

**Series
for Young Seekers of Beauty**





Jacques Louis David
(1748— 1825)

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BOOK 1



Cap. 1

Giulia and Valerio Sirio, little friends from birth,
are approaching, with decisio an old tree, considered by
all children the sage tree of the park.

G - Every time we pass near you why do we feel your
leaves make a strange noise a kind of swish swis..
sssss...

Tree - if you ask me this question you already know the an-
swer. PULL IT OUT! When children ask a good ques-
tion they always know the answer very well, they need
only to look for it and wish to find it.

VS - You would like to talk with us, wouldn't you? Why
would you like to talk with us? Really with us?

Tree - My friend The Wind has often brought me some frag-
ments of your speeches. I was very curious and so I
began to watch you and I payed attention while play-
ing in the park.

Watching curious and intriguing... I have understood
you would like flying.

G - You are not the sage king of the park you are the

crazy king of the park, why are you confusing children with little birds? You make us laugh!

Tree - When little birds are born cannot fly but when the beauty of sky becomes irresistible for them they start flying, at first not by their wings but by their thoughts. Children too cannot fly because they haven't wings but they can fly with their thoughts. Children's thoughts are like the wings of little birds, they serve to fly free and happy. Like little birds, children, to learn to fly, must feel, in their breasts, the irresistible call of the beauty of the world.

VS – Perhaps you are right! When Giulia and I are going hunting for discoveries in the park, we are enchanted and we don't feel the time pass... we feel our heads turn into sails in the wind, light sails ready to sail and to fly..

G - But... we always fall down and come back home disappointed. It is likely that we need a **master of flight. A *master of flight of thoughts.***

Tree - Smart! Excellent idea! Master of flight of thoughts will teach you how to know and love "the Beauty". You will become "beauty seeker" and step by step the call of beauty will find its way within you. When the call become stronger and stronger and more and more irresistible... only at that moment you'll be free and

happy and you'll fly at last.

VS - How can we look for a **Master of flight of Thoughts**? We are just children how can we succeed in finding him?

G - What's his name and his address? Can we ask our parents to take us to look for him?

Tree — You can ask your parents to take you to the beautiful square at the exit of the park. Get off your car and by the help of the “eyes” of your heart and of your mind start looking for the big **Magic window**.

VS - We have just asked how to look for a **Master of flight of thoughts** and you are answering us we have to look for a magic window too!?

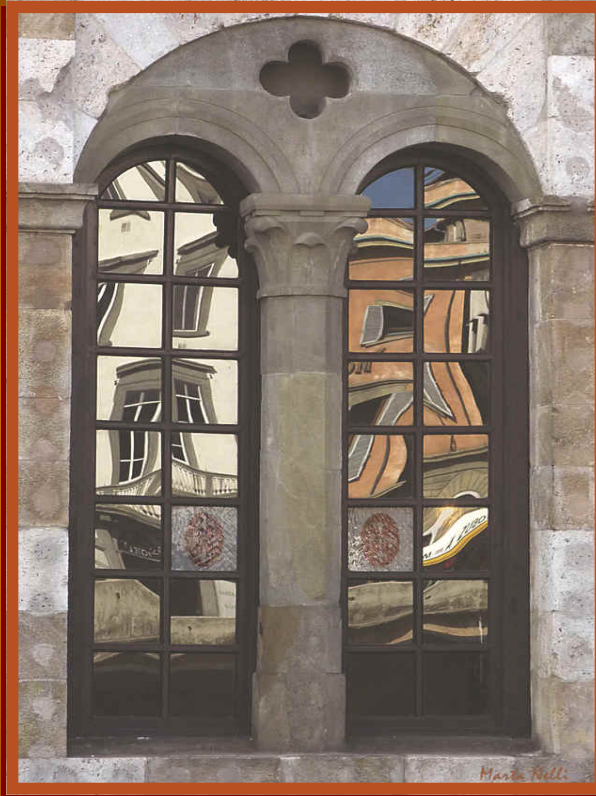
Tree – That's right, if you don't look for the magic window you will never find the **Master of flight of thoughts** Trough the window You can question the “palaces” in the square and they will tell you where you can find the nearest **Master of flight**.

G - But if we cannot find the magic window, we can come back to you... to...

Tree — You'll find it, you'll find it. Children like you can find all that they want.

