

## La Bataille - L'intégrale

By Ivan Gil & Richaud

GRAPHIC NOVEL

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1



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"Of all the great battles of the Napoleonic Wars, the Battle of Essling is not the most famous. It was, however, one of the most bloody. Forty thousand died on the banks of the Danube over the course of two days in May 1809. Balzac decided to turn it into a novel for Scenes of Military Life (The Human Comedy, Vol. 8). In 1833, he described his plan thus to Madame Hanska: "Not a woman in sight, cannons, horses, two armies, uniforms; on the first page, the cannon roars, and on the last, falls silent." Balzac, busy with a thousand other projects, never had time to execute his plan. But Patrick Rambaud has realized it with scrupulous attention to detail. The Battle does not tell a story; it unfolds like a mural that surveys all the troops' strategic movements, notes the details of the terrain that made such a difference to the battle's outcome, and sketches the portraits of the great figure of the Napoleonic era, Lannes, Bessières, Masséna. But this comprehensive view doesn't come at the expense of detail. Not a single cartridge belt, not a single garter button is missing from this immense army. The combination of precise detail and epic sweep that brings these pages to life makes this novel a unique achievement. It won the Prix Goncourt in 1997." - Gérard Meudal

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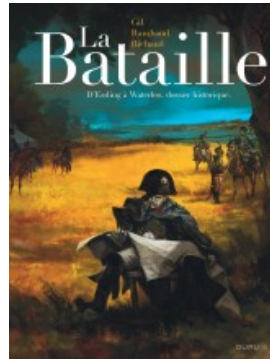
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# Chapitre II



*À quoi rêvent les soldats*

