVENING

A carriage moves up the street. Crowds laugh and dance and drink. Men and women kiss and embrace casually. Others travel up and down the streets from tavern to tavern. An undeclared party is happening in the city.

INT. THE CARRIAGE - FOLLOWING

Seated on one side, Claiborne and Eliza. On the other sit Evan Jones and his daughter, MARY ANN, a young woman of 17, with curly blond hair and full mouth. Claiborne intently watches the activity on the streets.

MARY ANN

You seem troubled, Governor Claiborne.

CLAIBORNE

What? No. Yes, perhaps a bit. These people. They seemed entirely focused on the carnal. Eating, drinking, dancing. It is a wonder that anything is ever accomplished.

JONES

I think misread them. Most are good, god-fearing people. They do like to indulge their vices. It is a badge of honor for the Creoles.

ELIZA

Tell me Evan, what exactly is a Creole?

(CONTINUED)

JONES

A Creole is anyone native born. French, Spanish, white or black. One may live here for many years, but unless you are born here, you will never be a Creole.

CLAIBORNE

If one is not a Creole, what then?

JONES

Then Governor, they are outsiders.

EXT. THE RUE ROYAL - FOLLOWING

The carriage turns onto Rue St. Louis, it passes the slave pens.

INT. THE SLAVE PENS. - FOLLOWING

In a small, dark room, the OVERSEER drinks from a pot of rum.

EXT. THE TREME PLANTATION - EVENING

It is large, but not ostentatious. A line of carriages waits to discharge their occupants.

Lanterns and candles are lit everywhere. Music can be heard coming from the house.

The carriage carrying Claiborne and his party enters the path.

INT. THE CARRIAGE - FOLLOWING

Claiborne looking out the window at the plantation.

CLAIBORNE

My God! Has the entire state come here tonight?

JONES

They all wish to get a look at you. There will be more to come. This is a momentous occasion.

(CONTINUED)

ELIZA

You really should be honored Will.

Claiborne smiles weakly.

INT. THE TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

The house is full of people. Men and women, young and old. French, Spanish, Americans and many different shades of negro. Some are slaves, others 'Free people of color'. Hundreds of candles are lit to illuminate each room. At the entrance greeting the new arrivals stand CLAUDE AND JULIE TREME. TITUS comes up to them.

TITUS

Mr. Treme, Governor Claiborne has arrived.

TREME

Thank you, Titus.

Titus leaves. BERNARD MARIGNY appears in the doorway with LAUSSAT and his WIFE.

TREME

Bernard? I thought that you were holding your own soiree this evening.

MARIGNY

That was our plan, but with everyone coming here, it was very drab. Also we were under attack by the largest mosquitoes I have ever seen. They were the size of bees.

TREME

You are all most welcome. Please enjoy all the pleasures of my home.

EXT. THE TREME PLANTATION KITCHEN ENTRANCE - EVENING

A wagon drives up carrying JEAN LAFITTE and CATHERINE VILLARS. Lafitte jumps down. Catherine Villars remains seated. Lafitte goes to the door and knocks.

CATHERINE

This is how we go to the ball? Through the kitchen door?

(CONTINUED)

JEAN LAFITTE

My dear, we are expected. They are also expecting this delivery. Then we shall eat, drink and dance.

Lafitte knocks again. A SLAVE WOMAN opens the door.

SLAVE WOMAN

Yes? What is it?

JEAN LAFITTE

We have supplies for the ball.

SLAVE WOMAN

You wait here.

(calling inside the house)

Titus! Titus!

The Slave woman turns and goes inside the house. Lafitte puts his hand up to Catherine.

JEAN LAFITTE

Mademoiselle, if you please.

He helps her down. Titus appears in the doorway.

TITUS

Mr. Lafitte. We expected you earlier.

JEAN LAFITTE

Well, as you see, I am here now. Come Catherine, The night is ours.

Lafitte escorts Catherine into the house. Titus stands bewildered.

INT. THE TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

Marigny watches the proceedings with Laussat and his wife.

At the front door, Claiborne, Eliza, Jones and Mary ann are being greeted by Treme and his wife.

Marigny's attention is focused on Mary Ann.

MARIGNY

Why is it, that with all the beautiful women in New Orleans, I can not take my eyes from the blond girl from Pennsylvania?

(CONTINUED)

LAUSSAT

I think there is no explaining why such attractions happen. We are slaves to it. Is that not so, my dear?