Cap. 2

Giulia and Valerio Sirio find the magic window



VS — Don't cry please
and one at time talk!
Don't you see we are
covering our ears?

Win — We cannot tell
you where is **the Master of flight of thoughts**. It is not allowed us to tell you.
Before answering the
questions we must listen

to the password in a very strong and clear way.

VS - Strong and clear: **TREE**

Win — Well. Now we can answer, this is the little old palace,

next to the church, speaking.

G – Hello little palace, my friend and I would like to learn flying, can you help us to look for a Master? a **Master of flight of thoughts**.

Win — Sure I can but, I don't know if I like to do so.

G – You don't know if you like! After spending the whole strength to discover the window, you dare to say you don't know if you like... look! Pay attention I'm getting angrier and angrier!

Win — Anger doesn't help and it often complicates things, and look at yourself; you are becoming a bad flower made only of thorns!

And now your eyes, that were shining like stars, are losing their brightness.

Without a valid reason I have no interest to help you.

No interest – no help!

VS – In the future we would like to become nice, big, very important persons, but to be so we must learn to fly free and happy.

This is the reason we are here to ask you where we can find the **Master of flight of thoughts**. Isn't this a good reason for you?

Win - It's a good reason! Very well. Go down to the square then approach the church and turn around. Behind

you'll find a small rectory, with a big garden in front of it. It is well shaded by a little wood of eucalyptus. Perhaps once it was the city of the Dead, well sheltered by these eucalyptus whose names means hiding (the name eucalyptus derives from the Greek language and it means hiding).

G – To day cemeteries are always far from cities.

Win - You are right, but 3 centuries ago cemeteries were inside the cities and all the people and the Dead were both protected by the high wall surrounding the cities. In 1800 the emperor of France, Napoleone Bonaparte, promulgated an edict (at that time emperors organized people's life making edicts and people had to respect them) and from that moment the living were divided by the dead.

G – Why did Napoleone promulgate that edict?

Win - because at that time cities were becoming bigger and bigger and the old wall had to be thrown down to let people build new houses and new streets. Towns changed and they became open communities, and in Napoleone's town project had to be like big tart, well divided into segments, and each segment had to be well detached the one to the other. So he ordered to divide the city of the living from that of the dead. Doctors liked the idea very much and they said it was

healthy to build cemeteries far from cities.

VS – I'm telling you we are here to look for a **MASTER** and not the city of the dead!

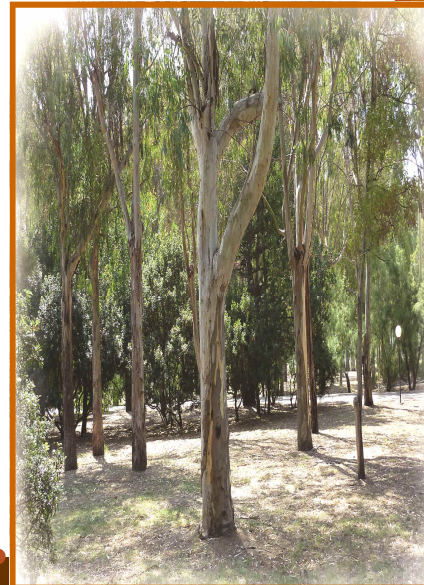
Win - Excuse me for the digression. Come into the garden, through its gate, always half open, check the trunks of the eucalyptus one after the other.
Caress the smooth bark of the trees with care untill...

G/VS - Untill...

Win - You'll discover a nature's masterpiece. A drawing that most eyes cannot see. CAUGH more times as if you had a bad cold. Cough... till the drawing comes out alive and it will begin to talk.

G - Little palace perhaps you haven't understood, we are not looking for a drawing speaking, made by the nature, but a **MASTER** for we two!

