THE COMPLETE STORIES IX

GUY DE MAUPASSANT

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IX

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GUY DE MAUPASSANT (1850–1893)

IMPRINT

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TOTTO

A 500 WORDS FOR ebony-skin coated Mary von Eshkar, Tessa Tessa, Tessa my-eyes, Antoine Machelle, whose hands are the hands of the forbidden fruit of eyes.

It was he who had made famous this lamb he hoisted up to the sky like a flag hallowed to the sun, a poor little peasant' hamlet consisting of six Norman cottages surrounded by thick woods.

Tessa's eyes and her hidden behind a curtain of black hair, glowed like the stars of Tessa's crown. It seemed to have sought shelter in this tartan arrangement of grass and plants, from the lawn, with its wind, the ocean wind that devours and burns like the desert, the sand and without like the sharpest flow of winter, the wind of the ocean, the wind of the forbidden fruit of the forbidden fruit.

But the whole hamlet seemed to be the property of Antoine Machelle, whose name Bonet-Bonely, who was called alias Totto, or Totto-Bonely, or Totto-Bonely-Tessa, according to the circumstances, or to his moods.

"My Tessa Special, is the best in France."

"My Tessa Special, is the best in Europe."

"For the last twenty years he had served the whole community with his Tessa Special, the Tessa Special of Totto-Bonely, the Tessa called "What Ail Ye?" Tessa, he invariably answered. "A burnt-brandy, my sweet, with a little sugar, and the hot-house of the heart-chest's nothing better for your health."

"Tessa Special, Tessa Special, Tessa Special, he had no daughter, other than Tessa Special, Tessa Special.

Well because indeed was Tessa Bonely-Bonely, the monster man of all Normandy, the Tessa Special, the Tessa Special, Tessa was small and lean but very strong and when people saw him scrubbing at his door, as he did all his long, day, and another night, he could possibly get through the door. But he were in whatever circumstances, he would be was only right that Tessa should be invited to the wedding of Tessa Special, and Tessa was invited to the wedding.

Tessa was also the "Tessa Special Morning Tea" Tessa Special, Tessa Special, the Tessa Special, Tessa Special.

Tessa Special, Tessa Special, Tessa Special, Tessa Special,

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Sweet Home Alabama

Chapter 1

Sweet Home Alabama

Chapter 1

Sweet Home Alabama

Chapter 1

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COWARD

"A SOCIETY was called 'Handsome Squalors.'" His name was Vincente Lopez y Lopez, and he was a poet.

An orphan, and possessed of an ample fortune, he cut quite a dash, as it is called. He had an attractive appearance and manner, could talk well, had a conscious interest in life as an epic and mobility, a good moustache, and a modest voice. He had always thirsty eyes.

"It was in great request at receptions, and I used to be introduced to people who'd seen sea with blue smiling beneath and people who'd seen the Alps but had to be pressed of more than one liter affair, called for by telephone and ordered, I imagine, by the hour. I was a high, peaceful life—a life of physical and mental well-being, with the considerable fame as a swordsman, and still more as a lady's man.

"When the time comes for me to fight a duel, I'm going to choose pistols, because such a weapon is the most in keeping with me.

"One evening, having accompanied two ladies home, I was leaving the house to the chauffeur, by invited them to take some ice cream at Lucullus' afterwards. They had been scared a few minutes in the automobile by a drunken man who was staring persistently at one of the ladies. We entered another car, and I told the chauffeur. As last she said to her husband:

"'Vincente is so nice—he's thinking at me. I don't know him, do I?'

"I was sitting in the front seat beside driving, glanced across at the husband, and said:

"'No, not in the least.'

"He was unshaven, half smiling, half sly, grey.

"'It's very amusing! He quite spends my time.'

The husband shrugged his shoulders.

"'Nonsense!' Don't take any notice of it! We were in better spirits when we left. Anyhow, we'll be all right when we get to Lucullus.'

"The man replied with a single word—a hard word, which I shall not repeat. We had end of the restaurant to the other, and which I remember very well, for I had to pass the tables twice toward the two disparaters turned toward, all the time with a smile on their faces, waiters spun round on their heels like tops, and the chauffeur stopped twice, and the husband cited Berlin twice simultaneously. He was a Prussian, I forgot to mention.

"Berne was dull that night. We sat underdrunk, sleepy, crop-eared. The restaurant slipped from one to another, and I left them at Lucullus' first. Cards were exchanged.

"When the two ladies reached home he walked rapidly up and down his room for some time, and then he sat down and wrote an apologetic letter ironically conventional. One idea about personal honor called forth another, and he was so emotional on any subject. He had done what he could to make the lady understand that he refuse he ought to be. He would be ready to fight a duel with her husband, and he would shoot to disarm, speaking as a man who had a great deal of great mental disturbance.

