

THE TABLE OF JERSEY

by

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(Based on Victor Hugo's spirit experience)

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FADE IN:

1 INT. DENNIS'S APPARTMENT/BED ROOM - NIGHT 1

In the dark, Maryse is laying down on the bed. Eyes wide opened, she stares at the window across which the street lighting is reflected on her face. She looks as if she was prone to guiltyness. Laying behind her, Dennis is sleeping. His hand holds Marsyse's hip. Suddenly a noise breaks the silence. A NOISE SOUNDING LIKE THE PERCUSSION OF TWO COCONUTS. ONE KNOCK THAN TWO CONSECUTIVE KNOCKS, THAN THREE OTHER LOUDER, THAN FOUR LOUDER, THAN FIVE LOUDER.

Dennis's hand leaves Maryse's hip and goes to search over a pile of books beside the bed, the alarm clock from where the noise is coming from.

THE NOISE STOPS. We can read on the alarm clock that it's 3.55 AM. Dennis wakes up like someone who hasn't slept enough. He takes a concerned look at Maryse. She seems to be sleeping.

Carefully, he gets off the bed. His bare feet walks on THE WOODEN FLOOR which CRACKS under his steps until he reaches the door. The door is opens and closes as his feet leave the room.

FADE TO:

2 INT. DENNIS'S APPARTMENT/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 2

Dennis's bare feet cross THE LIVING ROOM'S WOODEN FLOOR WHICH CRACKS in the dark as in the previous scene. His hand reaches the wall to turn the light on.

FADE TO:

3 INT. DENNIS'S APPARTMENT/KITCHEN - NIGHT 3

Dennis goes in the kitchen, still half-asleep and goes straight to the coffee machine that his hand will switch on.

FADE TO:

4 INT - DENNIS'S APPARTMENT/OFFICE - NIGHT 4

Dennis comes in the small office, yawning. Two desks against the parallel walls opposes themselves.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: 4

Upon one of them, two monitors and a computer tower that Dennis's hands will switch on. Above the other one, there are shelves filled with books and a laptop on the desk.

FADE TO:

5 INT - DENNIS'S APARTMENT/BATH ROOM - NIGHT 5

Dennis enters the bath room. He is still looking very tired. His hand turns the shower's hot water on.

6 INT - DENNIS'S APARTMENT/BED ROOM 6

THUDS FROM THE PLUMBING are heard in the silent room as Dennis is taking his shower. THE THUDS SOUND LIKE CONSECUTIVE SERIES OF PERCUSSIONS. Maryse is laying on her back, arms crossed behind her neck. She looks racked with remorse.

7 EXT - DENNIS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 7

Dennis's neighbourhood is modern and quiet. Cars are parked in the front of the 3 story building. Only the rooms of the second floor are lit. By one of the windows, we can see Dennis who is leaving the bathroom, a towel around his hips, his clothes on his arm and shoes in his hand. From window to window, we follow him walking to his office.

8 INT - DENNIS'S APARTMENT/OFFICE 8

Dennis comes in the office, leaves his clothes and shoes on the desk opposit to his. Than, he leans over his keyboard, moves his mouse and leaves the room.

A software is opening on the computer's screen. A logo appears : "RO-ZETTA". It represents the Bruegel's Babel tower which starts to fill the entire screen. THE SIGNATURE TUNE ENDS BY THE SOUND OF THE TOWER WHICH IS COLLAPSING.

The logo desapears from the screen where a new window takes place. In the window, the name DENNIS is turning from off line to on line. A contact list appears with many names connected to a flag corresponding to their language. The name of one of them with a Japanese flag, named KIRITA pops up in a dialogue window. As a phrase is being written in Japanese on the screen, a voice comes out of the computer's speakers in a perfect and accentless English, perhaps a bit solemn.

THE VOICE

DENNIS! Are you still up working
at this time of the night?

8 CONTINUED:

8

Dennis comes in with a mug of coffee in his hand. The towel is still around his hips. We notice he is good looking and well shaped.

DENNIS
Hello! Who's this?

