



Les formidables aventures de Lapinot: Vacances de printemps

(McConey: Spring Break)

by Lewis Trondheim

<http://comixinflux.com/index.php?view=book&id=12>

Contributors

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[4:1] McConey: Hmm, delightful. This scent of... This scent of... Ah, how should I phrase it? This scent of water. // Alex: Like the scent of adventure, if you'll allow me sir. // [4:2] McConey: Healthy life, my dear Alex // Alex: Until later, Sir. I'll set the kettle boiling for tea. Don't stay out long. // [4:3] Poor Alex. Worries about everything. // [4:4] He treats me like a five year old who's not to be trusted on his own. Ha ha! // [4:5] Damn it, I've told him a hundred times already to make holes in the cap so it stays in place. // [4:6] What a situation we're in now. One moment's distraction and I've already gone wrong. // [4:7] Buggestion. Where's the sea chart? Ah. Turkey, The Azores, Nebraska, Manila. // [4:8] Hmm. One thing's clear. I've not got a chart of this river. // [4:9] No need to panic. I have got this. An emergency handbook for unforeseen situations. Hopefully it'll provide a list of idyllic Sussex guest houses.

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[6:1] McConey: Do you still want to snitch to my parents? // McTerry: No. I'll tell my father. He's a butcher and has lots of sharp knives. // McConey: Forget that idiot McTerry. Look at my engagement present Nadia. // Nadia: Wow! Are those real diamonds? // McConey: I hope so. I swapped my best ball in my mother's jewellery box. // [6:2] I don't know what you want Mr McTerry, but now isn't the time. We're searching for an unbelievably valuable necklace. // [6:3] Miss Nadia // [6:4] But.. Ah! Miss Nadia, weren't you five years old then? // [6:5] Nadia: That was a long time ago, just like for you. // McConey: Yes, perhaps. Ah, probably. Ah, could be. // [6:7] Nadia: Don't you want to pull in? It would be easier to talk. // McConey: Of course... // [6:8]: The current's not bringing me into the bank. apart from that I've got a little heart problem.

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[8:1] Nadia: Sorry? // McConey: Oh, not you Miss Nadia, the rope. Such a nuisance of a rope. // [8:2] A double reef knot has spontaneously formed around my foot. Hmm. Have you perchance got a sharp Swiss knife with you? // [8:3] No need, I've got it. So, you were saying Miss Nadia? // [8:4] Nadia: I was asking why it's been so long since you've come back here. // McConey: Oh I only spend my holidays here. // [8:5] These will be my last carefree moments of peace. // [8:6] I've completed my studies at the Royal Academy, and Mother wants me to start working from July. // [8:7] Nadia: I understand. Are you going to work in your father's bank? // McConey: Oh no. I'm a (mumbles) // [8:8] Nadia: Pardon? // McConey: (mumbles) // Nadia: Sorry? // [8:9] Artist // [8:10] Nadia: You're an artist. That's fantastic. // McConey: That's a catastrophe, you mean.

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[10:1] Nadia: My dear friend, what can I say? // McConey: Nothing Miss Nadia. Oh-oh. There's always something else. // [10:2] McConey: It seems as if my boat has decided to make for the mill on its own. // Nadia: Dear God, yes. // [10:3] McConey: How will I get home? Alex will be back soon, and he'll be worried in the night? // Nadia: Why don't you crawl through the hole in the hedge? // [10:4] Well, who'd have thought? Look Miss Nadia, the hole's still there. // [10:5] McConey: So real, so tangible, like before. // Nadia: Mr McConey // [10:6] McConey: Uh, yes? // Nadia: Will you come to tea tomorrow afternoon. Around four o'clock? // [10:7] McConey: Of course, Miss tea... Tomorrow at four Nadia. I'll have to hurry, 'til then. // Nadia: Until tomorrow, my dear. // [10:8] Ha ha. I remember back then when I was such a little idiot. // [10:9] Times have changed. I'm not so little anymore!

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[3:2] Good Evening // [3:3] Ahem // [3:4] You're like anyone else, right? You ask yourself how love comes to those in love and why unrequited hearts are still thankful for their slavery. Well let me tell you the story of a young Englishman and how he fell in love. // [3:5] We find ourselves in the English countryside in 1870. // McConey: Shall we check again my dear Alex? // Alex: Exactly sir, we'll check again // [3:6] McConey: Spare oar, sail, life-saving equipment // Alex: Yes // McConey: Sextant, compass, assorted navigational charts... // Alex: Yes // [3:7] McConey: Carrot cakes, tea, chocolate, monocle, covers, change of pullover, small flask of rum, sweet water, buoy, spare buoy // Alex: Not so fast... Sir, spare buoy, yes // [3:8] Alex: I think that's everything, Sir // McConey: Perfect. It's a favourable weather forecast, no cyclone in sight... // What do you think Alex? // [3:9] Alex: I think you'll have a lovely trip, Sir. // McConey: Don't say that old chap, it's unlucky. // Alex: Oh! Yes. Too late.

