

OLYMPE. Hey.

MARIANNE. NO. *(Talking about Vincent now.)* If you burn this story then everything we've fought for, everything that's happened, every single person that has thrown their life into this will be as blank and mute as the paper you can't seem to fill.

OLYMPE. You seem upset. I get that, but I'm just saying what we know is true: This fight isn't winnable any more. It's unstoppable this violence and—

MARIANNE. Isn't winnable?

OLYMPE. It's not.

MARIANNE. It is.

OLYMPE. It's not.

MARIANNE. *(Furious.)* My husband died for this and you tell me that "this isn't winnable"?

OLYMPE. Wait—what?

MARIANNE. *(Furious sarcasm.)* It's just a game and he lost? NO. No—

OLYMPE. *(She gets it.)* Marianne, wait—

MARIANNE. *It can be won, and it will be won, because people like him died for something real, unlike you and your goddamn stories that you abandon just when it's your time to stand for something.*

OLYMPE. I didn't—I'm sorry—

MARIANNE. They killed him like he was theirs to throw away as they pleased, but he was mine. *He was mine first.*

OLYMPE. Oh Marianne I'm—

MARIANNE. THIS IS NOT YOUR LINE.

OLYMPE. I'm sorry, I'm saying I'm sorry.

Marianne is fucking furious.

MARIANNE. You're always saying, saying, saying, and you never listen.

Because this is all about you. Because you cannot feel anything unless it's staged.

Well I'm gonna blow your mind here and tell you that this might not be *your* story in the end. Yes—Holy shit, the lady who has the

time to sit down and write her little skits *might not be the hero of the French Fucking Revolution.*

OLYMPE. *You came to me, you all came to me, and asked for my help—*

MARIANNE. *And you are failing us because you're not writing what's real. The real world, the world you say you want to change, is too much to bear and you run. You run. You are allowed the privilege of telling stories, of naming yourself but here you tremble, afraid of your own power. Maybe that's why your writing doesn't mean anything.*

OLYMPE. Doesn't mean anything?—I went to the National Assembly myself and—

MARIANNE. Told them what you thought they could handle. It didn't work. Now you're cowering in the shadows, abandoning your friends. Where is my pamphlet, my declaration, huh? You wrote half a play for *Marie-Antoinette* because *she's easy to stage*. Where are my words, *Olympe*? Or am I one of those breathless puppets to which you so often resort.

OLYMPE. You can't berate me and call me false and then beg me to help you.

MARIANNE. I'm not begging for anything from you. I don't need you.

OLYMPE. Finally! I've been waiting for you to declare *your damn self* and stop waiting for me.

MARIANNE. And I'm waiting for you to realize that you can't write the world if you're not in it! You can't change it if you can't see it! And you can't be a hero if you're too scared to show up. Or is this all just another drama you'll never finish?

This chills Olympe.

OLYMPE. At least I'm trying to create something. You're *just watching*.

MARIANNE. *Witnessing isn't just watching.*

OLYMPE. *And fear isn't weakness.* Fear is how you know you're paying attention.

MARIANNE. Maybe real revolution doesn't have time for either fiction or fear.

OLYMPE. *Because you don't think art matters.* You never did—you never did.

MARIANNE. Oh please—I have *always* stood by you.

Throwing every bit of anger at Marianne with this—

OLYMPE. You have *always* judged what I do, and doubted it, and mocked it and truly, in your honest heart, thought that *words don't work*. You would rather have twenty Charlottes in this fight than *one* sane artist because theatre seems to piss you off, but *death doesn't bother you*.

Marianne smacks the papers out of Olympe's hands violently, like she's slapping a face.

Both Marianne and Olympe are shocked that she did.

Beat. Beat.

MARIANNE. If your story is so easy to burn you won't need my help.

Marianne leaves.

Olympe is alone...really alone now.

Freaking out.

Gathers her papers—will she burn them?

No. She can't. What does she do now?

Trying to conjure up a new character...

OLYMPE. Perhaps a...new friend enters?

Nothing.

Or an old one?

Across town trumpets announce...

FOUR.

Marie, standing behind a rail, the ribbons fallen at her feet, defending herself at the Revolutionary Tribunal.

MARIE. Marie enters.

This is not her usual crowd.

Marianne enters, Olympe isn't here.

Charlotte, as Fraternité, in a mask presides.

MARIANNE. The Trial of Marie-Antoinette. This is big. The world

is watching. Even so the prosecutor knows that this is not a trial but a roast as he says:

CHARLOTTE/FRAT. "Prisoner 280, STATE YOUR DEFENSE."

MARIE. Well. I didn't do...it?

CHARLOTTE/FRAT. "The Tribunal accuses the former and immoral Austrian queen of crimes against humanity, morality, and the Republic. These crimes include: Being queen—"

MARIE. Oh, I *did* do that.

CHARLOTTE/FRAT. "Calling the former king a coward—"

MARIE. Definitely did that.

CHARLOTTE/FRAT. "Conspiring with the enemies of France to promote war and destroy the populace—"

MARIE. I did not do that—

CHARLOTTE/FRAT. "Orchestrating orgies at the palace—"

MARIE. No one told me about *that*.

CHARLOTTE/FRAT. "She sent French treasury money to her true homeland of Austria, designed the massacre of Swiss Guards, and—"

MARIE. Well this is *not* hilarious.

CHARLOTTE/FRAT. "And we're not done yet, folks. This woman is also accused of incestuous relations with her own son."

MARIE. NOW YOU LISTEN HERE. YOU MAY PUSH ME BUT DO NOT PUSH MY CHILDREN, NEVER MY CHILDREN, YOU DO NOT. SLANDER. CHILDREN. That accusation is a disgusting lie that *you* dreamt up, not me, which says a lot more about *the dreamer than it does the accused* you sick, pardon my American, DICKS.

MARIANNE. And the women in the room were taken with her passion, for how many of them had been accused of being bad mothers by strangers.

MARIE. You think you're making things better with this charade? But you're not, you're setting us all up for a—All I'm gonna say is watch out for ambitious little emperors whose names rhyme with *Shapoleon*.

MARIANNE. The prosecutor knew he risked losing the crowd so he got right to the point: