

The Conqueors

By P, A. Breal

Play no. 139

Opening show: 02/07/1955

Hebrew by: S. Avidor

Directed by: Abraham Ninio

Designed by: S. Yorani

The Cast

Josepe Lipi: Chaim Amitai

Maria Lipi, his wife: Tamar Robins

Seniora Baglione: Niura Shein / Tmima Yudelevitz

Rafaelo , a worker: Izhak Bareket

Gakomo: Yosef Banai

Kosima, servant at Lippi's house: Ada Tal

Pietro, Lipi's son: Shmuel Atzmon

Alisa, his wife : Dalia Fridland

Ange-Marie-Le-Gouce, sergeant in Bonapare's Army: Ari Kutai

Fliko, private in Bonapare's Army: Raphael Klatchkin

Captain: Avram Aviram

Clerk: Yehuda Rubinstein

Act 1

The action takes place in Italy during the year 1796, during the first invasion of General Napoleon Bonaparte. As the curtain rises, we are found in a textile shop of the merchant Giuseppe Lippi, in a small village in the vicinity of Milan. One of his customers, Signora Baglione, tells horrible stories concerning the actions of the French conquerors and advises the shopkeeper to run away. But Lippi thinks otherwise: he has heard that the French pay high prices for what they buy and he wants to profit from them. He charges his mind when he finds out that most of the villagers are fleeing, and deciding to join them, he orders his household staff to start packing the merchandise. But his wife is not yet ready to run away: their son Pietro and his young wife Alisa have gone out to the forest and have not yet returned. Their fright reaches its climax, when the servant Giacomo comes running into the house and tells of seeing two French Hussars (Cavalrymen) in the vicinity of the village. Everybody is worried over the fate of the two youngsters when they finally reach the house in a state of near exhaustion. They tell of having seen in the forest the two Hussars as they were getting off their horses. In order to escape from them Pietro turned the horses loose and chased them away. Before the members of the household get a chance to decide what to do, loud knocks are heard on the door. The Hussars in their chase after Pietro have reached the Lippi house. Fearing the Hussars, everybody runs away and hides. The two Hussars are Sergeant Le-Gouce and Private Fliko who understanding Italian, can speak with the villagers. Fearing severe punishment for having lost their horses, they decide to tell their Captain that they were attacked in the forest and were forced to defend themselves and during the ensuing battle the horses were killed.

Act 2

The two Hussars are guarding the Lippi house according to the Captain's orders. He has decided that if it is proven that the villagers participated in the attack on the Hussars, then they – the villagers – will all be executed. But if it is proven that the two Hussars submitted a false report, then they - the two Hussars – will be executed. Within the conscience of the two there is a struggle as to whether to admit their lie or not. Their self-preservation is strongest, they decide to keep quiet and not to admit anything even if it means the execution of the innocent villagers.

Kosima, the servant, wants to save the Lippi family from the impending danger and tells Fliko that it was she who chased the horses away, therefore it is only she who needs to be punished. Fliko who is attracted to Kosima, promises her that he will influence Le-Gouce to retort his testimony and to forget the whole affair. But meanwhile the Captain orderly brings the written testimony in for confirmation and signature. Fearing the Captain, Le Gouce signs the testimony.

Pietro, who has hidden in the forest, returns home in order to surrender himself and thereby save the family. His mother, father and wife plead with Fliko to pity Pietro, forgive him and let him go, but Fliko is unable to do it because "Le Gouce has the rank, and he signed the testimony". But the family does not give up, they try to influence Fliko by giving him all kinds of presents, and even spread out a table before him filled with all sorts of wines and delicacies. With pleasure Fliko eats and drinks, until all of sudden he realizes Their intention and chases them all out of the room. Le Gouce then enters and sees the new boots that Fliko is wearing. He takes them away from him, ofr after all he has the higher rank and is entitled to them. The fight between them comes to sudden halt with the appearance of the Captain. First of all he takes the new boots from Le-Gouce and the new trousers from Fliko, those rightly belong to him because he is an officer. The Hussars tell him that they have found the man who had attacked them. The Captain then gives them an order that the next morning at dawn that man – Pietro – will be executed and the executioners will be Fliko and Le-Gouce

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Act 3

Le-Gouce and Fliko's conscience does not allow them to execute an innocent man and all of a sudden they get an idea. They will shoot Pietro, but with blank bullets instead of real ones, and in order not to arise the Captain's suspicion, they ask all the household to participate with them and to pretend that they are mourning Pietro. Everybody is happy over the idea and get ready to prepare everything.

Because of a misunderstanding Le-Gouce gets angry and decides to charge the bullets and puts a real one in the rifle instead of the prepared blank, harmless one. But before the execution order can be carried out, the Captain appears and revises everything. On the basis of an investigation it is proven that the two Hussars submitted false testimony, and therefore they will be executed. The Lippi household is happy on having saved Pietro, but now try to save the Hussars. Luckily a dispatch reaches the Captain from General Bonaparte and it contains a decoration for the Captain and a promotion for the

Le-Gouce. Because of this the Captain forgives the Hussars, returns to the regiment which is marching on to Vienna.
And life in the Lippi household reverts to usual.