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[5:1] Shit. The print's miniscule // [5:2] Yooo hoo. Little boat // [5:4] Mr Hare. Are you the dapper Captain? // [5:5] McConey: Ah, good day Madam. // Nadia: Ha, ha ha! Don't you recognise me? It's Nadia. // [5:7] Nadia? // [5:8] McConey: It's still true Nadia? We'll get married when we're grown-up? // Nadia: I promise. I'll let my parents know. // McConey: And what about those idiots Richardson and McTerry? // Nadia: Ah! // [5:9] McTerry: I heard you call me an idiot and that you want to marry Nadia. // McConey: Don't hit me McTerry. // McTerry: I'll tell your parents // McConey: If you do that I'll hit you. // Nadia: They're fighting... Overme!

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[7:1] Nadia: Where should it go then? // McConey: Well, what I had in mind was to head to the old mill and back. // [7:2] Nadia: To the old mill? // McConey: And back. I like taking little excursions. // [7:3] Nadia: I see that. You've not changed. I'm really happy to see you again. // McConey: Yes, me too. Above all because I took a wrong turn. // [7:4] Nadia: How are your parents? // McConey: Oh dear Miss Nadia, I hardly dare think about it. // [7:6] Nadia: Heavens! You don't want to say that they're... // McConey: Yes. // [7:7] Nadia: My God! How terrible! // McConey: Oh, no // Nadia: But how could that have happened? // McConey: Quite unexpectedly. // [7:8] As mother learned from shopping at Smarks and Pencer she said to me "listen darling, you'll recover alone in the country." // [7:9] Recover myself! As you can see, I'm not very sensible. // [7:10] Nadia: Then your parents are still in good health // McConey: They have boundless good health. Does that bother you? // [7:11] Nadia: Never mind. Shall we walk a little? // McConey: Okay // [7:12] Nadia: I don't want to be indiscreet, but why have you come back after all these years? // McConey: Ohh. Such a nuisance.

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[9:1] Nadia: It's really a catastrophe, to be hanging one day in the National Gallery between Gainsborough and... I don't know... another English artist. // McConey: Yes, right. // [9:2] I wanted to find myself in the Academy of Science between Newton and... another English scientist. // [9:3] I was a born scientist Miss Nadia, don't you remember? I loved being hands on. Dissecting planets, observing frogs through a telescope, discovering new illnesses... It was my calling. // [9:4] On the day I confided in my mother she replied "Out of the question. We've got enough rough edges in the house. You'll be an artist my darling. // [9:5] spent five unending years at the Royal Academy. The professors hated my microscopic style and criticised my motives. "Rainworm dissected lengthwise", "Battle of the amoebas" or "Abduction of the enzymes". The old gits. // [9:6] McConey: And here I stand with diploma and ready to spend the rest of my life painting naked women reclining in large, light hallways." // Nadia: My poor friend. // [9:10] The only concession my mother made was a two month holiday here accompanied by our faithful Alex. From the first of July - that's a Tuesday - I'll be painting for sixty years. Ah Miss Nadia, I believe my soul strings are sundered and my heart is with them, drifting away.

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[11:2] There we have it. That's all it takes for two hearts to entwine. // [11:3] But wait, see how it continues. // [11:5] Alex: You've not started on your carrots. Aren't you hungry sir? // McConey: I don't know what's wrong with me, Alex. // [11:6] I spent a few minutes talking with Miss Nadia, and since then I've not eaten or slept and have no lust for life. I can only think of Miss Nadia // [11:7] Alex: Oh, I understand. You've fallen in love. Congratulations sir. // McConey: You're congratulating me on falling ill? // [11:8] Hang on a minute. You said fallen in love? What's that? // [11:9] Alex: The symptoms are exactly what you described Sir. It was like that when I met my blessed wife Mrs Margaret. With her I... // McConey: You don't mean the fat Mrs Margaret? // [11:10] Alex: Hem // McConey: Fallen in love. How about that.

[12:1] McConey: Tell me my good Alex, if everyone who's fallen in love stops eating and sleeping like you say don't they become an unloving corpse? // Alex: I wouldn't know about that, sir. // [12:2] Alex: The reverse is usually true. The man in love bubbles with enthusiasm for the joy of life. // McConey: Fantastic. A condition that allows men to drag themselves above nature. // [12:3] McConey: Have we any books about this in the library Alex? // Alex: You mean works about love, Sir? // [12:4] Alex: There's nothing else. Every book in the world is about love. // McConey: Really? // [12:5] McConey: In my textbook comparing the anatomies of butterflies and amphibians there's nothing about love. Let's see... "Romeo and Juliet". // [12:6] Hmmm... Yes... Hmmm // [12:7] McConey: This work doesn't seem strictly knowledgeable, but I'll take a gander at it anyway. // Alex: A good selection Sir. It's said that Mr Shakespeare knew his way around the vagaries of the human soul. // [12:8] McConey: Really. And what's this mean? Who is this bloke talking to? // Alex: I believe the lovestruck young man is sharing his feelings with the moon, sir. // [12:9] McConey: He's speaking to the moon? And it answers him? Ha, ha, ha. // Alex: Naturally sir. It's always listening. // [12:11] Alex, bring my coat.

[14:1] My poor friend. Prepare yourself for the most tormented night of your life. Obsession raises perception and tonight my young rabbit you'll transform Nadia into a Goddess. // [14:3] Damn! // [14:4] I can't get to sleep. It's Alex's fault. Him and his metaphors. // [14:5] I'll use the time to write a little note. Let's see... "Dear Mother and Father". // [14:6] Hmmm // [14:7] Your eyes are two golden beetles. The... The... // [14:8] Eyes, beetles? No, that doesn't work. // [14:9] Miss Nadia, oxygen doesn't possess the lightness of your laughter, nor the cleanliness of your... of your... Come on! I need some inspiration. // [14:11] Shut!

[16:1] Alex: But it's only 7.30 in the morning. You've enough time sir. // McConey: Oh, 7.30. Yes, that's right. // [16:2] McConey: Alex, you're right. I've fallen in love. // Alex: I'm happy for you and congratulate you from the bottom of my heart sir. // [16:3] Hm. You already congratulated me yesterday, and I haven't slept a wink all night. Won't I be able to sleep tonight either? // [16:4] The entire night was taken up writing. I tried 1653 times or thereabouts to produce a love poem. // [16:5] Can I suggest you use your time this gorgeous morning to recover a little? // [16:6] Alex: A little walk, a little painting perhaps. // McConey: Okay, why not? // [16:7] It's curious Alex // [16:8] What's happened to nature since yesterday? Everything seems so graceful and charming. So clean. // [16:9] I feel inspired, my dear Alex. Above all I hope I'm not disturbed on this gorgeous morning. // [16:10] Alex: Have you got everything you need, Sir? For example a tube of red. // McConey: I'm fine. You can go now.

[18:1] Now, let's see. What should I wear at tea time to make the proper impression? // [18:2] Definitely not that. Deja Vu. // [18:3] Too smart. // [18:4] Too dumb. // [18:5] Too sporty. // [18:6] Damn. I've already tried this. // [18:7] Too sentimental. And too small apart from anything else. // [18:8] Too feminine. // [18:9] Alex!! // [18:10] Again!! What a mess // [18:11] Let's see... // [18:12] Exactly right for the circumstances.

[20:2] I hope Miss Nadia's as jittery as me. // [20:3] Then we could study this love thing together. // [20:4] Yes Victoria? // [20:5] Victoria: It's almost 4 o'clock, miss. Teatime. // Nadia: Already? What a nuisance. // [20:5] Victoria: Did you hear? It's ringing again. // Nadia: Bother. Let them in, but tell them I'm not ready yet. // [20:6] Victoria: Miss Nadia says could you wait in the drawing room, please, as she's not ready yet. // McConey: Yes, certainly. // [20:7] Nadia: Victoria, quickly. Run my bath. // Victoria: Ah, the final stage. // McConey: How. How, er, wonderful // [20:8] It... // [20:9] ...can't be.

[22:1] McConey: I insist that both of you leave. I'm Miss Nadia's choice and... // [22:2] McConey: And I'm her beloved and demand that you both leave. // Richardson: I'm her lover. Both of you get lost. // [22:3] Extortionist! Troublemaker! Warmonger! Mummy's boy! Zombie! Trader! // [22:4] Victoria: I think the gentlemen are becoming impatient. // Nadia: Yes, yes. I'm coming. The powdering took a bit longer, but I'm ready now. // [22:6] Richardson: Ah! Ahem. A pair of flowers Miss Nadia. // McConey: Here. I've got some as well. // McConey: And me. What happened to my bouquet? // [22:7] Nadia: I'm not happy. I leave you alone for two minutes and you discuss politics. Typical men. // All: Ahm // [22:8] Richardson: Sorry Miss Nadia. // McConey: We didn't do it on purpose. // McConey: It won't happen again. // [22:9] Nadia: You should know that all three of you are my friends and I invited you all to tea because I thought we'd have a nice time together. // Richardson: Of course. // McConey: We've just been having a little fun together.

[13:1] Alex: You're going out sir? // McConey: Exactly. I'm going to have a word with the moon. // [13:2] Think about it my good Alex, I've succumbed to this illness and I can use it for my studies. // [13:3] Ha ha. // [13:4] Ahem... Ah, hallo. // [13:5] So, I've two or three questions on the topic of love for you. // [13:6] Could one say that the condition of love corresponds with three daily meals? And if so, savoury or sweet? // [13:7] And again if so, are there other flavours? And can one choose the aroma? And does Miss Nadia feel anything for me? // [13:9] Okay, one must obviously take it as it comes. // [13:10] Ahem, the same question. // [13:12] Hmm. Perhaps I'm not in love enough, but this story of the conversational heavenly body is obviously an exaggerated metaphor. That Alex. Time for bed.