Laussat kisses his wife's hand. She laughs.

MADAME LAUSSAT

Oh dear, I believe he is trying to seduce me.

LAUSSAT

Come, I hear a waltz.

Laussat leads his wife away, leaving Marigny alone. From behind come Jean Lafitte and Catherine Villars.

JEAN LAFITTE

Look at him, Catherine. An old maid waiting to be asked to dance.

MARIGNY

Lafitte! When did you return? I spoke to Pierre yesterday, he was quite worried about you.

JEAN LAFITTE

He often acts more like my mother than my brother. I arrived this afternoon.

MARIGNY

I am very happy to see you. Mademoiselle Villars, still keeping company with this rascal I see.

CATHERINE

He keeps me amused Bernard. We have not seen you in quite some time. Have you found better dancing elsewhere?

MARIGNY

No, Cheri. There is no better dancing in the city.

JEAN LAFITTE

Have you not heard, Catherine? Bernard has been bitten by love for Evan Jone's daughter. Even now he can not keep his eyes off of her.

(CONTINUED)

MARIGNY

You exaggerate as usual.

JEAN LAFITTE

Do I? So that is the new Governor? What do you make of him?

MARIGNY

He is like all Americans, ignorant fools.

JEAN LAFITTE

Really Bernard, you insist on living in the past. I see this as a great step forward.

MARIGNY

Would you dance their jigs and reels? They are like champagne bubbles. All froth and no taste.

JEAN

Does that include Jones' daughter? Talk to her, Bernard. See there, she is heading for the ballroom.

Marigny looks to see Mary Ann, Jones, Eliza and Julie Treme entering the ballroom.

JEAN LAFITTE

(continued)

For myself, I wish to meet this Claiborne. Catherine.

Lafitte offers Catherine his arm, she takes it and they go towards Claiborne and Treme.

Marigny follows after Mary Ann Evans.

Lafitte and Catherine approach Claiborne and Treme. Treme looks shocked when he sees them.

JEAN LAFITTE

Ah, Claude. This is truly a glorious affair. You have outdone yourself.

TREME

Oh yes. Thank you.

There is an awkward silence as Claiborne and Lafitte examine each other. Both waiting for an introduction.

(CONTINUED)

TREME

Governor Claiborne, this is Mr. Clement. One of our local merchants, and ah...

JEAN LAFITTE

My wife, Jeanette.

TREME

Yes, yes of course.

CLAIBORNE

A pleasure Mr. Clement, Mrs. Clement. What line of business are you in Sir?

JEAN LAFITTE

Imports and exports. My congratulations on the day.

CLAIBORNE

Thank you.

JEAN LAFITTE

I look forward to the new future of New Orleans. I see enormous opportunity.

INT. THE BALLROOM IN THE TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

Couples swirl around the dance floor. Others stand and watch. One group is Evan and Mary Ann Jones with Eliza Claiborne. Marigny walks up to them.

MARIGNY

Bonsoir Monsieur Jones c'est un plaisir de vous voir. Mademoiselle Jones voulez-vous me faire l'honneur avec une danse?

MARY ANN

J'avais cru comprendre que vous n'aimez pas les choses d'avoir à faire avec les Américains.

MARIGNY

Non, pas tout. Je voudrais être amis avec vous.

MARY ANN

Then I suggest that you speak English, sir. For that is the language of my friends.

(CONTINUED)

Jones laughs. Eliza looks pleased as well. Marigny scowls to hear his own words used against him. After a moment, his smile returns. He speaks in English.

MARIGNY

Touche Lady. Please, can you not scold me while we dance?

Marigny extends his hand to her, but she does not take it.

JONES

Mary Ann, do not leave him standing so. Dance with the young man.

MARY ANN

Yes, father. Excuse me, Mrs. Claiborne.

Mary Ann takes Marigny's hand and he escorts her to the dance floor.

INT. THE TREME MANSION, THE FRONT DOOR - FOLLOWING

Claiborne and Lafitte are still in conversation. Treme stands waiting, holding his breath.

JEAN LAFITTE

Governor Claiborne, should you ever require my services, I hope that you will not hesitate to ask.

CLAIBORNE

Thank you, Mr. Clement. I shall remember.

JEAN LAFITTE

For now, I intend to drink wine, dance and gamble. We know how to celebrate here.