On the monitor, the user name "DENNIS" appears. The roman alphabet is composing : "Konnichiwa! Donata desu ka. " Right away, the phrase is recomposed in Japanese fonts. Dennis sits down and looks at the screen.

DENNIS (cont'd)
Oh! KIRITA! How are you doing?

The phrase is being written in Japanese on Dennis screen just as he mentions it.

9 INT - MR KIRITA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

9

The very same phrase is now written on the computer screen of a Japanese man in his fourties reading the message before typing his answer on his keyboard.

10 INT - DENNIS'S APARTMENT/OFFICE ROOM

10

Kirita's answer is being written in Japanese on Dennis's screen while the voice out of the speaker translates :

THE VOICE
I'm fine, thank you! How about you?

DENNIS
I just woke up ! I've an early flight to catch.

THE VOICE
You woke up ? Does that mean that you sleep, sometimes ?

Dennis laughs and starts to get dressed, chatting with Kirita through his RO-ZETTA translating software.

DENNIS
I don't work much more than a Japanese employee in Tokyo, you know.

THE VOICE
Being an american, I wonder how have you have been able to cope for so long?

10 CONTINUED:

DENNIS

I don't know! Maybe because I eat
more sushis than hamburgers!

He laughs again.

11 INT - MR KIRITA'S OFFICE - NIGHT 11

Kirita is reading Dennis's answer and laughs.

12 INT. DENNIS'S APPARTMENT/OFFICE - NIGHT 12

Dennis has just put his pants on and is fastening his belt.

DENNIS

Was everything alright with Ro-
Zetta at today's congress?

THE VOICE

Well... We had a little bug.

DENNIS

Oh really? What was it? New
confusions between B and V ?

THE VOICE

No. B and V are fine now.

Dennis is putting his shirt on.

DENNIS

What is it, though? SI and SHI ?

THE VOICE

No. L and R.

DENNIS

Again? Which words?

THE VOICE

Election!

DENNIS

Election and... Erection!

THE VOICE

Yes.

DENNIS

Damn!! Did they notice?

THE VOICE

You bet they did! 72 erections in an international political congress speech is quite an event that no Japanese present today is going to forget!

DENNIS

(for himself)

Holly shit!

(To Kirita)

How is it possible? These words were in the list double checked by YUKI! I'm certain they were! We even laughed about it!

THE VOICE

So did any Japanese in the audience! We've filmed it, I'll send you the file. They were doubled over.

DENNIS

Exept the customers, I suppose.

THE VOICE

Right! They wondered why they were laughing so much. When they found out, they became really furious.

Dennis is leaving the building, warmly dressed. He walks toward his car in the front of the house while we can hear the end of the previous scene's conversation.

DENNIS

(OFF)

This can't be a coincidence. Someone in the team must have wanted to make a joke. Try to find out how this happened. I'll write to the customer as soon as I'm back.

Maryse is standing at the window watching Dennis who is getting in his car. Her breath is steaming up the glass. With her finger, she writes : FORGIVE ME in the steam.

15 EXT - MARIA WALL HIGH SCHOOL - DAY 15

A Volkswagen Passat enters the school long driveway at the end of which we can read : Maria Wall High School. It is spring time. The building looks old but very classy.

16 INT - MARIA WALL HIGH SCHOOL/FRENCH CLASSROOM - DAY 16

About 20 young girls and boys aged around 17 years old are split in groups of four or five. Laughing, arguing out loud or moving the desks and chairs. Nevertheless, all of them seems to belong to a high social class if we refer to their look and the way they are dressed. Only David is quietly sitting at his desk, drawing with much talent, the character of DEATH.

17 INT - MARIA WALL HIGH SCHOOL/JESSICA'S OFFICE - DAY 17

THUDS COMING FROM THE FLOOR ABOVE are disturbing Jessica, a woman, in her late fiftie who is trying to focus on a letter she reads. THREE KNOCKS AT THE DOOR. Nancy, the secretary comes in the office with the mail and newspapers that she'll bring to Jessica's desk.

JESSICA

What's all this mess up there?

NANCY

Well... Mrs WALL, it seems like Maryse is late again.

JESSICA

Late again? If I remember well, she has only been late three times in ten years.