[15:1] The hours of darkness, although taking longer, eventually passed. // McConey: Crap, crap, crap. // [15:2] Miss Nadia... Nadia... Nia Dia.. Dia Dia... Gna Gna... Da Da... Do Do. // [15:3] Okay, I've tickled my muse enough for today. Now for bed. // [15:6] Hmmm. Who is it? // [15:7] Breakfast and a good morning sir. // [15:8] I'm happy to see you up already sir. As my father and his fither before him used to say "The man who gets up early sees the poplar grow". // [15:9] Or was that the guy who owned the Chinese laundry? // [15:10] Alex: Would you like tea, sir? // McConey: Tea!!! // Alex: Or would you prefer coffee, Sir? // [15:11] McConey: THE TEA, THE TEA. // Alex: At once, Sir. And only the best as served to Kings // [15:12] To the devil with kings. At 4 o'clock this afternoon I've been invited to tea with Miss Nadia.

[17:1] Hello // [17:2] During the day I replace the moon. // [17:3] I only wanted to say, it's mid-day. // [17:4] Alex: I only wanted to say, sir, that lunch is ready. It's a ragout of field thyme with cooked carrots and a mountainhouse sauce. // McConey: Take a look, Alex // [17:5] I was never as good as this. Look at this picture. What do you think? Brilliant, no? Honestly? // [17:6] Alex: I like it a lot. The cow on the right looks so rustic and peaceful. So idyllic. // McConey: What cow? // [17:7] McConey: Those are two amoebas sitting in the high grass fluttering their long eyelashes. // Alex: In that case one of them has very long ears. // [17:8] Yes. Hmm. My glimpse of nature was never so lyrical and swarming, right? // [17:9] McConey: Well, if it's lunch time already I must make haste. // Alex: But that's not right. // [17:10] What about my ragout? // [17:11] What ragout? I'm not hungry.

[19:1] McConey: I'm ready. // Alex: It's three long hours to wait before teatime, sir. // [19:2] McConey: Ah. Well, I'll hang about in the hallway. // Alex: As you wish, sir. // [19:3] McConey: What are you doing Alex? // Alex: I'm trying to straighten your knot, sir. If you could only shake a little less. // [19:4] McConey: I can't do anything about that. I'm a bundle of nerves. // Alex: That's completely normal symptoms, Sir. // [19:5] Hm. Interesting // [19:7] McConey: A potential problem has just occurred to me. What if Miss Nadia isn't displaying the same symptoms? // Alex: But Sir // [19:8] Alex: I'm sure your feelings for Miss Nadia will be reciprocated. If I can offer a tip, you must be truthful with her. // McConey: And how do I do that? // [19:9] Alex: Well when I first got to know Mrs Margaret I looked her in the eye and said "I love you". // [19:10] I understand. A truly inspiring speech. // [19:11] McConey: And how did she reply? // Alex: "I love you as well". // [19:12] A talkative person. Have you ever played "the person who speaks four words loses"?

[21:1] McConey: The idiot McC Terry, the butcher's son. What are you doing here? // McC Terry: McConey. You! That's not on. // [21:2] McConey: You dare dirty Miss Nadia's carpet with your fat dog's feet? // McC Terry: Look at yourself you wretched jumper. // [21:3] McC Terry: At least I was invited to tea. I didn't consider for a minute that I'd bump into you again at teatime after all these years. // McConey: You were invited as well? // [21:4] McConey: Unlikely. I don't believe it. // Richardson: Neither do I. // [21:5] Victoria: Only a little more make-up. // McConey and McC Terry: Richardson // [21:6] McConey and McC Terry: What do you want here? // Richardson: That's what I was going to ask. I've been invited to tea. // [21:7] McC Terry: You as well. How big is this teapot? // McConey: Gentleman, you're surplus here. I ask you... // Richardson: You're both surplus. // [21:8] McC Terry: I consider you both to be surplus. // McConey: That makes six surplus people McC Terry, but there's only three of us. Talk some sense.

[23:1] McC Terry my old friend you inherited your father's butcher shop after he was bitten by an angry chicken. // [23:2] Richardson, faithful Richardson, started off wanting to go into a monastery and you're now a Captain in our glorious army. // [23:3] And you, Mr McConey, my childhood sweetheart, who will one day perhaps hang in the national gallery between Gainsborough and... um... another English painter. // [23:4] Nadia: My three unique friends, from whom I'd find it hard to choose should I one day think about marriage. // Richardson: But we could talk about that over a nice cup of tea. // McC Terry: Yes // [23:5] No, I'm very disappointed with your conduct. // [23:6] Nadia: Gentlemen, you can forget about tea. // McC Terry: The biscuits as well? // [23:7] Nadia: I suggest we have a picnic by the river on Sunday. Are you interested? // McC Terry: All together? // McConey: With both the others? // Richardson: Okay. // [23:8] Nadia: But I don't want any petty misunderstandings between you. // McConey: But that wasn't a petty misunderstanding. // [23:9] Richardson: We promise to behave Miss. // McC Terry: I'll bring a good rabbit paté with me. // McConey: Only if you want a starring role in the installation 'dog run over'.