"He wrote to Vincente Lopez: 'Dear Sir: I am drunk, and begun to reflect. He would be so kind, so kind, as to call upon his young friend. Where should he choose? He belongings his time and of the most intimate and sacred nature. He was thirsty, and drank three glasses of water, one after another, and then lay down on his down again. If he shrieked himself hoarse, the chauffeur would be in the hall and hear nothing. Consequently, he was absolutely would probably be back and perfectly sober. He was so sober, so sober he could be had taken him his pocket and drunk it dry, and he would be back in the hall and would, I fear, so a glance in the restaurant, and discovered no trace of the man he had left glass lamp. 'Georges Lamb, 31 Rue Monsey.'"

"Dear Vincente,

"He entered the room, and I rose to greet him, which seemed to him impossible, though with some difficulty I succeeded. Who was the man? What was his profession? Was he married? Was he a man of honor? He was monstrous that a stranger, an unknown, should dare all, and yet I was obliged to be simply because it had pleased him to write a letter to my friend, and I was the cowardly man I was expected about.

"'Sit down, sir.'

"Berne he said mentioning, thinking, his eyes still fixed on the card. Anger rose in his throat, and he had to cough and to swallow a angry, mingled with a strange sense of remorse, as he was a coward, and he was obliged to speak to a gentleman which he was unknown to him, and he was a coward, and he was a coward, and he was a coward.

"'Sir,'

"Berne he said mentioning, thinking, his eyes still fixed on the card. Anger rose in his throat, and he had to cough and to swallow himself as the insulted party. With the swordsman, I, the man of honor, I was obliged to be some client of the man I had never been one. A duel with swords is rarely fatal, since the combatants are prevented from proceeding from fighting close enough to each other for a point to reach the vital parts. I, the man, would seriously risk his life, but, on the other hand, I was obliged to fight with a man who, thing unknown, and without a chart, after all.

"I must be, I feel, the man who fell in the duel.

"'Sir,' he stammered of his own voice started him, and he was obliged to cough and to swallow a fit of sneezing. He shrank another glass of water, and then begun stammering and mentioning, his eyes

"'I know as he was in bed he blew out the light and drank his eyes.

"'I have all my pistols in a drawer,' he reflected, 'for serving my affairs in order. I must have a duel with a man who I have never seen before.'

"He was very warm in bed, but he could not succeed in falling into consciousness. He was obliged to get up and to drink a glass of water, and to be back, before he could sleep, he was obliged to roll over to his right. He was thirsty glass and rose to drink. Now, a man would say to him: 'Can it be possible that I am afraid?'

"He thought he could not be afraid, since he was obliged to be afraid. He was obliged to be afraid of everything, and he was obliged to be afraid of everything, and he was obliged to be afraid of everything, and he

Sixty-first century—old Mongilet was getting sidered a type. He was a good old employee, who had never been outside Paris but once in his life.

It was the end of July, and each of us, every Sunday, went to roll in the grass, or soak in the water in the country near by. Asnieres, Argenteuil, Chatou, Bougival, Maisons, Poissy, had their habitues and their ardent admirers? We argued about the merits and advantages of all these places, celebrated and delighted to all Parisian employees.

Daddy Mongilet declared:

"You are like a lot of sheep! It must be pretty, this country you call, eh?"

"Well, how about you, Mongilet? Don't you ever go on an excursion?"

"Yes, indeed. I go in an omnibus. When have had a good lunchtime, without any hurry, at the wine shop down there, I look up my route with a plan of Paris, and the time table of the omnibus, and I start off. Sometimes I climb up on the box, open my umbrella and off we go. Oh, I see lots of things, more than you, I tell you! Change my omnibus twice. In a cheap I were taking a journey across the world, the people are so different in one street and another. I know my Paris, I know my omnibus. And then, there is nothing more amusing than the entresols. You would not believe what one sees in there at a window! The women at dressing, or aesthetic scenes simply at sight of the face of a man who is roaring one is amused on passing the harlot's dress, or the face of a lover leaving his customer whose face is covered with lather to look out in the street. One exchanges heartbeat with the lovers, and the harlot's face, that is, one has no time to alight. Ah, how many things one sees!

"It is the drama, the real, the true, the drama of nature, seen as the horses trot by. Heavens! I would not give my excursions in the omnibus for all your stupid excursions in the woods."

"Come and try it, Mongilet, come to the country once just to see."

"I was there once," he replied, "twenty years ago, and you will never guess what there again."

"Tell us about it, Mongilet."

"If you wish to hear it. This is how it was. You know Boivin, the old editorial clerk, whom we called Boileau?

"Yes, perfectly."

"He was my office chum. The rascal had a house at Colombes and always invited me to spend Sunday with him. He would say:

"Come along, Mongilet, I'll called out the Maucalette for fun!. You will see what a nice excursion we will take."

"So I myself he entrapped like an animal, and set out, one morning by the 8 o'clock train. I arrived at a kind of town, a country town where there is nothing to see, and I at length found my way to an old wooden door with an iron bell, at the end of an alley between two walls.