NANCY

Three times, yes. But within the same week. I don't know if you have noticed but she has been really weird for a while.

Jessica looks worried.

18 EXT - MARIA WALL HIGH SCHOOL - DAY 18

Maryse gets out of the Wolkswagen Passat which is full of boxes and suitcases. She closes the door and runs to the entrance of the building.

19 INT - MARIA WALL HIGH SCHOOL/MAIN STAIRS - DAY 19

Jessica is walking up the stairs. WE CAN HEAR THE CHAOS COMING FROM the french class at THE FLOOR ABOVE.

20 INT - MARIA WALL HIGH SCHOOL/FRENCH CLASSROOM - DAY 20

In the middle of the chaos, Tessa, one of the very good looking girls of the class, takes a look at David's drawing. The way she refers to him, we can guess she is attracted to him.

TESSA

Hi DAVID. It's really impressive!

David pretends he didn't hear

TESSA (cont'd)

Anything wrong? You're so quiet.

While they talk, David keeps drawing.

DAVID

I can feel JESSICA WALL is coming up. She'll be here in a minute!

TESSA

Since when do you fear her?

DAVID

I had my last warning yesterday. Next bullshit I pull, she'll expel me.

TESSA

You've always said that was what you wanted.

DAVID

Right. But I don't want to see my mom beg in Wall's office again for her to keep me.

TESSA

So you can be a good boy sometimes?

David finally looks at her very severely

DAVID

Do you like good boys, TESSA?

The way he stares at her makes Tessa very uncomfortable.

TESSA

What do you mean by "good boys"?

DAVID

Good boys looking or talking like rebels, but good boys anyway ?

TESSA

Well, I guess, yes.

DAVID

Maybe that's why I don't like you.

Tessa stays mouth opened by the disbelief.
Jessica makes her entrance in the french class.

JESSICCA

What's going on here ?! Get back to your place, all of you!!

Every student reaches his/her place in silence. Jessica sits at Maryse desk.

JESSICCA (cont'd)

alright! I was trying to read a letter in my office and I just couldn't because 20 young people who will be part of this country's best colleges next fall were making such a mess that I wondered for a while in what kind of school I was! May someone give me an explanation?

SOFIA

Ms NANTEL hasn't show up yet

JESSICA

Has she forbidden you to quietly revise your french courses?

THOMAS

We didn't know if she was coming today. Maybe she couldn't wake up because she's ill or because...

DAVID

... She got laid all night.

Everyone's attention was focused on Thomas's speech and David spoke changing his voice, using a very deep tone. The two boys's desks are at the opposite part of the class. Thomas's one near by the window, David's near by the door which is still opened. No one saw him except Maryse who just discreetly arrived and surprised him.

She stands at the entrance and stares at him severely. In the mean time, some students discretely laugh about David's comment.

JESSICA
Who said that ?!

The class room keeps silent.

JESSICA (cont'd)
Does the author of this great
conclusion believe that I'm going
to let one of my teachers be
insulted ?

David who is still drawing feels that Maryse is staring at him. He looks at her too and suddenly feels embarrassed. Maryse enters in the class room and walks straight to her desk where she puts her bag down on the floor.

MARYSE
Sorry for being late.

JESSICA
It's alright, dear.

MARYSE
Thank you Mrs Wall for watching
after my class.

Jessica walks to the door. When she crosses Maryse, Jessica puts her hand on her arm in sign of support. Maryse follows her till the door. Before leaving, Jessica turns around to look at the students.

JESSICA
I want the anonymous great
thinker in my office by noon, or
you'll be all punished!

Jessica walks out of the class room and Maryse closes the door behind her. Before she closes the door completely, Jessica turns round to Maryse.

JESSICA (cont'd)
So? You did it?

MARYSE
(With a sad glance and a
forced smile)
Yes. It's all done now.

JESSICA
I'll be waiting for you over
there in the afternoon.

MARYSE
(Almost whispering)
Thank you so much, JESSICA!

21 INT - AIRPLANE - DAY

21

CNN's STOCK SHOTS of George W. Bush's conference on March the 20th 2003 and the first attack in Irak are shown on the airplane's big screen. Dennis is sitting in business class, reading his files. A man beside him notices the Ro-ZETTA's logo at the back of Dennis's folder.

