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<p>&lt;414/c&gt;</p>  <p>Key:  <a href="#">Footprint</a>  <a href="#">ConEn1</a>  <a href="#">Footprint</a>  <a href="#">ConEn2</a>  <a href="#">Footprint</a>  <a href="#">ConEn3</a></p>	<p>of music. By the later stages of the performance he had become increasingly sulky, though the fräulein, wrapped up in her own problems as usual, seemed not to notice. Another pleasure, which Karelius shared with most male members of the audience, was the performance of her sister's understudy. Cast as the gaoler's daughter, she had a pleasing soprano voice and was an adequate actress by the undemanding standards of grand opera. The reasons for her popularity however owed little to her musical or thespian talents. A generously proportioned blonde, she wore a blouse of thin white silk with outrageous décolletage and virtually nothing underneath. Several times during the performance she permitted the most delicious show of her own. It was impossible she should be unaware of the treat she was thus providing for the soldiery, many of whom expressed their appreciation in appropriately ribald terms. After four hours and three acts the performance came to an end. It had not been an unqualified success. Even Karelius, a Beethoven admirer, felt that it could have been improved, though to be fair his attention had often been distracted by Louise Müller and audience reaction to her. There had been no announcement of her substitution, but theatre people were notoriously careless about such things. He had not enjoyed the second half of the show quite as much. Louise Müller's appearances were less frequent, and the fräulein was again showing signs of becoming over-emotional. 'The girl taking your sister's part was deucedly good,' said Lapointe, with, from Karelius' point of view, gratifying lack of tact. Katja Müller blinked back her tears and shot him an angry glance. 'Did you think so? I thought her a trollop.' It couldn't have been very nice for her, thought Karelius, seeing her sister substituted by a woman who had obtained cheap success by such <u>a blatant display of sexuality</u>. But he refrained from overt agreement, telling himself that in view of his own disreputable pleasure it would have been hypocritical. 'Good show, I thought,' said Moreau heartily, as they began to push their way out of the auditorium. 'Pity there weren't more here to see it. Can't help feeling the Grand Army isn't really the ideal audience.' 'They seemed to enjoy the trollop's performance, anyway,' said Fräulein Müller bitterly. 'Ah well, my dear, you must remember they're a long way from home, and many of them haven't had much feminine company for a while. Must admit I rather enjoyed it myself,' confessed Moreau with a laugh. 'Certainly <u>a bit of an eyeful</u></p> <p>at times. Still, the theatre's supposed to be about entertainment, isn't it? Doesn't do to take it all too seriously.' His good humour was so infectious that even the fräulein managed a wan smile. Karelius, about to agree, suddenly turned away in a fit of coughing. 'All right?' enquired Moreau as he recovered. 'Yes, fine, thanks. It was nothing.' Ahead of them a burly figure was emerging into the street. Karelius hoped he had not caught sight of him. For Fedorov was still supposed to believe him to be lying in the mud at the bottom of the Danube. Thiercelin had enjoyed the performance too. The music had sounded exactly like all other music he had ever heard, and the intervals between Louise Müller's appearances had been rather tedious, but the display of her charms had provided more than adequate</p>
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	<p>compensation for the occasional ennui Lefevre had enjoyed it even more, expressing his enthusiasm at the end by shouting, 'Bravo!' standing, and clapping his hands above his head. No-one else had gone quite as far as that, and the self-conscious Thiercelin had tried to look as if Lefevre was nothing to do with him. As they left he was surprised to learn that his colleague's appreciation of the proceedings had not been entirely lecherous. 'Absolutely brilliant,' Lefevre assured him. 'Beethoven's a genius, but those fools in the audience couldn't tear their attention from your lady friend's pumpkins. Mind you,' he admitted fairly, 'they really are quite remarkable.' 'The plot didn't seem too plausible,' Thiercelin ventured. 'Oh, the plot. Nobody goes to the opera for that. It's just a vehicle for the music ...' Lefevre launched into a semi-technical explanation of the latter, accompanied by snatches from some of the arias. 'I dare say you're right. Anyway, to business. We'd better go and see Fräulein Müller again.' 'Was I invited too? I didn't get that impression, Jacques.' 'Just for that you can stand outside in the rain. Might not be a bad idea, anyway. All sorts of people go to see performers after a first night. Apart from Fedorov, that fellow who gave us the slip the other evening might turn up.' 'If they do, should I follow?' 'The mystery man, yes. Fedorov, not unless you see special reason. We'll be waiting for him back at his place, after all. A tantôt.' Thiercelin began</p>
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