CLAIBORNE

That is becoming quite apparent to me sir.

Charles Leveau approaches Claiborne. As Lafitte turns to leave he looks to Treme.

LEVEAU

Governor Claiborne, a pleasure to see you again.

(CONTINUED)

CLAIBORNE

Mr. Leveau. The pleasure is mine. Where is your lovely daughter?

LEVEAU

She became very weary. I put her to sleep in a room upstairs.

JEAN LAFITTE

(aside to Treme)

Mr. Clement?

TREME

Lafitte, behave, please.

JEAN LAFITTE

Why must everyone always assume the worst of me? Come 'Jeanette'.

Lafitte and Catherine go towards the ballroom. Treme returns to Claiborne.

TREME

Governor, shall we go inside?

CLAIBORNE

Very well, Claude. Mr. Leveau, I go to face my new countrymen. Will you accompany us?

LEVEAU

I would be honored.

Treme leads Claiborne towards the ballroom, followed by Leveau and several others.

INT. THE BALLROOM IN THE TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

Marigny and Mary Ann dance together.

MARIGNY

Please Mary Ann. Do not be angry with me.

MARY ANN

Why not? How could you be so rude to Governor Claiborne? His task will be hard enough without you and your cronies standing in his way.

(CONTINUED)

MARIGNY

Is he so soft that he cannot take a bit of criticism? What kind of a man is that?

MARY ANN

You don't know what kind of a man he is. And you never will with that attitude. You are just a petulant child, and I despise you.

She stops dancing and attempts to break his hold. Marigny holds on to her.

MARIGNY

Please, Pomponne, I can not stand to have you dislike me. Tell me what I can do.

MARY ANN

You can begin with an apology.

MARIGNY

I am sorry.

MARY ANN

Not to me, you fool!

Just then, Treme, Claiborne, Leveau and the others enter the ballroom. Treme signals to the orchestra and the music stops. Treme steps forward.

TREME

Ladies and gentlemen. Please may I have your attention.

The room falls quiet, as everyone turns their attention to Treme and Claiborne.

TREME

(CONTINUED)

I present to you, Governor William Claiborne!

The majority of the people applaud politely, while the small group of Americans clap and shout. Among them, are General Wilkinson, Shambaugh, Micah Lewis and Corporal Dawson.

DAWSON/LEWIS

Hoozah! Hoozah!

(CONTINUED)

WILKINSON

God bless the United States of
America. (Singing) 'Yankee Doodle
went to town, riding on a pony'.

The rest of the Americans join in the song.

INTERCUT OF THE SLAVE PENS - FOLLOWING

The OVERSEER unlocks the door to one of the pens,
enters. Inside the pen are six slaves, all women. MATILDA
is one of them.

We HEAR the singing from the ball.

AMERICANS

'Yankee Doodle keep it up, Yankee
Doodle Dandy, Mind the music and
the step and with your girl be
handy".

The Overseer pulls Matilda up, drags her to the door. She
resists him, but it is useless. The Overseer pulls her out
of the pen into the open space.

As he pulls her towards the wooden gate, CHARLES DESLONDES
appears at the window of the pen he is being held in. He
pleads to the Overseer.

The Americans begin the 2nd verse of "Yankee Doodle".

Ignoring Charles, the Overseer opens the gate, Drags Matilda
through. She bites his hand. He releases her. Matilda
runs. The Overseer catches her quickly. He slaps her
several times, then drags her off. Deslondes looks on
helpless.

AT THE BALL

Etienne DeBore walks over to the band stand and speaks to
the musicians. They begin to play "Le Chant Du
Depart". DeBore sings and is joined by Laussat, and their
WIVES.

THE SLAVE PENS

In the Overseers room, the Overseer pulls Matilda
inside. His eyes take in Mathilda's face and body. He
pulls her up, slobbers kisses over her face and neck, his
hands cover her breasts. Matilda fights to no avail. He
undoes his pants.

Under this we HEAR the singing at the ball.

(CONTINUED)

DEBORE, LAUSSAT, VILLERE
 "La victoire en chantant Nous ouvre
 la barrière. La Liberté guide nos
 pas. Et du Nord au Midi La
 trompette guerrière A sonné l'heure
 des combats. Tremblez ennemis de la
 France Rois ivres de sang et
 d'orgueil"

The Overseer pulls up Mathilda's dress and spreads her legs,
 pushes himself into her. Mathilda screams.

