

ACT ONE

Scene One René's Café

(Sound effects: "Allo, 'Allo" theme music. Lights up on the café which is open for business. The café has a main door to the town square [with a bell that rings on entry], a door/exit leading to the back room/kitchen and a staircase leading upstairs. There is a bar area and a number of tables and chairs. RENÉ is polishing glasses behind the bar. On a table at the back of the room are four French peasants, two male and two 'female' (they are actually the British airmen in disguise). The 'females' have their backs to the audience. RENÉ addresses the audience.)*

RENÉ. Ah, I was wondering when you might show up again at the Café René. I bid you welcome, of course, I don't know if you've eaten already but the pâté is particularly good – the camembert however is 'orribly

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warm and runny but I've got a lot to get rid of, so it is of course the 'Dish of the Day'. So why is my cheese so warm? Well, it's because my pantry is also hiding the two escaped British airmen who have not been able to get back to England. If you were party to our earlier adventures, you will remember that we ended the whole escapade with Edith and I as the proud owners of the masterpiece the 'The Fallen Madonna With The Big Boobies' by that master knocker painter Van Klomp. It is now stored in a safe place – sadly it is a *very* safe place because there were so many forgeries made of it no-one is really sure who has the real one anymore.

(During this speech, YVETTE has entered from the back room, and collected empty glasses from the peasant's table. YVETTE approaches RENÉ at the bar.)

YVETTE. *(Seductively.)* Oh René, Madame Edith will be at the market for a little while yet, René, how about we pop in the pantry for a private party?

RENÉ. The café is open, Yvette. I have a business to run.

YVETTE. Oh, my love, how long is it?

RENÉ. *(Puzzled.)* Perhaps less than it was, but the stresses of war do not make it easy.

YVETTE. I mean how long is it since we last spent time alone together? I yearn to feel your powerful embrace once more.

RENÉ. Perhaps later, my sweet. When the café is closed, I might manage a hug on the rug in the snug.

YVETTE. Then later, my Gallic hero. *(YVETTE moves away and continues to tidy.)*

RENÉ. *(To audience.)* My wife Edith still does not suspect that I am having dalliances with my waitress Yvette...

and my other waitress Mimi...there is much going on for a businessman such as myself.

(YVETTE blows RENÉ a kiss as she leaves through the back door.)

Luckily, I am prepared to put in the overtime.

(RENÉ makes to follow YVETTE offstage but is interrupted by the two peasant 'females' pushing their chairs back and standing up in indignation. The two males then stand up and make suggestive actions, and the 'females' both slap the male peasants who leave through the main door.)

What is going on here?

*(The two females turn to reveal they are in fact the **BRITISH AIRMEN, FAIRFAX** and **CARSTAIRS** in disguise.)*

FAIRFAX. I'm not sure what they were suggesting but I certainly haven't done anything like that since Harrow!

CARSTAIRS. Didn't sound like cricket at all, old boy.

RENÉ. *(Unable to understand any of this.)* What are you two idiots doing out here? You're supposed to be hiding in the pantry! What if the Germans were to walk in?

FAIRFAX. What's he saying?

CARSTAIRS. Haven't a clue old boy!

(MICHELLE enters with CRABTREE through the main door. RENÉ jumps at the ringing of the bell.)

CRABTREE. Good moaning.

RENÉ. Oh my God! I thought that we'd had it then!

FAIRFAX. Carstairs! It's those resistance chappies!

