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# MAPOLEON



EMIL LUDWIG

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# NAPOLEON

# **EMIL LUDWIG**

Translated by EDEN and CEDAR PAUL



#### NAPOLEON

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Napoleon went forth to seek Virtue, but, since she was not to be found, he got Power.

—Goethe.

# TO ELGA LUDWIG

### AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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#### CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

#### BOOK ONE

1769. August 15th, Napoleon born.

1779. At School in Brienne.

1784. At the military academy.

1785. Sub-lieutenant of artillery.

1789. To Corsica.

1791. April, lieutenant in Valence. October, to Corsica.

1792. Putsch in Ajaccio. Banishment.

1793. Captain. Siege of Toulon.1794. February, brigadier general.August, arrested.

1795. June, at the Ministry for War.
October, suppression of the Paris rising.
Commander of the Army of the Interior.

1796. March 2nd, Commander of the Army of Italy. March 6th, married to Joséphine Beauharnais.

#### BOOK TWO

1796-7. Battles of Millesimo, Castiglione, Arcola, Rivoli, Mantua.

1797. At the castle of Montebello. Peace of Campo Formio.

1798. In Paris till May.

May 19th, embarcation for Egypt.

Battle of the Pyramids.

1799. Jaffa, Acre, Aboukir.
October 7th, landing in France.
November 9th, coup d'état of the eighteenth Brumaire.
December 24th, First Consul.

#### BOOK THREE

1800. June 14th, battle of Marengo.

December 24th, attempted assassination.

1801. Peace of Lunéville. Concordat with Pius VII.

1802. Peace with England.
Consul for life. Legion of Honour.

#### CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

1804. March 21st, duke of Enghien shot.

May 18th, assumption of imperial title.

December 2nd, coronation.

1805. October, Trafalgar.
November, Vienna taken.
December 2nd, battle of Austerlitz.
Peace of Pressburg.

1806. Confederation of the Rhine. Joseph, King of Naples. Louis, King of Holland. October 14th, battle of Jena. Berlin. Continental System.

1807. Battles of Preussisch-Eylau and Friedland.
June 7th, treaty of Tilsit.
Jerome, King of Westphalia.

1808. Rome. Madrid. Bayonne. Joseph, King of Spain. Murat, King of Naples.

1809. Excommunication. Battles of Aspern-Essling, Wagram, and Vienna.

1810. January, divorce.

April, married to Marie Louise.

1811. March 20th, birth of his son.

#### BOOK FOUR

1812. Battles of Smolensk, Borodino, Vittoria, Moscow. December, return to Paris.

1813. April, battles of Lützen and Bautzen. July, battle of Dresden. October 16th to 18th, battle of Leipzig.

1814. Battles of Brienne, La Rothière, Champaubert, Montereau, Bas-sur-Aube, Laon, Arcis-sur-Aube.

April 6th, abdication in Fontainebleau.

April 20th, embarcation for Elba.

1815. February 26th, sails from Elba.

March 13th, outlawed.

March 20th, Paris.

June, battles of Ligny and Waterloo.

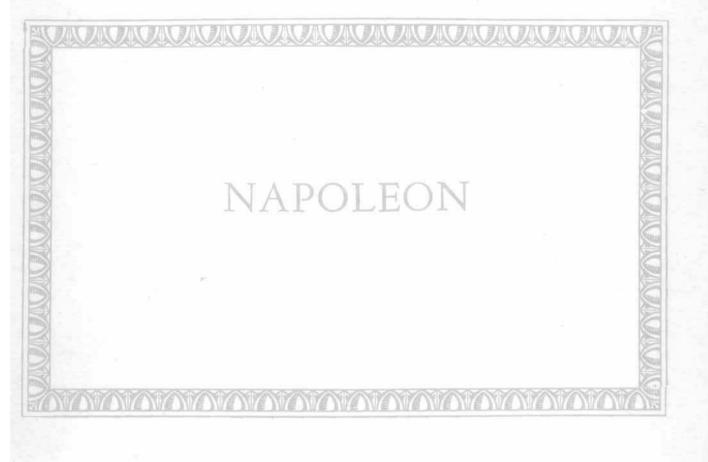
June 23rd, second abdication.