[24:1] Oh dear. // [24:2] Alex: Was the conversation heated, or was she taken ill? // McConey: No, nothing like that my good Alex. // [24:3] It didn't come to anything. These two idiots from the distant past turned up and prevented me from saying anything. // [24:4] Alex: Which idiots were these, sir? // McConey: McTerry and Richardson, my childhood arch-enemies // [24:5] Oh, those idiots. // [24:6] McConey: They stood by her side as if betrothed. // Alex: Shocking. // [24:7] And next Sunday we should all go on a picnic together. What do you say to that? // [24:8] Alex: I could prepare a carrot paté. // McConey: They'll impress Miss Nadia with war adventures and bulging receipt books. What can I do? // [24:9] Alex: Don't become depressed sir, we've got other talents. // McConey: You mean you and I Alex? // [24:10] Alex: No. We'll work hard sir, and by Sunday you'll be the most accomplished drawing room seducer in the district. // McConey: I fear Alex that the picnic won't take place in the drawing room.

[26:1] Nadia: what a delightful setting. // Richardson: Beautiful. // [26:2] And these leaves. What a wondrous herbarium we could make from them. // [26:3] Alex: Shall we take things in hand, sir? // McConey: Oh, yes. // [26:4] Here's a boat. Would you like to take a little trip? Only you and me. Without... Not if you don't want to. // [26:5] McConey: Shall we eat first? // McConey: That depends on Miss Nadia's appetite. // [26:6] Nothing better than a short ride. I've brought two horses with me. Entirely by coincidence.

[28:1] Alex: I did bring a bottle of Pommard with me. Shall I? // Nadia: Please do. // McConey: Gladly // [28:2] McConey: Isn't he amazing, my butler Alex. My rock. // [28:3] He's irreplaceable. // [28:4] He's so attached to me. Me, his good master. And he saves any situation. // [28:5] Ah. Hm. // [28:6] Mmm. Thank you Victoria. Tell me Richardson, you must have lived through unbelievable adventures in India. // [28:7] Ah. You can definitely say that. Ah, India... // [28:8] A world of contrasts. // [28:9] A place of magic and mysteries... Ahm... You have to live with the wild pride of the tribes... the strong winters in the North... The fakirs... ahm, and the tigers... // McConey: Oh, man. // [28:10] Fascinating. Which region were you stationed in? // [28:11] In Bombay. I was a secretary in the Prince's palace. But I also occupied myself in the library.

[30:1] Can any of you climb up a tree like this? // [30:2] Any child can. // [30:4] I can do that as well.

[32:3] Made it. // [32:4] Moon: It's you! What are you doing here? // McConey: When I spoke to you before you didn't hear me, so I climbed higher. // [32:5] I want to know exactly what love is. And, listen up, no excuses. I want concrete information. // [32:6] What do you see there young rabbit? // [32:7] Is that meant to be my lucky star? The one that brings luck for me and Miss Nadia? Is it? // [32:8] Is that what you think? Isn't a planet anymore, an energy producing star, one of the things you used to study through the telescope and give names like 'gamma' or 'antares'. // [32:9] McConey: um // Moon: You see how quickly everything has changed? // [32:10] The world is the same, but you're living another story, your story, and it's a love story. // [32:11] Consider that your chemical formulas have completely lost their charm, and you can be completely stunned by the smell of a flower. That's the strength. // [32:12] McConey: The strength? // Moon: The strength that's brought you up here and against everything you know and value. // [32:13] Now I'm speaking to myself. Is it the same illness?

[25:1] Despite that, the training began on Tuesday. // McConey: Miss Nadia, the tea is priceless. Oh, darling, if it weren't a breach of decorum I'd even enjoy it at night. // Alex: Not 'darling' sir, 'darjeeling'. // [25:2] Oh yes, I thought... // [25:3] Wednesday // McConey: Your eyes are like petri-dishes Miss, um, Alex // Alex: Perhaps a pair of thousand strong flickering flames would be better. // [25:4] You've a God-given talent for dancing Miss Nadia. // Alex: Thank you sir. // [25:5] McConey: I'm not talking to you, I'm talking to Miss Nadia. // Alex: Of course. // [25:6] Thursday // Do you know Miss Nadia... // [25:7] McConey: If we were stranded alone on a desert isle I'd gladly complete my herbarium with you. I'd select tropical ferns, and you could collect unknown leaves. // [25:8] WE could seal or love with the sale of botanical works. // [25:9] Friday // McConey: I love you Miss Alex // Alex: At last. I'm delighted to hear this sir. // [25:10] Saturday // Alex: I think we're there. We've broken through the retarded repressions of your life, believe me. // McConey: What big words Miss Nadia. // [25:11] And finally, Sunday

[27:1] McConey: Are you mad Richardson? You're ruining the day. No, a ride in the carriage is what's called for. // Nadia: McConey, we've just arrived in the carriage. // [27:2] McConey: Exactly, so, the boat like I just said. // McConey: But haven't you thought about the swing? // Nadia: Listen. // [27:3] Richardson: Yes, listen. Miss Nadia wants to be alone with me to listen to me, so let us be. // McConey: No way. She doesn't want the dandruff from your fur on her dress, a little stroll, my dear? // McConey: How about going for a jog Miss Nadia, but just us? // [27:4] Alex: My lady and gentlemen, the picnic is laid out. // McConey: mm // Nadia: Good. Let's eat. // [27:5] McConey: I've bought a couple of good bottles of wine with me. // Richardson: Oh good, pass them here. // Nadia: I take a drop occasionally. // [27:6] McConey: What's happened? // Richardson: Oh what a shame. Your nice basket. // [27:7] McConey: Richardson you did it. Without doubt. I'll make you... // Richardson: Yes? What my friend? We heard. Is there something wrong? // [27:8] McConey: If you don't want to get dirty, watch out. // Nadia: Oh, for a moment I thought... // McConey: I hope the drunken ants don't bother us.