Win - Discover the drawing, cough... and you'll find in front of **your master!**



Cap. 3

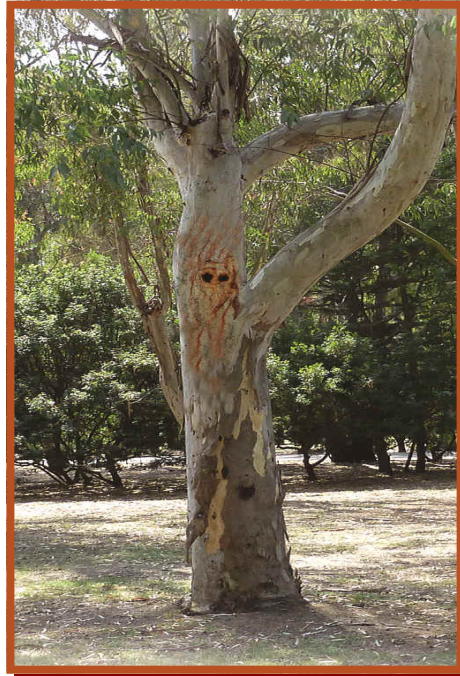
Giulia and Valerio Sirio meet their Master of flight of thoughts

G - It might be this one!
What do you think about?

VS - It's here. It's a drawing of
an owl and it is going to be
struck by the sun

G - Struck! The drawing made
by nature is filling with
colours...
Wonderful ! I 'd like to
touch it.

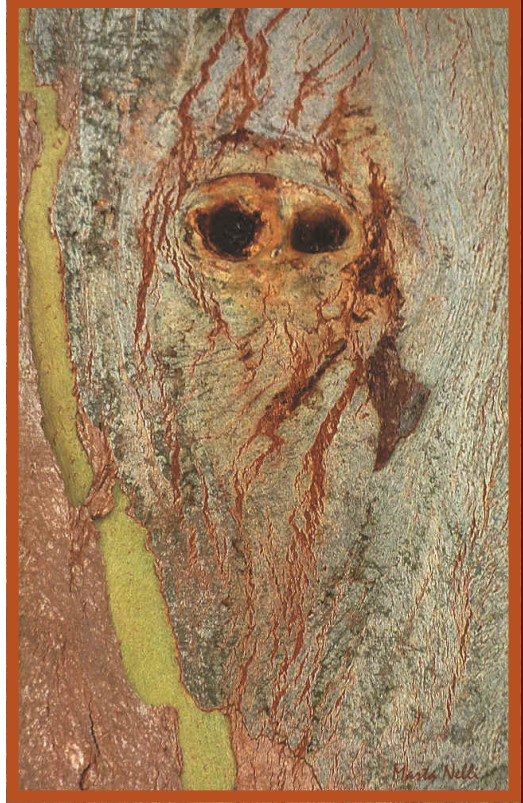
VS – Who knows if someone
might have seen him, I don't think so.
Perhaps the nature drew it a lot of time ago to
decorate the town of the Dead.



G – I can feel some feathers move
under my hand

VS – Let's cough again, stronger and
stronger!

Master – No children, Nature cannot have made this drawing for the Dead because that drawing, as you can see, is a wonderful work of art. Every true artist, even if its name is Nature, never creates something for somebody, but he makes it to let beauty live in our world for ever. If beauty disappeared we should live in a dark land, without stars in the sky and without fireflies in the meadows, without perfumes in the air and nothing enchanting. Artists sometimes say they have made their work of art for someone. Don't listen to their words, watch their works and feel with your mind and heart and you'll understand I'm telling you the truth.



G – Master owl I'd like to know if mums too when they “make” their children are artists.

Master – Sure, both mothers and fathers are, because when they love each other they make wonderful works. Every child is a wonderful work.

G – A drawing is a work of art, it's something different from a child!

Master – A drawing is different from a painting, a poem, and from any other forms of art.

VS - When an artist finishes his work, a drawing never changes, on the contrary when a child is born from mother's big “belly” is not finished and he changes continuously.

Master – A child is a drawing made by his father and mother but finished by the child who will be able to learn to fly and he will be able to transform his life in a work of art.

G – We are ready to start with the lesson.

Master – Sit down on the grass and let's begin!

Cap. 4

The Master o flight of thoughts shows
the seeker of beauty

Jacques Louis David

Master – Once in the second half of the 1700 in some European countries spread a great fever for a change. Previous way of thinking doesn't appear right anymore and most people are not prepared to the new thoughts and they are frightened and confused.

G – It was really a terrible time. When I'm frightened I always feel bad.

Master – A french child, called Jaques Louis David, looked at the adults all around him and shook his head because he didn't like them at all. His eyes tried to look for something in the street of Paris but they found only frightened, confused and angry people.

G – Jaques Louis David was right. We Children need calm, strong and positive persons, because we are confused!