July 13th, letter to the prince regent.

July 31st, declared a prisoner.

#### BOOK FIVE

1815. October 17th, arrival in St. Helena. 1821. May 5th, death.



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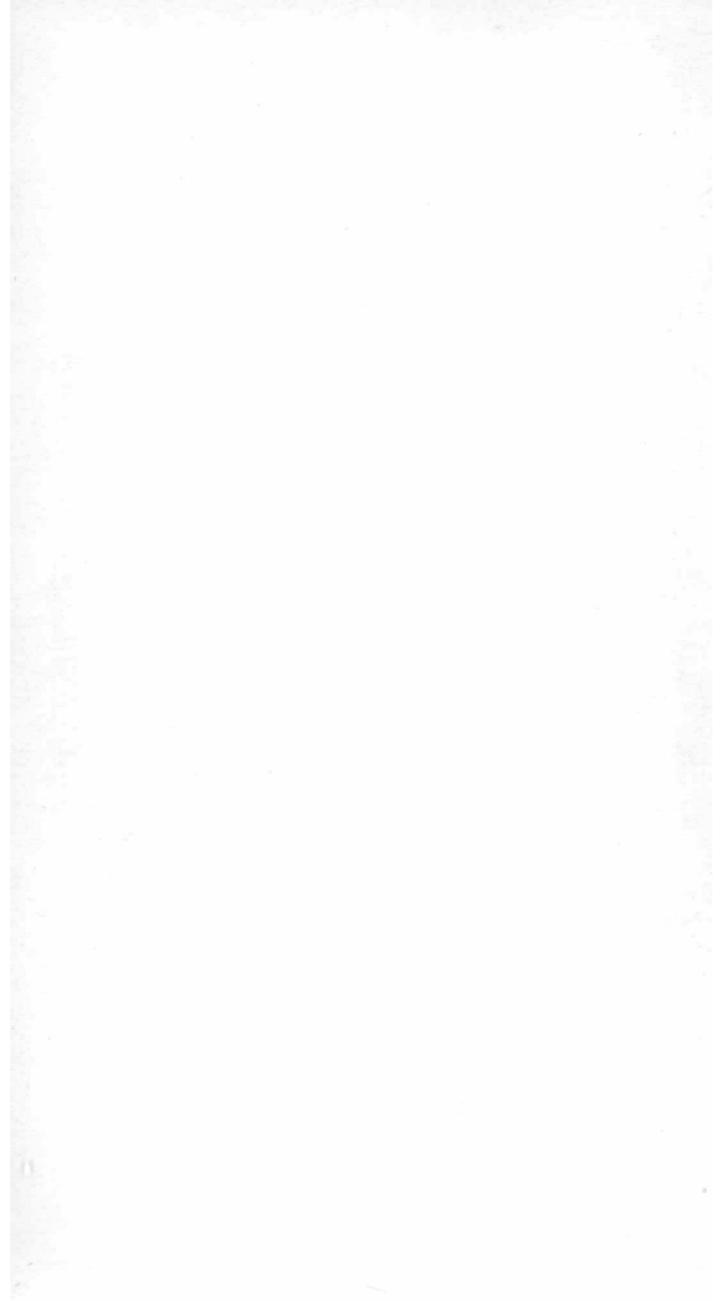
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#### BOOK ONE

## THE ISLAND

The story of Napoleon produces on me an impression like that produced by the Revelation of Saint John the Divine. We all feel there must be something more in it, but we do not know what.

—Goethe.



A young woman is sitting in a tent. Wrapped in a shawl, she is suckling her baby, and listening to a distant rumbling and roaring. Are they still shooting, though night has fallen? Maybe it is only the sound of one of those autumn thunderstorms whose echoes reverberate from the mountains; or perhaps it is nothing more than the murmur from the surrounding forest of pines and evergreen oaks, where foxes and wild swine have their lairs. She looks like a gipsy, sitting there with her white breast half covered by the shawl, brooding within the murky tent, uncertain what the fate of the day may have been. Now she hears the sound of hoof-beats. Is it he? He promised to come; but it is a long way from the fighting line, and the mists are rising.

