

**Title:** Aux cafes chantant[s] = At the singing cafe: vaudeville skit in one scene

**Name(s):** Morrison, James J.

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role-playing  
song title -- "Le Pere La Victoire"  
theatrical life  
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**URL** <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/diglib/ihas/loc.rbc.varsep.s20421>

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■ A U X C A F E S C H A N T A N T ■  
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(AT THE SINGING CAFE.)

VAUDEVILLE SKIT IN ONE SCENE.  
\*\*\*\*\* \*\* \*\*

BY  
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JAMES J. MORRISON.  
\*\*\*\*\* \* \*\*\*\*\*

FOR MARIE, BARONESS VON ZIEBER.  
\*\*\* \*\*\*, \*\*\*\*\* \*\* \*

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1900.  
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(II.)

\*AUX CAFES CHANTANT\*.

Enter Reginald.

Reginald.

Well, this is a singular turn of fortune, when a fellow of my circumstances is denied a few dollars, by a too law-abiding and stingy father. I am forced to earn a livelihood as a waiter in this French Cafe Chantant. It will be alright if some of my set do not discover me.

Enter Alphonse, with dog.

What a stiffness of the face this man possesses. What do you desire in this private dining hall, Sir?

Alphonse.

I represent, M<sup>me.</sup>, the Countess Shinsky Hmph.

Reginald.

One must swallow their palate and sneeze to say that! What does the Countess Shinsky wantsky?

Alphonse.

She's coming to catsky.

Reginald.

Let her comesky.

Alphonse.

Heresky.

Reginald.

Yesky.

Exit Alphonse.

What an awful affliction! There are some things in life worse than being poor. That fellow looks like a man that never would love in his early life and then disgrace his family with an episode at sixty.

Music, without.

What's that? (Goes G. looks out.) Great Heavens! It's Miss Sprightingale, the prima donna, who married the Russian exile, coming here. Now for my French waiter act!

Exit, hurriedly.

Enter Countess and valet.

Countess.

Here. Take Mother's beloved! (Handing dog.) I've just determined

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to go to Europe. It seems that not a manager in America wants me. [It's all through my accursed size. One look and that's enough! I can't see what people admire about little women, who look as though their bodies were not large enough to contain a soul much less a digestive outfit, - and as for form, well, they can't deny me! Mr. Shoman said I had a magnificent, though not Hanson- so I presume he meant my victoria! He was to engage a lady for leads and I think there were three who applied. One woman who weighed about 90 lbs., with a shape like a herring, that you might find in an early morning catch up the Hudson; the other looked like a ringed mackerel, of doubtful years, 110 lbs., with a dress stuffed like a mattress, and no chance of seeing her real face for the paint and powder. The manager came in, I said; - "Are you Mr. Shoman?", the herring said, "I hear you wished a lady for leads." and the mackerel said, "My dear Mr. Shoman- -" (Winks.) The mackerel got the job. Ring for a waiter, Alphonse.

Alphonse rings. Enter  
Reginald.

Goodness, what's this?

Reginald.

Did you ring, Mme.?

C  
Countess.

No. I rang the bell. Don't imagine I'm fresh. Will you kindly tie my shoe? Not that one, - that one. Oh, get out! Give me a bill-of-fare. Don't stand there like a piece of household art. Give me some water. Remove mother's angel, Alphonse! (Giving Dog.) Will you hurry there, waiter?

Reginald.

Yes, Mme.. Here is some Appolinaris!

Countess.

How do you take this?

Reginald.

Through the face. Is there anything else I can do for you?

Countess.

Yes. Go in the corner and converse with yourself for about 13 seconds. That will do. Don't stare! What have you to eat?

Reginald.

Quisque vous voulez.

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Countess.

Don't you get gay with me. Why don't you have that fringe removed from your face? Don't speak! I'm talking to myself and don't expect an answer.

Reginald.

Ah, M<sup>me</sup>., I spik- - !! French!

Countess.

Isn't that nice! Will you laugh in French for a minute? Turn your face away. I don't wish to lose my appetite!

Reginald.

Will you have ze bill-of-fare?

Countess.

I never eat them. O, excuse me. What have you got?

Reginald.

Anything you desire.--

Countess.

What's this? Hors des oeuvres! Ho horse for me! Pate de fois gras! Consomme a' la royal! --Pomme e de terres. I see it all! This bill-of-fare is in French. This waiter's French! I'll try him. ~~o~~ Caroon! Parlez Vous Francais?

Reginald.