From his locked pen, Charles Deslondes shakes the door as he
 listens to his sister's rape.

AT THE BALL

The song continues, more Creoles join the singing. The
 Americans no longer heard, cease singing and
 disperse. Treme is deeply embarrassed, but Claiborne
 smiles.

TREME
 Governor Claiborne, I am so sorry!

CLAIBORNE
 You need not be. In America, every
 voice has the right to be heard.

On the dance floor, Marigny enjoys the scene. Mary Ann
 pulls away from him and storms back to her father.

MARIGNY
 Wait please. What did I do?

Marigny stands dejected. Jean Lafitte comes over to him.

JEAN LAFITTE
 Come, Bernard. You know what they
 say, my friend, no chance at love,
 lucky at cards. Let's put this to
 the test.

Marigny looks after Mary Ann for another moment, then he
 turns to Lafitte. His smile returns.

MARIGNY
 Yes, let's see.

The two men exit the ballroom. The singing continues.

General Wilkinson now stands apart from the other
 Americans. CASA CALVO approaches him.

(CONTINUED)

CASA CALVO

As you can see General, the French will not easily be corralled.

WILKINSON

It is the first day. There are lessons to be learned, on all sides.

CASO CALVO

Governor Salcedo and some others are gathering in a room upstairs. Will you join us?

WILKINSON

If you will wait for me at the staircase, it is best that we not be seen leaving together.

CASA CALVO

Of course. That would be prudent.

Casa Calvo leaves him. Wilkinson waits a moment, follows.

INT. A BEDROOM IN TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

It is a large room with doors connecting to a hallway, and another bedroom. Assembled are JUAN SALCEDO, his son, MANUEL, PERE ANTOINE and RAMON ANGULLO

SALCEDO

(In Spanish, subtitled)

Until we receive instructions from Madrid, we must do everything we can to disrupt this new government.

MANUEL SALCEDO

This is all comes from King Carlos trusting that little Corsican!

PERE ANTOINE

We must keep calm. Nothing will be gained by losing our control.

MANUEL SALCEDO

Exactly what have we gained with our control?

SALCEDO

We are still here, we may still affect a change. The French distrust the Americans, and the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SALCEDO (cont'd)

Americans trust too much in their bravado. We can use all of this.

ANGULLO

We need time and information. Which we can obtain through the ambitions of Clark and Wilkinson.

PERE ANTOINE

They can be invaluable. If no one discovers their duplicity. I think it prudent they deal only with me. As the Pastor of the city, it should not appear unusual.

KNOCKING comes from the door to the hallway. The door opens and Casa Calvo and Wilkinson quickly enter the room.

CASA CALVO

(speaking in English)

Gentlemen. General Wilkinson.

SALCEDO

Welcome General. Come in. We have brought food and drink, sir.

WILKINSON

I did not come here to eat or drink. I would hear what you have to say, and return to the ball before I am missed.

SALCEDO

We would like nothing better, however we are still waiting for one more to join us.

Another KNOCK on the door. Casa Calvo opens the door. Daniel Clark enters.

CASA CALVO

Ah, here you are. Please Mr. Clark join us.

Clark's eyes scan the room and land on General Wilkinson.

CLARK

What the bloody hell is he doing here?

Wilkinson returns a look of equal malice.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY THE TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

CHARLES Leveau makes his way down the hallway. LOUD MUFFLED VOICES can be heard. He stops at a door, lets himself in.

INT. A SITTING ROOM IN TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

This room is next to the one where the Spanish are meeting with Wilkinson and Clark. THE VOICES ARE NOW LOUDER, MORE DISTINCT.

CLARK
(O.S.)

This man cannot be trusted. He changes allegiance more often than he does his trousers.

WILKINSON
(O.S.)

I will not be insulted by this adulterer. Tell me sir, how is Mrs. Des Granges?

Leveau goes to a small settee where his daughter Marie is curled up sleeping. He cannot help but overhear the debate.

INT. A BEDROOM IN TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

Wilkinson and Clark stand face to face.

PERE ANTOINE

Gentlemen, would it not be more productive to concentrate on our present mutual interests.

CASA CALVO

Yes. We are all in serious states due to this latest change of possession by the United States.

WILKINSON

I have nothing to fear. It is I lead this American force?

CASA CALVO

General, it was only six years ago, you swore your allegiance to the court of Spain. Nor do I forget the large sums paid to you.