[29:1] I can tell you of an amazing incident that occurred in the streets of Calcutta near the palace of Wazir Khan. There was a wizened madman dressed in rags, and for a few rupees he'd predict your future by looking into the skull of an ape. // [29:2] I followed him into the darkest corner of a Chandookhana, one of those opium dens. The old man gripped my hand. The smoke took my breath away and I prayed to heaven to send a gentle breeze through a window. Then the old boy started to speak in his rattling voice... // Nadia: yes? // [29:3] He said "soon, you handsome young white man, you will marry a woman and make her very lucky. Her name begins with an N and ends with an A. // [29:4] Richardson: What do you think Miss Nadia? // Nadia: ... um... // McConey: Perhaps he meant Natasha, the maid that left your parents house so quickly. // McConey: Oh, what a beautiful example of an Apollo. // [29:5] Nadia: What did you say MrMcConey? // McConey: An Apollo Fritillary. A wonderful butterfly. Come quickly and see. // [29:6] Nadia: Oooh. It is nice. // Richardson: But... That's just an ordinary butterfly. // McConey: Look.

[31:2] It's a little late, but here's a cup tea that might cheer you up. // [31:3] McConey: My dear Alex, it'll take more than a mixture of dried leaves in hot water to cheer me up. // Alex: Oh, one doesn't talk about tea like that. You must have reached rock bottom. // [31:4] No, I'm not at rock bottom. We didn't throw each other in the water. Or we could have organised a mud fight to make Miss Nadia smile. // [31:5] Alex: But didn't you have the mud fight after the jumping? // McConey: Oh yes, so it was real. // [31:6] Ah sir, love makes us do the most ridiculous things. // [31:7] Certainly, but what cure is there for love? // [31:8] Alex: If it's not reciprocated there are two solutions. The first is to forget your beloved. // McConey: No, no, totally impossible. No, and no again. What is the second? // [31:9] Alex: Death. // McConey: Mmmm... forgetting. Not such a bad idea.

[33:1] An illness that someone can only sort out themselves. It's remarkable that with all our intelligence everything changes so rapidly. And why? // [33:2] Because we've grown up. // [33:4] I doubt it. // [33:5] But it's so difficult to throw off the past without knowing what will become of us. // [33:6] Everything was so simple earlier. We played at love and marriage. // [33:7] Yes, a game. And the rivalry with McConey and Richardson was also a game. // Voice: Yes // [33:8] McConey: It was so easy to suggest feelings without experiencing them. Love, sadness, joy, jealousy... // Voice: Wretched childish feelings. // [33:9] And today, finally we meet the ghosts in the night and sacre them away, one after the other. // Voice: And we discover the treasures that have awaited us since childhood. // [33:10] And what treasures. We're unlucky like never before, and overly lucky.

[34:4] I remember when you were a child you hesitated to jump from a wall sir. // [34:5] McConey: My dear Alex, have you ever gone to sleep as a child and woken as an adult? // Alex: I don't know anymore sir. The truth of love started for me when I was eight years old. This transition is indistinct for me. // [34:6] Hmm. What luck // [34:7] Alex: Would you like to visit town, sir? I need to pick up a few things and we can chat a little along the way. // McConey: To town? On foot? // [34:8] McConey: That's probably some distance. The ideas you have today! // Alex: I've done it every day for years. I'm sorry to have ripped you out of your sleep.

[36:1] McConey: And besides, should I leave Miss Nadia in the claws of my rivals? That's intolerable. // Alex: Certainly, but I fear that in Miss Nadia's eyes at the moment you stand on the same step as the gentlemen McC Terry and Richardson. // [36:2] Alex: And that step is located comparatively low. // McConey: So? And? // [36:3] Well, perhaps it would make sense to make your peace with the other gentlemen and find out which of you Miss Nadia is most likely to marry. // [36:4] McConey: A very astute insight Alex. But what if it's not me? // Alex: Then you should retire gracefully. Love is also a sport. // McConey: Well seeing as I'm the only one who earns no money, I could lose. // [36:5] McConey: Is there another solution? // Alex: Yes. You could challenge the others to a duel and eradicate them from the English countryside. // [36:8] Mr McConey // [36:9] McC Terry: It isn't enough that you run me down. Now you're spying on me as well. // McConey: Um, no. No. // [36:10] McC Terry: Get lost. There's nothing for you here. // McConey: Wait a minute. What are you hiding behind your back? // McC Terry: Nothing. I've wrenched my arm.