Master – One day Jaques Louis David thought and thought and after he said: “I don't like people I see and when I'm adult I wouldn't like to be like them. When I can I'll go away from Paris.”

VS – Wasn't it better to stay and became “seeker of the new thoughts”?



Master – Yes, of course, but only if his heart had suggested him to stay. But his heart said: “Go away! Go away as soon as you can”.

And one day when he was just 20 David left his Paris and went to Rome bringing pencils to draw and brushes to paint.

G – Why did he choose Rome?

Master – Because before 1700 Roma was well known by all people and considered the capital of the world because of his masterpieces which could show its power and greatness.

VS – Some of these masterpieces still exist, my parents have shown me them while we were going for a walk in Rome.

Master – In Rome he goes round and round through the streets never stopping. He visits the ancient monuments and he studies every work of art. He draws pictures of them and makes a lot of attempts with the same purpose, he wants to meet, in his heart, the strong and calm people who had lived in the ancient Rome.

VS – It is not possible for us to day, I cannot meet, in my heart, an ancient roman. Neither could David.

Master - You are wrong, David could, he knew - that men's heart are as big as the world - so everything can happen in them. One day, in fact, he felt in his heart the emotion of this meeting. He was going to meet the "Orazi's brothers ". His hands started working, first with pencils, then with brushes. So The "Orazis' Oath" was born.

G – The “Orazi” ? I have never heard this word. On the contrary I know the meaning of oath because when someone accuses me because I am wrong I say: “I swear not to do it!”

Master – Many centuries ago, when Roma was a small town, it entered in war against Albalonga the nearby town.

Both women of the 2 cities cried because they knew war would have destroyed their husbands' lives and their children's lives. Besides They knew that after the end of the war, in peace time they would have suffered. Because only few strong men had remained to bear the hard work they had to do.

G – There was nothing to do, wasn't there?

Master – There is always something to do if we know what to do. Orazi's father looked for a solution....Then he went to Albalonga to see a father who was his friend. One of the CURIAZI family and he said to him: “I have 3 male children you have 3 male children. Instead of people of our towns only our 3 children could enter in war against each other. The Victory of my children will be the victory of Rome, the victory of your children will be the victory of Albalonga.

We'll bear on our shoulders the terrible weight of the war. The other father listened and then in silence shook his hand: the war agreement was done.

G - WRONG. They had to talk with their children before making that agreement!

VS – Perhaps They knew their children and they knew they would accept. Who won?

Master – Who won? Roma won But both Orazi and Curiazi lost.

The 3 brothers Curiazi and two of the 3 Orazi died.

The truth is that war can never be won. Wars can only be lost because the benefits, that victory brings, compared with the pain and damage caused by war, appear very little.



Cap. 5

The Master of flight of thoughts shows
“The orazis' oath”



Master – Look carefully, of course. This is the reproduction of the original oil painting, a big canvas now at the museum of Louvre. David took 3 years to paint it (1783-1785).

G/VS – Ok!

Master – Try to pretend that your eyes are magically transformed into 2 small metal pieces and the painting has a large magnet behind the painting where are your eyes now?

G - Mine are on the 3 brothers. They are embracing one another and are well united. They are not afraid, their arms outstretched want the swords. They seem to have only one thought: VICTORY!

Master – Good, you can see everything very well!

VS – Mine are on the shining blades in the middle of the painting. They look like rays of light.

Master – Orazi's father get them in his hands.

G - The father, in contrast to his sons, seem full of thoughts. Perhaps he thinks the war may only be lost.

Master – It may be.

VS – I don't think so. In my opinion he is speaking to his sons, seriously, and he is saying he is proud for the courage they are showing and besides because they are ready to fight for their city.

Master – May be, now think about the title of the painting!

VS – I have understood. The 3 brothers are swearing they are going to make their duty.

Their father is listening to the sons' oath before giving them the swords.

G - I think that father would like stopping his sons' oath with his hand, because he is very worried for them.

VS – I don't think so because he knows they are doing a right thing.

Master - We haven't spoken yet about women and children... Women are tired of crying. Can you see? Look at the children... David has painted them in a shadow covered, perhaps, by the mantle of a woman perhaps because he thinks darkness is in their mind. They are too small to understand what is really happening.

Now pay attention to the question I'm going to ask you. Think of an orange, can we divide it into slices?



G – Sure! What a stupid question!