CHARLES
Excuse me? My name is CHARLES
PINEWOOD. I'm one of the Ro-
ZETTA's happy users.

DENNIS
How do you do? I'm Dennis
NIGHTINGALE.

CHARLES
Nice to meet you Mr Nightingale.
Are you one of the Ro-ZETTA
representatives?

DENNIS
Actually, I'm one of its creators
and also one of the many
linguists who work on this
program.

CHARLES
You know, Ro-ZETTA became one of
my number one day to day
instruments since the mobile
phone!

DENNIS
I'm glad to hear that!

CHARLES
How convenient it is to
understand and be understood by
any foreign speaker so
spontaneously! My only regret is
that it only talks and recognises
spoken English.

DENNIS
There are as many kinds of spoken
English as there are foreign
speakers, sir. But I agree with
you on that point and we are
working on it.

(MORE)

21 CONTINUED:

21

DENNIS (cont'd)
 Experimental versions already
 exist in some other spoken
 languages. But as for everything,
 it's only a matter of time.

22 INT - MARIA WALL HIGH SCHOOL/FRENCH CLASSROOM - DAY

22

Maryse is talking to her students who are listening to her attentively. On the black board, key words such as : "18ème siècle, Corneille, Racine, Molière" are written.

MARYSE

Today was our last lesson on the French classical period. We are already late with our program and I want the chapter dedicated to romanticism to be over by Easter. which is only a month away. Last year, France celebrated the 200th anniversary of its main romantic representative : Monsieur VICTOR HUGO and I've decided to focus our study on his work. That's why for next week, I want you to read one of his plays.

THOMAS

Why not one of his novels ?

MARYSE

First of all, because, I'll ask you later to compare that play to a classic one. Second of all, I'm tired of reading my students's prose about The Hunchback of Notre-Dame copied and pasted from the internet movie data base.

The students are laughing.

MARYSE (cont'd)

Or worse: copied from the program of the Broadway show : Les misérables.

THOMAS

You are exaggerating, Ms Nantel! Do you really think we are that stupid?

MARYSE

I wouldn't go so far, THOMAS. But I do think that some of you are a bit too easy going sometimes.

AN ALARM signals the end of the course.

MARYSE (cont'd)
See you next week, everybody.
David, please, stay here!

The students stand and leave the class room. David puts his stuff into his bag and sits in the front of Maryse's desk. She is writing in her agenda and doesn't look at him

MARYSE (cont'd)
Tu vas te dénoncer?
(Are you going to
denounce yourself?)

DAVID
Bien sûr! Je ne voulais pas vous gêner devant tout le monde.
(Of course! I didn't want to embarrass you in the front of everybody.)

MARYSE
How tactful! Why did you say that?

DAVID
I don't know. I thought aloud.

MARYSE
That I got laid all night?

DAVID
Yes. I must have been jealous.

MARYSE
(Finally looking at him)
Jealous?!

DAVID
Yeah. Does that shock you?

MARYSE
No. It's a pretty common fantasy for young people of your age.

DAVID
Fantasies become experience sometimes.

MARYSE
Right. When the fantasy is shared. But I don't have that kind of interest for you.

DAVID

Not yet.

As she didn't hear him, Maryse starts to write again.

MARYSE

Go to Mrs Wall now and keep a low profile! You are in trouble if I may remind you.

23 INT - MARIA WALL HIGH SCHOOL/JESSICA'S OFFICE - DAY

23

Jessica is sitting at her desk, dialing a number on the phone.

JESSICA

(after some silence)

Dennis, this is Jessica. I wanted you to know how sorry I feel about all of this. Although i've lent my summer house to Maryse, please, remember that i'm not taking either side. You're still both my friends and I really hope that this situation is temporary. Please, call me when you'll be back.

THREE KNOCKS comes from the door as she hangs up.

JESSICA (cont'd)

Come in!

David comes in.

JESSICA (cont'd)

Yes?

DAVID

I'm the anonymous great mind who said ... "that."