[38:1] Victoria: Good morning miss. Did you sleep well? // Nadia: Is it mid-day already. // [38:2] No, only 8 o'clock, but there was a letter in the post from London, from your parents. // [38:3] Victoria: They're surely letting you know of the day of their arrival with... // Nadia: Is that all. You should have let me sleep. // [38:4] Victoria: Well, there are three young men. // Nadia: Together? // [38:5] Victoria: Yes, together. // Nadia: Tell them I'm not quite ready, and they should wait in the drawing room without thrashing each other. // [38:6] But they're not coming here miss. They're heading for the little hunting cabin in the woods. // [38:7] Nadia: My God. // Victoria: Do you think an accident's about to happen? // [38:9] Nadia: How terrible. // Victoria: It's not too late to put a stop to this madness. // [38:10] Nadia: Yes it is. They're already on the train. // Victoria: On the train? // [38:11] They're arriving today.

[40:1] Richardson: Then as soon as it stops raining we'll go to Miss Nadia. In the meantime... // McConey: We scratch each other? // [40:2] Richardson: A little game of cards? I always have them with me. Believe me, boredom is more terrible than the most terrifying fiend in the life of a soldier. // McConey: Whist? // McC Terry: Whist. // [40:3] But only one round. // [40:4] A little later. // Ha ha, my luck changes. // I give in. // [40:4] McConey: Oh look, it's nice again. // McC Terry: Yes. // Richardson: Let's bring this party to an end, then. The thunder can break up a game. // [40:5] So, the time has come for the future wife to choose one of us. // [40:6] McConey: It looks as if Miss Nadia has visitors. // McC Terry: Two cousins with a little luck. // [40:7] Victoria: Oh, you're not dead. // McC Terry: No. Should we be? // McConey: Whose are these cases Victoria? // [40:8] The householders. Miss Nadia's parents have just arrived from London. // [40:9] With her fiance.

[42:5] McConey: Okay then. Bye. // Richardson: Bye. // McC Terry: Bye.

[44:1] Alex: Phase one: Falling frenziedly and naively in love. Phase two: (best case scenario) love on both sides and eternal fulfillment. Phase three: An end to eternal love and dejection. // [44:2] McConey: What's phase four? // Alex: A period of quiet retreat from the wider world. // [44:3] Do you really want me to believe your babble Alex? // [44:4] Alex: Certainly not, sir. Hmm. The moment isn't the best, but can I share a surprising new thought with you sir? // McConey: I can't take any more. // [44:5] Alex: I ask you for permission to cite the example of Miss Victoria, whom I love, and who feels the same for me. // [44:6] Fat Miss Victoria? Nadia's maid? // [44:7] When did that happen? I mean... How is it... // [44:8] During the picnic sir, and one time when I was out of service hours. // [44:10] Well that is a good surprise. I'm really happy for you. // [44:11] Okay, get to phase two. And leave me alone. I'm occupied.

[35:1] McConey: My dear Alex, I despair. // Alex: Some painters produce their finest work in such conditions. Perhaps you should start a picture. // [35:2] Hmm I see it already. A scene with a battle to the death. Screaming bacteria... But before I strived for knowledge, but now just to express myself. // [35:3] McConey: Can you fill in my gaps in the knowledge of love. // Alex: Talking about the subject is a difficult business among men ourselves. // [35:4] Well how is it possible, for instance, that different men become obsessed with wooing the same woman? Their equilibrium is thrown out of balance. Their world is turned upside down. // [35:5] Sir, love is feeling we all carry within us. When it's not returned by our first love perhaps it will be by our second, or third. The equilibrium returns. It just takes a little time. // [35:6] McConey: What are you wittering on about Alex? When our first love doesn't work out it's impossible to love again. // Alex: The love one preserves in a book is more real than two people in him. // [35:7] In truth one doesn't meet love with a single blow. It's like running water that bulges up. // [35:8] Some rivers have a series of rapids, others have an even flow and others still have massive waterfalls. // [35:9] Anything is possible. It depends on the fluctuations of the landscape, but they can begin to flow from the slightest slope. // [35:10] Alex: You're like a young stream, sir, building beneath a slope. It bubbles up and ripples, that's all. // McConey: Well that's a nice parable, but rivers don't have hands and feet. What would the fish and crabs make of that?

[37:1] Richardson: Who's this letter to McC Terry? // McC Terry: Give that back! // McConey: A letter! For Miss Nadia? // [37:2] McC Terry: That letter's not addressed to you Richardson. Give it back or you'll regret it. // Richardson: It's obviously for Miss Nadia. That sly fox has written behind our backs. I'd like to read your poetic artistry McC Terry. // [37:3] My sweet love, my hams are your hams... If only your hams could be mine. // [37:4] McC Terry: You've no right. // Richardson: An ode to pig bellies. // [37:6] McConey: Miss Nadia, your eyes are a like thousands of flickering flames. // Richardson: Hey, that's my letter. // McConey: You thief. That's not yours // [37:7] You'll see // [37:10] I propose we settle this problem under the rules of gentlemen. Early tomorrow morning by Miss Nadia's hunting cabin.