**Master – Wait, I have not finished the question yet.
Can we divide David's painting into slices?
The men, the woman, the children, the Orazi's
house?**

G – I think so, the men are all together in the middle of the painting; the women and the children are from the side; the house at the bottom. Three slices.

Master – Think with calm, yes, but...

VS - The slices of an orange are all the same while in the painting the three parts are different.

G - The men are more important then the women and the children. At last the Orazi's house.

**Master – Well, very good. the men in David's opinion
are more important so he paints them bigger
and better lighted. They appear like big statues
in the middle of an empty square with the bot-
tom full of people watching.**

VS - The house is the last one because it is almost in the darkness like the children.
Women are illuminated. They are apart scared and sad

but clearly visible.

Perhaps David puts them on the bottom because he considers them inferior to men because they are afraid.

G - Woman inferior to men?!

Master – No, women are not inferior in David's opinion they have a different wisdom, but not inferior.

David wants us to understand the difference between a female head and a male head. Male knows how to look for solution to problems but only women can say if the solution is right.

Orazi and Curiazi think it's better to make a war with six men than to make a war with two armies, on the contrary women think that even with six men a war is wrong because you can only lose a war and really never win.

G - David is great!

Master – David admired mankind's head both males and females because from they come the true beauty of human beings. He loved arithmetic and geometry at school because they demonstrate better than other subjects men's ability to think. The triangle was his favorite figure. Therefore to give even more beauty to its painting David imagine many triangles then, without

painting

them, he paints inside them the characters of the painting.

VS – Why didn't he draw the triangles? Why did he think them only?

Master – I reveal a secret. The mind's eyes are higher than the physical ones. I mean those we have in our head. David didn't want big small and passive people in front of his painting, on the contrary he wanted to teach everyone how great is to learn to use all the six eyes every human being has got. The eyes of the head, the eyes of the mind and those of heart.

Homework! Next time, using the eyes of the mind, find the number of the invisible triangles drawn by David on the painting.



Cap. 6

The Master of flight of thoughts
shows a new painting:
Napoleon crossing the Alps at San Bernardo

**Master – Well, you are already sitting and ready.
Have you counted the triangles at home?**

G - We have counted
four ones.

**Master – Then you
should still try
to look for
them.**

**This morning,
as you can see
I will let you
see the repro-
duction of an-
other painting,
a smaller can-
vass than the
other, now in**



France in the museum in the castle of Rueil Malmaison. David took a year to make it (1800-1801).

VS - Who is sitting on the white horse?

Master – I'm answering in a moment. Now back to the story of our "Seeker of Beauty" number 1. One night David's heart began beating so strong to wake him. He payed attention and started listening and he could know that a man, not unlike the ancient Romans, calm strong, self confident, wanted Paris to become the new capital of the world.

G - Wow one of the Orazi who moves to Paris. Good!
What's the name of this man?

**Master – A moment please, be patient! David who was always listening to his heart, went in search of a man resembled one of the Orazi whose name was Napoleone Bonaparte and whose job was to be general... He met him when France and Austria were fighting in Italy in a war and France was loosing.
David watched deep into Napoleone's eyes.**

VS - Napoleone's eyes, like Orazio's eyes, might not be sad, but only serious and bright, because his eyes could

not accept the defeat and they were looking for a solution.

Master – Good! Napoleone found the solution under the command of his soldiers. He didn't stop in front of the Alps, separating France from Italy. He used the pass of Saint Bernardo as a door to enter Italy, where now people are breeding big hairy dogs well suited to find men buried by avalanches.

Napoleone managed to reach the french army who was loosing, took the command and France won the war.

G - We have already said, wars cannot be won by anybody.

Master – Napoleone was too young to know that. He had the same eyes of the Orazi who say: VICTORY! While in Italy soldiers were fighting David retreated into his heart and there he met Napoleone. And his hands took brushes and started working. This is how "Napoleone crosses the Alps at S. Bernardo" was born.

Now let's do the game we did last time; the painting has got behind a big magnet. Your eyes have become two pieces of metal and I want to know where they are going.

G – Mine on the **white, intelligent horse's** head all lit up,

together with Napoleone's head and he for this reason he doesn't need to hold the reins pulled to ride on him. They both know where to go.

Master – Good, the red mantle, raised by the wind, is like a ribbon that ties closely the general to his horse, to let people understand that in war are both one.