(CONTINUED)

SALCEDO

As for you Mr. Clark, the lands we granted to you have given you both fortune and influence.

CLARK

What exactly would you have us do?

CASA CALVO

A request was sent to the King to secretly bring a force of arms into Mexico, and into Florida. New Orleans could find itself inside a scorpion's pincher. We require both time and credible information.

INT. A SITTING ROOM IN TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

Leveau listens intently to the conversation in the next room, scarcely daring to breathe.

PERE ANTOINE

(O.S.)

Mr. Clark, we seek the time. Insinuate yourself between Claiborne and the Creoles

ANGULLO

(O.S.)

Create as much friction as you can. They distrust him already. You need only add fuel to the fire.

WILKINSON

(O.S.)

What may I ask do you expect of me?

CASA CALVO

(O.S.)

I should think that would be obvious. We need to know of any plans President Jefferson might have, in addition to Claiborne's fortifications to the city.

MANUEL SALCEDO

(O.S.)

For instance we know of the 400 men you have waiting in Natchez. When they will be brought into the city?

INT. A BEDROOM IN TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

WILKINSON

So you would have me betray both my
President and my command?

Clark laughs.

CLARK

Can you believe this man? It's
like a whore protesting to be a
virgin. At this rate we will be
here for hours.

WILKINSON

My position here is second only to
Claiborne? You would have me place
that in jeopardy?

CASA CALVO

How long would that position
remain, were Claiborne to learn of
your recent intrigues in Kentucky.

SALCEDO

Not to mention the money you have
received at our hand.

PERE ANTOINE

You would be disgraced
General. With no friends to call
on.

Wilkinson paces like a trapped animal. He realizes that he
has no choice.

INT. A SITTING ROOM IN TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

Leveau realizes the full weight of what he has
overheard. He picks up Marie, moves quietly towards the
door.

WILKINSON

(O.S.)

Fine. I will do what I
can. However, I want assurances
that should this enterprise fail, I
will have safe haven in the west.

PERE ANTOINE

(O.S.)

You can rely on our good graces,
General. As we shall rely on you.

(CONTINUED)

At that moment, the sleeping Marie stirs in his arms.

MARIE LEVEAU
Papa. Je dois aller faire pipi.

LEVEAU
Oui, oui. S'il vous plaît être tranquille, Marie.

Leveau opens the door, goes into the hallway.

The door to the other room opens and Manuel Salcedo sees the door close. He goes to the door and opens it.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY THE TREME MANSION - FOLLOWING

Leveau goes quickly down the hallway to the stairs. He turns to see Manuel Salcedo in the door he left. Leveau goes down the stairs. Casa Calvo comes up behind Manuel.

CASA CALVO
(subtitled to English)
¿Sabes quién era?

MANUEL SALCEDO
(subtitled to English)
Fue el productor de añil, Leveau. Llevaba a su hija. ¿Cree usted que oyó?

CASA CALVO
(subtitled to English)
Síguelo, Manuel. No podemos darnos el lujo de correr ningún riesgo.

Manuel goes after Leveau.

INT. A LARGE ROOM IN TREME MANSION - LATER

The room is full. Men and women, young and old, gamble and drink. At a table playing poker are JEAN LAFITTE, JEAN BLANQUE, CORPORAL DAWSON and MICAH LEWIS.

JEAN LAFITTE
I will wager 10. The Spanish never understood this city. But with you Americans, I see great things coming.

(CONTINUED)

LEWIS

Do you? Fold.

JEAN LAFITTE

Yes indeed. I embrace this new government with open arms.

BLANQUE

I agree. Fold. Out of upheaval comes opportunities.

JEAN LAFITTE

For men of vision. Great things await Monsieur...?

BLANQUE

Blanque, Jean Blanque.

JEAN LAFITTE

I am Jean also, ... Clement.

DAWSON

If you two are through, I wager fifteen more.

JEAN LAFITTE

Fifteen? You must have very good cards. Perhaps you have me beaten. But I must satisfy my curiosity, I match your wager.

DAWSON

Your luck has just run out mister.

Dawson smiles broadly, reveals two kings and two queens.

JEAN LAFITTE

Four very strong cards, Monsieur, but sometimes three is more strong.

Lafitte turns over his cards, shows three tens.

DAWSON

Damn! How lucky can one man be?