Oui, Oui, M<sup>me</sup>.. Je suis un Francais. Un Francais de la ville de Paris, et s'il vous plait, votre serviteur!

Countess.

Yes, yes. I thought so. Now, when I get to Parlez vous Francaise, I have reached my natural limit, but I can't afford to let this waiter think so. I'll read this bill-of-fare or die! Give me some Vermicelli some consomme a la royal, some Julienne, some Creme des sauge', and that's all.

Reginald.

What id a strange ordaino , M<sup>me</sup>!!

Countess.

What do you care, whether it is a strange order or not. Beside, b I am

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a stranger in the place..

Reginald.

But you have ordered five soups, Mme..

Countess.

That's my business. Don't get impertinent, Sir. I want it for the dog. (Aside). I guess I'd better quit. (Aloud). Here hang this bag on that valet and don't disturb his composure. (Business.)

Reginald.

Is that all, Mme.?

Countess.

No. I've changed my mind. Don't bring any soups. Beside it's Friday and I can't eat it. What do you do for a living? O, excuse me. I'm very absent minded.

Reginald.

Mme. is always excusable.

Countess.

There's no doubt about it. That's a pleasing waiter.

Reginald.

Can I do anything for you, Mme.?

Countess.

Yes, yes. You can let me alone. I don't care to eat, and when the proprietor comes in, give him this card, and tell him I desire to see him. I am a songstress, - a chanteuse.

Reginald.

Ah, Vous est une chanteuse! - a songstress! Ah, Mme., I adore you songstress. I also sing. I sang at the Bal National of Frenchmen.

Countess.

Ah! So! and what did you sing at the ball?

Reginald.

Well, in fact, I had quite a nombre of balls. - High balls! And I

(VI.)

sang a song that my grandpere sang to me when I was a little boy.  
My grandpere was in the army of Napoleon.

Countess.

That will be about all for the grandpere. Let us hear the song.

Reginald.

It is called "Pere La Victoire" and is in imitation of M. Paulus, the famous French Chanteur comique. It is a great favorite of mine.

CHANSON — " LE PERE LA VICTOIRE "  
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SPECIALTY.

Countess.

You sing very badly, I think.

Reginald.

I have to thank you, Mmc..

Countess.

I have heard worse.

Reginald.

I am oblige.

Countess.

But not much worse.

Reginald.

You are genereux.

Countess.

I have a dog that can give you cards and spades and win in a walk.

Reginald.

I bow to beauty always.

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Countess.

This waiter is a wise boy. Alphonse! Bring mother's delicious darling thither. (Takes Dog.) My guardian angel! Sing for the homely man. (Singing.) A rue! A rue!— - (Clock strikes.)

Alphonse comes forward.

Alphonse.

The carriage has returned, my lady.

Countess.

G.O.D.? O, certainly not! How stupid! Well, I must be going. Here waiter; take this.— (Giving "tip".)

Reginald.

Mme.! How dare?— Why— (Aside.) What am I saying? I am only a waiter. I say how fair of you. I am doubly repaid in serving you.

Countess.

(Looks at him sternly. Exits.) (Leaves money on table.)

Reginald.

I forgot! I forgot! This is the end of my escapade! She left a "tip". O, what a fool I am! I think I have had experience enough, and like the prodigal I will return; tired of feeding on the husks of pleasure. (Takes off coat. Drops card-case.)

Exit. Reginald.

Re-enter Countess.

Countess.

I'm sure I had a handkerchief when I came in. I must have left it here. Why here is that dollar. Upon my soul! It is the same that I gave that waiter. He disdained it. That is queer, indeed. If that man ever did that in a Broadway restaurant, he would be assassinated by his co-workers some dark night, up an alley, with a lead pipe, on the head. If I worked with him, I would lay the plans. Still, there is something about him that doesn't resemble the ordinary waiter. What's this? (Picks up card-case.) Why it's a card-case! Mr. Reginald Moreaux. Old Barker's son! How strange! It has been some time since I saw little Reggy! Poor Reggy! It is a pity that so much money has nothing to hold it!

Enter Reginald, hunting.

(VIII.)

Countess.

Oh, here is Frenchy again! Garcon! Did y u see a lady's handkerchief here?

Reginald.

No, m'ame.. I did not. I am, myself, looking for a lost article.

Countess.

He seems to have lost his dialect.

Reginald.

I beg you will excuse me!

Countess.

Certainly. But was it this? (Showing hand case.)

Reginald.

Yes ma'am. It is.

Countess.

Sir! How did you come into possession of this? I happen to know its owner!

Reginald.

Who was and is a foolish boy.

Countess.