Do you remember the 3 brothers Orazi were one? And David had thought that a hug could keep them together.

VS – I've often heard: "unity is strength" so David might have thought the same and he expresses it in every work. My metal eyes are going to Napoleone's **hand** which is pointing where to go and his **eyes** which seem to tell his soldiers: "Come on! Soon!".

Master – Perhaps we too.

We need to know where is the right destination. Let's' focus on soldiers. What can you see?



G - They are as small as the children in the other painting.

VS – But the children were in the shade while the soldiers are well lit .

Master – In David's opinion in every human history there are those who guide and many who follow; the last ones are less important but without them the leader could not do anything.

VS – Napoleone, we are now speaking about, is the same of the edict on the city of the dead?
Can Generals too make edicts?

**Master – Yes he is, but when he makes that edict he is no longer working as general, but as politician.
Next time we are speaking about it.**



Cap. 7

The Master of Flight of Thoughts
shows another painting:
“Napoleon's Coronation”

VS – The Big always speak about politics and politicians.
What's a politician's job? What's politics?

G - The TV News talk about politics, when I hear such a
news I close my ears!

**Master – What is the most important thing when you
make a game with other children?**

G – To have fun and not bicker.

Master – And not to bicker?

VS – To know and respect the rules of the game.

**Master – Therefore a children game, to let every
child be happy, must have rules everybody
knows and respects.**

G/ VS – Yes, it's true!

Master – In big countries like Italy, France and many other countries in the world, life is like a game we make together. Politicians are those people who first think, and then write laws. Citizens are those who know the rules and respect them.

G – You mean that when Napoleone stops to be general and becomes politician he leaves the army to write laws. Don't you?

Master – Yes, we can say so.

VS – An "edict" is one of the rule of "The citizens' Game"?

Master – Good. Politics is the whole "citizens' Game" involving both politicians and citizens.

VS – Was Napoleone a good politician too?

Master – French people think so and they wanted him emperor.

G – Why emperor and not king?

Master – A king is in the center of the game of citizens of a country; when other countries take part this game, a *king* becomes *emperor*. David, who loved Napoleone because he saw him as a new Orazio, presented himself to the Em-

peror's palace.

Napoleone, who knew his works, asked him to help him to prepare his coronation and his wife's coronation. Then he asked to make a sort of portrait (cameras didn't exist at that time).

VS – Did David accept?

Master – Yes he did. He collaborated with the tailors and the cloth merchants to prepare Napoleone's and his wife's clothes, because at that time people were recognized by the clothes they wore.

The farmers, for example, had few clothes made always in the same way and in the same color. They wear them throughout their life. So when a person met a farmer in the street, he could recognize him from the clothes he was a farmer.

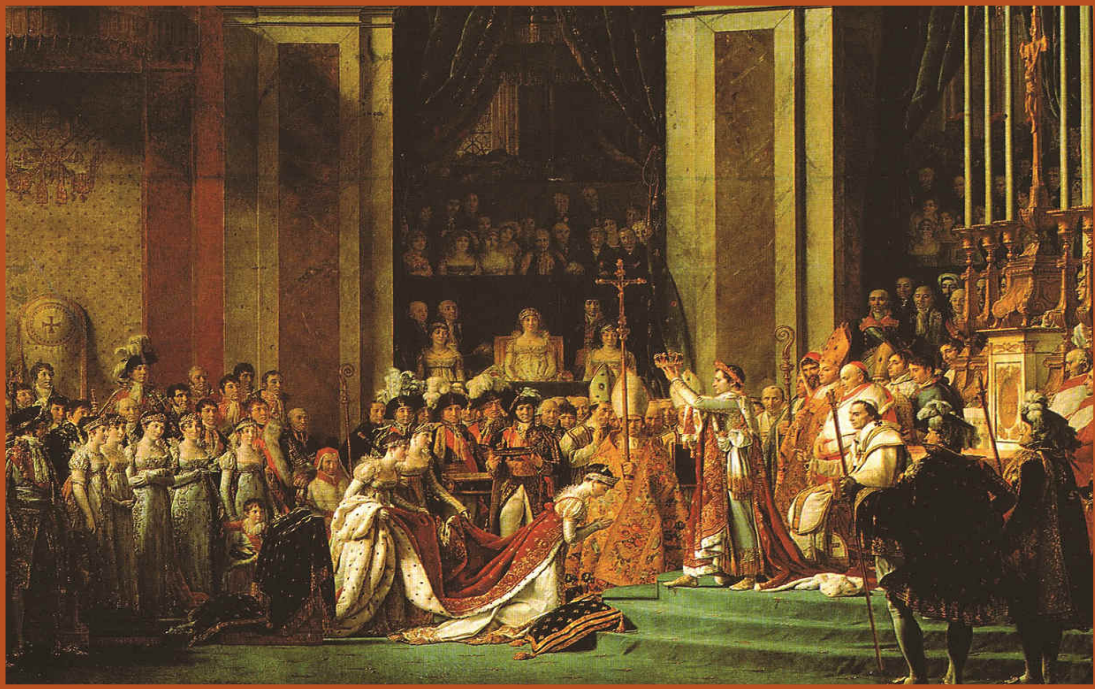
VS – Then David started drawing beautiful clothes, so beautiful that people said that Napoleone and Giuseppina were the biggest emperors of the world!