JESSICA

I know. Come here!

David reaches the seat in the front of Jessica's desk.

JESSICA (cont'd)

Why did you insult your teacher?

DAVID

I didn't mean to insult her. It was just a joke. I know you don't find it funny.

(MORE)

23 CONTINUED:

23

DAVID (cont'd)

But since some people laughed,
somehow it must be funny for
silly minds like ours. But I do
admit I shouldn't have said that
and I sincerely apologies.

JESSICA

You remember what I told you
yesterday ?

DAVID

Yes! I do and if you expel me
that would be just fair. But if I
was you I wouldn't do it.

JESSICA

And what would you do if you were
me?

DAVID

I would find a way to make me
useful for a day of punishment so
I could repair my offence.

Jessica thinks for a while.

JESSICA

Alright! Count on it! You'll stay
with me this afternoon and I'll
make you useful!

24 EXT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE - DAY 24

David is cleaning the windows of the front of a one story
little house surrounded by trees and hedges.

25 SAME PLACE, LATER 25

David is clipping the hedges.

26 SAME PLACE, LATER 26

David is mowing the grass.

27 SAME PLACE, LATER 27

David is washing the front porch.

28 INT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE - DAY 28

Jessica is arranging flowers in a vase. No wall separates
the living room from the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

Large windows on both sides of the house allow a lot of light to enter. The interior is a bit old fashioned but warm. David comes into the house.

DAVID

The porch is clean. Is there anything else I could do?

As he says that, they can hear and see Maryse's car which is parking in the front of the house.

JESSICA

Oh, your teacher has arrived. Bring her stuff from her car to the house!

David at first surprised by Maryse's arrival seems to be glad to see her again.

29 INT - MARYSE'S CAR - DAY

29

Maryse stops her engine and sees David coming out of the house straight to her car. At first, she looks surprised to see him, than, she seems annoyed. She gets out of the car as David is opening the back door.

30 EXT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE - DAY

30

Maryse joins David at the back of the car referring to him in french.

MARYSE

Qu'est-ce que tu fais ici?
(What are you doing there?)

DAVID

Je "répare mon offense".
(I'm repairing my offence)

Jessica appears at the front door.

JESSICA

Here you are! Come in, dear! I've prepared us some lemon tea!

31 INT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE - DAY

31

Jessica comes in the house, followed by Maryse.

MARYSE

Wow! You've given yourself so much to do just for me. You shouldn't have!

Maryse observes the floor and enters the room beside the living room. Jessica has reach the kitchen, where she opens the fridge.

JESSICA

I haven't been in this house since last summer. It needed to be cleaned anyway!

32 INT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE/BED ROOM - DAY

32

Maryse observes the room and lays down on the bed

MARYSE

I would have done it this weekend.

JESSICA

(OFF)

Oh! I haven't told you! I don't have cable TV.

MARYSE

No big deal! You'll keep me up to date on the commercials and the "shock and awe" coverage!

Jessica enters the room, a tray with a tea pot and two glasses in her hands, sits on the bed and serve the tea.

JESSICA

Don't be silly! You'll watch it on the internet!

She gives Maryse a glass of tea.

JESSICA (cont'd)

So brand-new free woman, how do you feel, now?

MARYSE

Free... And sad. Sad for Dennis.

JESSICA

By the way? How did he react ?

MARYSE

I don't know. I haven't told him yet.

JESSICA

You haven't?! Sweet heart! This is not serious!

MARYSE

I haven't found the courage to tell him to his face. I wrote him a letter.

JESSICA

Is this an appropriate way to leave a man you've been living with for so many years?

Maryse stands up with her glass of tea and goes to the window.

MARYSE

I know Dennis! He would have found a way to put the blame on himself when he has nothing to be blamed for. I didn't want to leave him a chance to convince me to stay and I was afraid to change my mind!

33 JESSICA'S FRONT HOUSE - MARYSE'S POV

33

A box on his shoulder, David comes from the car to the house. He looks mysterious and attractive as well.

MARYSE

(OFF)

That's why I ran away like a thief with a short note that says I realized i've never been in loved with him.