JEAN LAFITTE

This game requires a touch of guile and cunning. If you wish to trust to luck, you should try the dice.

Lafitte points to a corner where MARIGNY and four other men are squatting on the floor, throwing dice against the wall.

(CONTINUED)

DAWSON

I think not. Look at them. They
look like frogs on a lily pad.

JEAN LAFITTE

Do you hear that Bernard? This
American says you look like a frog.

Marigny raises his head, a smile on his face, but a sharp
glint in his eye. He hops across the floor, croaking like a
frog, sticking out his tongue at Dawson.

MARIGNY

Rebeep rebeep. Better a French
frog, than an American ass.

Dawson rises from his seat and goes to Marigny.

DAWSON

Do you call me an ass!?

Marigny hops to his feet in front of Dawson. He now brays
like a mule. Dawson towers over Marigny.

MARIGNY

Heehawww. Heehawww!!

The room erupts in laughter. Marigny turns, walks back to
the dice game. Dawson is enraged.

DAWSON

You filthy little bastard! You
think you can insult me like
that? I demand that you apologize!

Marigny stops and turns. His face now deadly.

MARIGNY

I refuse.

DAWSON

Then I would have satisfaction!

MARIGNY

Do you challenge me, ASS?!

Dawson slaps Marigny sharply on the face. Several men jump
to their feet to intercede. Lafitte stands by Marigny,
Lewis and Shambaugh step in front of Dawson.

MARIGNY

I will give you
satisfaction. Tomorrow at dawn, at

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARIGNY (cont'd)
the oaks of Bayou St. John. The
choice of weapons is mine.

SHAMBAUGH
Corporal Dawson, remember our
orders. You cannot fight this man.

MARIGNY
It is too late for that. You shall
face me or be deemed a Yankee
coward! As will your comrades.

DAWSON
Do you hear Bart. I cannot turn
now. Will you stand with me?

Shambaugh looks to Lewis, there is no way to avoid this.

SHAMBAUGH
(to Marigny)
You adhere to the Code Duelo?

MARIGNY
Certainly, we are not animals. (**to
Lafitte**) Will you stand with me?

JEAN LAFITTE
In all manner of things, Bernard.

DAWSON
We shall be there toad. What is
your choice of weapons?

MARIGNY
Rapiers, Monsieur Ass.

LEWIS
God help us when William hears.

EXT. THE TREME PLANTATION - NIGHT

CHARLES LEVEAU places MARIE into the wagon. He looks around
constantly as he climbs up onto the wagon.

MARIE LEVEAU
What is the matter Papa?

LEVEAU
It is time to go home to Mama.

He takes the gris gris pouch from his pocket.

(CONTINUED)

LEVEAU

Marie, I want you to hold this for me. It is very important.

MARIE LEVEAU

Papa?

LEVEAU

Everything is fine. Ha Jessy.

The wagon starts forward. Leveau looks behind, sees no one. Marie watches him. MANUEL SALCEDO emerges from the shadows.

EXT. A BALCONY OUTSIDE THE TREME MANSION - LATER

CLAIBORNE alone. SOUNDS OF THE BALL float out. Claiborne raises his eyes to heaven.

CLAIBORNE

Lord, please fortify me in this endeavor. I fear that I am exceeding lacking to the task.

The balcony door opens and ELIZA steps out.

ELIZA

William? It has been a long day. Perhaps we should be leaving.

CLAIBORNE

Oh? Yes. Evan said they will continue until daybreak. The first of many long days to come.

ELIZA

I have no doubt that you shall stand the test.

Claiborne takes Eliza in his arms and holds her tightly.

CLAIBORNE

That is good. I have doubts enough for us both.

EXT. THE BAYOU ROAD - LATER

Charles Leveau drives his wagon. Marie sleeps beside him. All is quiet. Then: THE SOUND OF HORSES GALLOPING TOWARDS THEM. Leveau picks up Marie.

(CONTINUED)

LEVEAU

Marie, wake up now, get into the back!

MARIE LEVEAU

Papa?

LEVEAU

Do as I say. Get down, cover yourself with the blanket.

MARIE LEVEAU

I am frightened Papa.

Marie covers herself.

LEVEAU

There is no reason to be. Come on, let's sing. Shall we sing? *Lavender's blue, dilly dilly, Lavender's green When you are king, dilly dilly, I shall be queen*

Marie sings with him.