Say, rather, a bright boy.

Reginald.

Who did not know the value of money until today, but thanks to his own recklessness, he has caught the incidental knowledge and finds an old acquaintance serving him with one, whom he has served with hundreds. Permit me to introduce myself.

Countess.

Reggy Morcaux! You horrid thing!

Reginald.

Fat woman! Beware!

(IX.)

Countess.

What do you here?

Reginald.

I am disinherited and forced to earn my own living.

Countess.

Why don't you do as I did? Go on the stage.

Reginald.

A Fifth Avenue stage? Oh, no! I'll stay here at the singing Cafe. But yet, I might do something on the stage.

Countess.

Why, Reginald, what could you do?

Reginald.

Imitations.

Countess.

Imitations! Of what?

Reginald.

Watch me and I'll show you.

S P E C I A L T Y .  
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Countess.

Oh, that is excellent. Why with a talent like that you might support me in my new travesty on "Sporting Life".

Reginald.

I know it well. I will do my best to assist you.

Exit Reginald.

S P E C I A L T Y .  
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(X.)

"THE TRAVESTY ON SPORTING LIFE."

Enter Reginald.

Reginald.

Ah, so you are here! Do you know why I have sent for you? Not because I could not bring this place to you or for any other stale comedy, but because I want you to restore to me those papers.

Countess.

I have no papers, Sir.

Reginald.

My dear woman, every drama has papers in it. If you have no papers you might as well stop the play.

Countess.

Ah, then, I refuse to deliver them up.

Reginald.

You refuse, woman when you promised Broker Nichols that you would enact the part of a lady, of a Countess! That you would restore to me rights. Just think of my name! My reputation! It will be ruined! It will be lost!

Countess.

If you could lose your reputation it would be the best thing that ever happened you.

Reginald.

But my father! He will forsake me. The end will be-- the prison!

Enter Messenger, with letter.

Ah, there is a letter from him, now! Give it to me, give it to me, I say. (Struggle.)

Countess.

Don't read it! Have mercy! Stop, I pray!

Reginald.

(Reading it.) Troy Steam Laundry. A bill for .26 cents!

(XI.) (.IX)

Countess.

This is really nothing to me! You are becoming tiresome.

Reginald.

But there was a day when you said you loved me.

Countess.

You had money then, but - -

Orchestra plays "When you  
a'int got no money" ect..

Reginald.

I see it all! I am betrayed! And yet, there was a time when I  
thought that- -

Orches. p. "Money never  
runs out".

Countess.

Ah, true. I can not waste words with you. I must be going.

Reginald.

No! You must listen. What have you done with those papers?

Countess.

I sold them. I needed money. You see -

Orches. pp. "Living Easy".

Reginald.

What did you do with the money?

Countess.

Carriages, flowers, diamonds, parties; It went for bills.

Reginald.

Then you bought canary birds?

Countess.

Kindly trouble me no further. I shall have to leave you.

Going?

Reginald.

(XII.) (.IIX)

Countess.

Yes. Going.

Reginald.

At least, give me one kiss before you go?

Countess.

(Striking him.) Take that you disguised lead pencil.

Reginald.

And you, woman, by the pretended love you bore me; by your false carresses; you have made me what I am. From an honest and earnest boy, you have transformed me into such a man.

Countess.

Why, you are raving. You are mad!

Reginald.

No. I am not mad. I'm only batty! But, you beautiful and awful weed, I swear that you will no longer poison the hearts of men with your noxious perfume. You will not treat them as you have done me.

Countess.

My God! You would not take my life! You would not murder me?

Reginald.

Yes. For I have just heard you making love to the Duke of Plainfield.

Countess.

It was not the Duke of Plainfield.

Reginald.

Don't argue with me at this exciting moment. Who was it, then?

Countess.

It was the Baron Ice Trust.

Reginald.

What were you saying to him?

(XIII.)

Countess.

I was begging him for a piece of ice.

Reginald.

Do not tell me that. I am an outraged being.

Countess.

I will ring for help.

Pushes to the bell. Rings.

Reginald.

It will be useless.

Struggle.

Countess.

For God's sake have mercy! Don't. Don't!

Reginald.

Too late! Too late! Ah! Dead! Dead!

She is strangled on sofa.  
Bell rings.

Reginald.

The bell! The bell ..! She rang it!

Business to bell.

Reginald.

(At the portieres.) Come in.

Enter Messenger.

Messenger.

Did some one ring here, Sir?

Reginald.

Yes. I did. Here's a quarter. Chase the "duck".

Curtain.  
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