[39:1] Richardson: Why are we here? // McC Terry: Yes, why have you dragged us here? // McConey: We must settle our disagreements in a radical fashion. // [39:2] I propose we vote on which of us should carry on seeing Miss Nadia. Who votes for me? // [39:3] Hmm. // [39:4] McConey: There is another way to settle our differences. // Richardson: What's that? // McC Terry: If it's measuring who's got the longest ears count me out. // [39:6] McConey: Aargh. The first to the hunting cabin wins. // McC Terry: No, the first two stay in the running. // Richardson: No, the first three. // [39:7] Richardson: Right, the fire's on. What do you suggest? // McConey: An infallible solution. // McC Terry: I already know what you're suggesting. // [39:8] McC Terry: You want us to visit Miss Nadia together and ask her to choose one of us. // McConey: Yes exactly.

[41:1] McConey: Fiance? // Father: Oh, it's you my boys. // [41:2] Father: It's been years since I last saw you. By the devil, you've become men. // McConey: Yes sir, all of a sudden. // [41:3] Father: Come in. Come and see who's come to visit first thing after we've arrived. // McConey: We don't want to bother you. // [41:4] Father: Darling... Nadia... John... Nadia... // Richardson: John. How ordinary. // [41:5] Father: Lord John Charles John-John. A splendid fellow. You'll see. // McConey: Lord John Charles John-John? // Richardson: That sounds less ordinary. // [41:6] Where are they then? They've only just met and they're getting married next month. You know how it is. // [41:7] Mother: Did you call darling? // Father: And how! Where are John and Nadia. // Mother: In the garden. Hee hee. You know how it is! // [41:8] Have you seen who's come to visit?

[43:2] Oh dear. // [43:3] Alex: Forgive me sir, but should I take from your demeanour that you business wasn't crowned with success? // McConey: That's not difficult to work out. // [43:4] McConey: It was a total fiasco. Miss Nadia is engaged. She was engaged the whole time. // Alex: Ah. // McConey: To an idiot // [43:5] hrm // [43:6] My lifeblood bubbles for Miss Nadia, but hers bubbles for someone else. I'm bubbling all alone. // [43:7] Alex: May I suggest another metaphor, sir? // McConey: No // [43:8] Alex: It's very apt and concerns legs, bears and honey. // McConey: Tell it to the children // [43:9] Alex: Well I see I can do nothing to drag you out of your depression. // [43:10] Alex: When you've passed through the third phase of love I'll explain a few things. // McConey: The third phase?

[45:1] The days pass. // [45:2] Take a look! A prize example of gold butterfly. // [45:3] Alex: You're feeling better sir. Oh, I'm happy. // McConey: Thank you Alex // [45:4] I'm feeling distinctly better. I think I'll take a walk into the village. // [45:7] McConey: Um, hello. // McC Terry: Yeah? What do you want? You know this isn't a vegetarian butcher. // [45:8] McConey: We could take the boat out sometime in the next few days. // McC Terry: Who's this we? Us two? // [45:9] McConey: If you want we could invite Richardson as well. // McC Terry: Good idea. I'll let my helpers know and we can set off. // [45:10] And for McConey the spring holiday really began on that day. // Richardson: L Ha, ha, I've got one. // McC Terry: Super. Give it to me. We'll sell it in my shop.

[46:1] Richardson: Not likely. I want to eat this one. // McConey: Hey, watch out. // McTerry: Come back. With the money from that we could eat out at a decent restaurant. // [46:2] Richardson: To eat fish there? Rubbish. // McConey: How so? I'm not going there to eat meat! // [46:3] McTerry: Come on, give it here. // Richardson: Ha, ha, ha. // [46:4] Back you rabid dog or you'll feel my sabre. // [46:7] Those three good for nothings again, amusing themselves in the manner that good for nothings do. // [46:8] Richardson: Ha, ha. // McTerry: Unfortunate. // McConey: Oh well.

[48:1] Nadia: That's a bit technical. // McConey: Do you want to hear a nice parable about water flow and how each water molecule is dependent on larger deeper pulls that mixes them up with each other? // [48:2] Hmm // [48:3] Don't worry Miss Nadia. Marriage is without doubt also an extraordinary driving force. // [48:4] Anyway, I haven't had an opportunity to congratulate you and wish you every possible happiness. // [48:6] Thank you. // [48:7] Don't worry about it my young friend. You'll succeed one day. // [48:8] Pardon? // [49:9] Nothing. I'm just getting darker.

[47:1] A few days later Alex needed my help as best man. // Alex: Really Sir, how do I look? // McConey: Like a million pounds. Shall I pull it tighter? // [47:2] Alex undertook his second wedding with Miss Victoria. Everyone was there, and a little sunny spell announced the forthcoming arrival of summer. // [47:3] I put on a large garden party at the cottage. A wedding should be celebrated with all dignity in the best possible chaos. // [47:4] Almost all the guests celebrated in fine fashion. // [47:5] Alex: Champagne Sir? // McConey: Alex, what are you doing? // [47:6] McConey: Put that tray down and dance with Miss Victoria. // Alex: But she's serving the canopes. // McConey: Go, go. // [47:9] Nadia: Why are our dreams always out of reach? When one is a child one wants to be grown-up and when one's grown-up one wants to be a child again. // [47:10] I don't know either, but breaking free requires a disturbance of equilibrium. It's the pull between a driving force and indolence.