LEVEAU/MARIE LEVEAU

Who told you so, dilly dilly, Who told you so? 'Twas my own heart, dilly dilly, That told me so

Leveau takes up his musket and the reins, straps the mule.

THE HORSES ARE GETTING CLOSER.

EXT. THE DUELING OAKS - DAYBREAK

Rays of sunlight pierce through the fog. Beneath three oak trees MARIGNY and LAFITTE wait. A wagon carrying DAWSON, LEWIS and SHAMBAUGH approaches. With them is DOCTOR COX, an army surgeon. The wagon stops, Shambaugh jumps down, he approaches Marigny and Lafitte. Lafitte goes to meet him.

SHAMBAUGH

Well sir, here we are. It is our obligation to prevent this if we can. Will your man stand down, Mr. Clement?

JEAN LAFITTE

Lafitte, Jean Lafitte. I shall ask Monsieur Marigny a last time.

(CONTINUED)

Lafitte returns to Marigny. Dawson, Lewis and Dr. Cox climb from the wagon. Dawson removes his jacket and hat.

JEAN LAFITTE

(CONT)

They wish to know if you will kneel
and kiss the man's derriere?

Marigny just looks at Lafitte with a confident face that says "Never". Lafitte turns to Shambaugh.

JEAN LAFITTE

(CONT)

I fear it is your man who must quit
the field or answer with steel.

DAWSON

Then let us get on with it.

Lafitte retrieves a case and walks with it to where Dawson stands. He opens the case revealing two shining rapiers.

JEAN LAFITTE

First choice is yours.

Dawson picks up one rapier, weighs it, then the other. He takes up the first. He cuts the air.

Lafitte offers the other rapier to Marigny, who takes it up. Lewis steps between the two men.

LEWIS

Gentlemen, at the word, you will
engage until blood is drawn. At
that time the injured party will be
given a chance to stand down and
the aggressor shall then clear the
field, victorious. Understood?

Both men nod their agreement.

LEWIS

Very well then. Stand your marks.

Marigny and Dawson stand about ten feet apart, eyes focused on each other. After a moment...

LEWIS

Engage!

Dawson charges Marigny, rapier held high. Marigny stands firm. Dawson cuts to Marigny's head, Marigny ducks easily, stabs at Dawson's torso, Dawson barely eludes the thrust.

(CONTINUED)

Dawson charges again. Marigny parries several strikes, deftly moving to his left. After one more attempt, Marigny moves so the sun strikes Dawson's eyes, he is momentarily blinded. Marigny steps in, draws his sword across Dawson's thigh. A thin line of blood appears. Dawson CRIES OUT IN PAIN. Lewis jumps between them.

LEWIS

There is blood. That is the end!

MARIGNY

Will you concede that I am the better man. Monsieur Ass?

Dawson glares at Marigny, then his thigh.

SHAMBAUGH

Come now Robert. Stand down.

MARIGNY

Heehawwwwww!

DAWSON

AHHHHHHH!!

Dawson attacks with renewed purpose. He pushes Marigny back, stepping inside Marigny's thrust. He takes hold of Marigny's sword hand, slams him across the face with his other arm. Marigny falls to the ground, Dawson moves in for the coup de grace.

Marigny somersaults back to his knees and thrusts up into Dawson's chest. Dawson falls. Lafitte goes to Marigny, drawing his own sword as he eyes Lewis and Shambaugh. Doctor Cox goes to Dawson.

DR. COX

He is dead.

The four men stand looking at each other.

EXT. CHARLES LEVEAU'S FARM - MORNING

The wagon arrives, comes slowly to a halt. Leveau seated still, there is no sign of Marie. Marguerite runs from the house.

MARGUERITE

Charles! I have been frantic all night. Where have you been? Where is Marie? What has happened?

(CONTINUED)

Marguerite reaches the wagon, looks up at Leveau. His coat is covered in blood from several wounds. He is dead.

MARGUERITE

Charles!? NO! NO!....
Marie?! MARIE!!

MARIE LEVEAU

(O.S.)

*Who told you so, dilly dilly, Who
told you so? 'Twas my own heart,
dilly dilly, That told me so*

Marguerite climbs up the wagon. She pulls the blanket up revealing Marie Leveau alive, gripping the gris gris pouch. She rocks back and forth as she sings.

THE END OF EPISODE ONE
(TO BE CONTINUED)