Master – Right. And perhaps even Napoleone's crown model is one of David's ideas because it is equal to that worn by the great Romans at the Orazi's time.

G – It seems to be made of all gold leaves.

Master – Gold leaves are the leaves of an evergreen plant called *laurel*, now present in many garden so we do not note it. The ancient Romans considered it very precious and they had a special care.

Let's back to David, after the ceremony he begins to work on a huge canvas, now at Louvre



museum in Paris. He took 2 years to paint it (1806-1807).

Now let's do again our game "metal eyes-painting magnet".

G – It is very nice. My eyes are going on Giuseppina and her dress! She looks like a princess! She doesn't seem something political, it seem a marriage even if you have told us they are already married.

VS – You are right! My metal eyes are watching Napoleone's **eyes** and I noticed they are not looking at the crown, he is going to put on his wife's head, but they are looking only Giuseppina like everyone else in the painting. For Napoleone she was more important than the crown!

Master – Is everybody looking Napoleone's hands while he is lifting the crown?

VS – Perhaps the people behind Napoleone don't look carefully. Especially the one sitting in white. He may be a priest.

Master – The ceremony takes place in Paris, in “Notre Dame Cathedral”. The character, sitting and dressed in white, is the Pope Pio VII.

VS – The Pope and the other men of the church, behind Napoleone, are well lit but they are not in the center and they do not participate with heart. They think, being in church, to be the protagonists of ceremony, on the contrary there are only two protagonists: Napoleone and Giuseppina.

Master – You are right. Any questions?

G – Who is the lady in the center sitting in the background? She appears, among the many people present, particularly important.

Master – She is Napoleone's mother. In the painting you can see 81 people represented, and all the people but one were present at the ceremony.

G – Who was missing?



Master – Napoleone's mother was absent because she didn't want Giuseppina to be Napoleone's wife and this is the reason Napoleone was sad.

But, to create a perfect ceremony, David painted Napoleone in a happy attitude and Napoleone's mother, smiling and moved.

VS – Was David present at the ceremony?

Master – Yes, he represented himself near Napoleone's mother, a place the emperor liked.

G - Who are the two women who are raising Giuseppina's mantle?

Master – They are Napoleone's sisters: Elisa and Paolina.

G - They take the mantle as one does with brides! But Giuseppina's mantle is heavier. She is a bride empress.

Master – In the two different paintings, we have looked, we have seen the characters of both the paintings are linked together by something.

G - By a hug in the first one, by a red mantle in the second one.

Master – Even in the 3rd painting too, David puts a link among the characters. A bond that holds Napoleone and Giuseppina together.

VS – Perhaps this bond is invisible to the *eyes of the head*?

G – **Love** is the bond between the two Characters Napoleone's love for Giuseppina and Giuseppina's love for Napoleone. And we can see with the *eyes of the heart*.

Master – Good! When David paints a bond, which can be seen only with the *eyes of the heart*, David reveals a secret: "Be careful - he says -

you do not realize it has just begun a new way of looking at things in the world! After so much confusion and uncertainty here it is a new light in men's minds ”.

In fact it was in the first decades of 1880 that people stopped to privilege the *eyes of mind* (as David did at the time he painted “Orazi's oath”) and they began to trust in the *eyes of the heart*.

This new way to look at the world was called

Romanticism.

Series for Young Seekers of Beauty

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