BACK TO:

34 INT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE/BED ROOM - DAY

34

JESSICA

Ouch! That's hard.

MARYSE

Yeah... But that's true, Jessica. I left my best friend and i'm also sad about that. I wish we could stay friends but he'll feel betrayed and he won't forgive me for that.

34 CONTINUED:

34

JESSICA

Of course he won't! He is a scorpio!

MARYSE

Oh come on!! You know I don't believe in those things.

Maryse leaves the window and walks to the door that leads to the main room.

35 INT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE - DAY

35

Maryse enters followed by Jessica and surprises David who has the box of a software in his hand. We recognise the Ro-ZETTA logo on the box.

MARYSE

What are you doing?

DAVID

I was just taking a look! That's a cool program!

JESSICA

Is the car empty?

DAVID

No, it isn't.

JESSICA

So? What are you waiting for? Hurry!

36 EXT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

36

Maryse is sitting on the porch, thinking, her cellular phone in her hands. She is hesitating to call.

INSERT

37 CELLULAR PHONE'S SCREEN

37

The screen is lit up on the name DENNIS.

BACK TO:

38 EXT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

38

Maryse sighs and stands up to go into the house.

39 INT - DENNIS'S APARTMENT/OFFICE ROOM

39

Dennis is sitting in front of his computer listening to the political speech sent by KIRITA. We can hear people laugh each time the word ELECTION is pronounced.

THE SPEAKER

Most of the citizens interviewed by referendum thought they should have elections more often. But since women have been taking part in the elections as well...

Behind Dennis, the desk and the shelves are empty. Dennis looks very upset. On the screen, the Ro-ZETTA dialogue window is opening with its specific tune covering the speaker. We can see the name of Maryse preceded by a French and an English flag. The voice of an accentless English speaking woman starts to talk as Dennis's eyes and expression become colder.

THE WOMAN'S VOICE

Good evening Dennis. Do you wanna talk?

DENNIS

It's a bit late for that, isn't it?

THE WOMAN'S VOICE

Do you prefer to talk tomorrow though?

DENNIS

(with a cold but quiet voice)

I don't wanna talk to you anymore. Assume your decision, Maryse! Go your way and leave me alone.

He selects Maryse's name on his screen and blocks her. Then, he hides his face in his hands.

40 INT - JESSICA'S SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT

40

Maryse is sitting on the floor, her back against the sofa, facing her laptop which is on the little low table of the living room. On her screen the dialogue session with Dennis is closed. She stands up and walks to the room, but as she is opening the door, the speaker of her laptop starts to talk :

THE VOICE

Opening Dialogue requested.

Maryse runs to her laptop. She sees the request on her screen. A dialog window from a user with a french flag named VICTOR is awaiting her approval. Maryse seems sceptical but after hesitating a little while, she accept the request.

MARYSE

Hi Victor!

As she says that, "Salut Victor!" is writing on the screen. Victor's replies : "Bonsoir, ma petite." as the speaker says:

THE VOICE

Good evening, little one.

MARYSE

Do I know you?

THE VOICE

Doesn't my name sound familiar to you?

MARYSE

Well the only Victor i've mentioned recently is dead and buried for a looooooong time.

Maryse sits on the sofa and while she is answering, she takes off her earrings and shoes.

THE VOICE

Where I am now, time has no meaning anymore.

MARYSE

(She seems to be having fun)

Would it be possible that Mr Victor Hugo, himself would nicely be chatting with my humble person through the internet ?

THE VOICE

And you don't think it possible that during my lifetime, I could have chatted with the most illustrious dead without all that technology?

MARYSE

(Laughting)

Yeah, with a table!

(MORE)

MARYSE (cont'd)

I've heard of it! The spiritism sessions while he was in exile in Jersey!

THE VOICE

What's so funny about it?

MARYSE

No serious mind really would take it seriously! But... Well... Alright! Let's admit you would actually be Mr Victor Hugo. Why would you come to talk to ME?

THE VOICE

Because I miss you and I'm watching over you.

MARYSE

So we met in my previous live!! Is that what you mean?

The dialog window turns off-line. Maryse stays a while wondering.

(TO BE CONTINUED)