The flap of the tent is thrown open, letting in a breath of night air. A man enters. An officer in a coloured tunic and wearing a plumed head-dress; a slim fellow, nimble of movement; a young patrician, in the middle twenties. He greets the woman ardently. Springing to her feet, she gives the nursling to her maid. Wine is brought. Taking the kerchief from her head, she stands before him, showing chestnut ringlets astray on a smooth, white brow. An eager question is on her wellshaped lips. Add to the picture that she has a long chin, a sign of energy; that her aquiline nose is thrown into relief by the firelight; and that on her hip there gleams the dagger which in this mountain land she never lays aside. We see a lovely amazon, daughter of an ancient race, sprung from men of action and resolution. The woman's forebears, like the man's, have for centuries been leaders and warriors; first across the water in Italy, and then in this craggy island.

But now, when all have gathered together against the hated enemy, have joined forces in the attempt to drive out the French, here, in the wildest part of the mountains, whither the brave girl of nineteen has followed the husband fighting for their fatherland; who, now, could recognise in her the brilliant patrician, the magnet of all eyes? Here, nothing but pride and courage show that she is of noble birth.

The man, full of life and vigour, ever in movement, tells her all his news. The enemy has been beaten, driven back towards the coast. There is no escape. Envoys have been sent to Paoli.

"There will be a truce to-morrow. Letizia, we are winning!

Corsica will be free!"

Every Corsican longs for many children. It is a land where an affront is instantly avenged by a dagger thrust; where the vendetta is sacred; where family feuds last from decade to decade and from century to century. The man before us wants many children, to ensure that his race shall persist; and the woman has learned from mother and grandmother that children are tokens of honour. She had become a mother at fifteen; but the baby she has just been nursing was her first boy.

The thought of freedom glows afresh, for the officer is ad-

jutant to Paoli, the leader of the people.

"No longer shall our children be the slaves of France!"

#### $\Pi$

With the coming of spring, despondency prevails. The enemy has landed reinforcements; the children of the island take up arms once more; again the young wife accompanies her husband to the war; this time she carries a child beneath her heart, the child conceived during the storms of the previous autumn.

"Often, in search of news, I would steal forth from our mountain nook to the battle-field; I heard the bullets whistling, but I put my trust in Our Lady"—so she would tell the

story in later years.

In May, the Corsicans were defeated. There was a terrible

retreat through the dense forests and the rugged mountains. Among the multitude of men and the few women, rode Letizia, big with child, carrying her one-year-old boy in her arms, seated on a mule. They reached the coast safely. In June the defeated Paoli, accompanied by a few hundred of his faithful followers, had to flee to Italy. In July Paoli's adjutant, Letizia's husband, with other envoys, capitulated to the conqueror. The insular pride was humbled. But in August his wife brought the avenger into the world.

She named him Napolione.

This woman, who during the campaign had played the heroine and had shown a man's courage, must now, in the great
house by the seashore, become a prudent and thrifty housewife. Her young husband, fanciful by temperament, lived
more on plans than on income. For years his energies were
mainly devoted to the great lawsuit concerning his inheritance.
As a student in Pisa, where among his fellows he was known
as Count Buonaparte, he had lived well but learned little.
After the birth of his second son, he cut his studies short. How
was he to make a living? In troublous times, a man of the
world takes the world as it is; comes to terms with the conqueror; all the more since the French, in order to secure their
footing in the island, are inclined to show favour to the
Corsican nobility.

Soon he becomes assessor in the new lawcourts; superintendent of a nursery in which the king of France, eager to turn the new possessions to account, wishes to grow mulberries; and when the distinguished marshal comes to stay, no expense must be spared. There are still flocks of sheep in the hills and vineyards along the coast; his brother, archdeacon at the cathedral, is well-to-do; and his wife's half brother, another priest, a merchant's son, is skilled in worldly affairs.

By the time his proud and beautiful wife has reached her thirties, five boys and three girls have been born to her. This is well accordant to the notions of the islanders, for whom rivalries and vendettas are supreme virtues. But the rearing of eight children is a costly matter; so, day by day, the youngsters hear their parents talking about money. At length, how-