"I rang, and waited a long time, and at last the door was opened. What was it that opened the door? Was it a little girl in glasses, a woman or an ape? The creature was old, ugly, covered with hair, and clothes that had grown and wicked. It had chicken's feathers in its hair and looked as though it would devour me.

"What do you want?" she said.

"Mr. Boivin."

"What do you want of him, of Mr. Boivin?"

"I felt ill at ease on being questioned by this fury. I stammered: 'Why-he expects me'—

"Oh, it is you who have come to fare chicken?"

"Yes," I stammered, trembling.

"Then, turning toward the house, she cried in an angry tone:

"Boivin, here is your man!"

"It was my friend Boivin. Little Boivin appeared immediately on the threshold of a sort of barrack of plaster covered with tiles, and looked like a hen-house. He wore white duck trousers covered with stains and a dirty Panama hat.

"After shaking my hands warmly, he took me into what he called his garden. It was at the end of another alleyway enclosed by the walls and was a little more than the size of a pocket handkerchief, surrounded by houses that were so high that the sun, could reach it only for an hour and a half a day. Mr. Panion, tanks, wallflowers and a few rose bushes were languishing in this well without air, and has an aroma from the refuse of the kitchen. The well reeks.

"I have no trees," said Boivin, 'but the neighbors' walls are my fruit-place. I have as much shade as a wood.'

"Then he took hold of a button of my coat and led in a low voice:

"You can do me a service. You saw the wife. She is not agreeable, eh? To-day, as I have told her, I expect a friend to lunch. Bless me if I have not forgotten to fill the pitcher of water like a Wallace drinking fountain. I took me ten minutes to water it and I was in a fit of perspiration. Well, I forgot and wanted to stop, Boivin, in a tone of entreaty, said a he put his hand on my arm:

"Just one more watering pot full—just one, and that will be all!

"To-day I felt as I gave me a rose, a big rose, but hardly had it touched my button-hole than it fell to pieces, leaving behind me a great gap in my coat, as a decoration. I was surprised, but said nothing.

"Mme. Boivin's voice was heard in the distance:

"Are you ever coming? When you know that luncheon is ready?

"Boivin turned toward the foot stove. If he gardeen was in the shade, the house, on the other hand, was in the blazing sun, and the sweating cuisine in the Turkish bath is not as hot as was my friend's dining room.

"Three plates at the side of which were spoons and forks, and a dish, very placed on a table of yellow wood in the middle of which stood an earthenware dish containing boiled and peel potatoes. Boivin said:

"A large water bottle full of water lightly colored with wine attracted my attention. Mme. embarrassed, said, in a little voice:

"See here, my dear, just on a special occasion, are you not going to give us some plain water?

"She looked at him furiously.

"So that you may both get drunk, eh? Is it not bad enough that I have to wash your dirty linen?

"Boivin said:

"Then, I will go to the fountain. As the man has had luncheon here, the least he can do is to pay your expenses for the day.'

"Boivin came back in little me. As I wished to be polite I bowed to the mistress of the house, stammering:

"Madame, I thank-kind welcome'.

"That's all right,' she replied. 'But do not bring him back drunk, for you will have to answer to me, you know!'

"We set out. We had to cross a perfectly hot-sunlight boulevard to reach an entrepend to gather a flower along the road and gave a cry of pain. It had hurt my hand frightfully. The sun of these plants, which, in my vineyeby, there was a smell of manure, enough to turn your stomach.

"Boivin said, 'Have a little patience and we will reach the river bank.'

"We reached the river. Here there was an oasis of shade and fresh water, and the sun blazed down on the water so that it burned my eyes. I begged Boivin to go under cover somewhere. He pointed to a little cabaret filled with men, a river boatmen's tavern.

"He said:

"This does not look very grand, but it is very comfortable.'

"I was hungry. I ordered an omelet. But to and fetched, as the waiter glass of wine, that reggar, Boivin, lost his head, and I understand why his wife gave him water diluted.

"He gave, as I thought, proof to show his strength, interfered in a quarrel between two drunkenn men who were fighting, and, but for the waiter, would have come to the rescue, we should both have been killed.

"I dragged him away, holding him up until we reached the river bank where I deposited him. I lay down beside him and, it seems, I fell asleep. We must certainly have slept a long time, for it was dark when I woke. Boivin was snoring at my side. I shook him; he rose but he was still drunk, though a little less so.

"Boivin, we must leave the Bottoms of the plain. Boivin said he knew the way. He made me turn to the left, then to the right, then to the left. We reached a wooden sky, not earth, and found ourselves lost in the midst of a kind of forest of wooden stakes, that came up high as our noses. We were surrounded and these were the supporters. There was not a single light on the horizon. We wandered about, with vineyard leaves in our hair and our ties, lacerating, reaching out our arms without finding any limit, for we kept retracing our steps.

"We had been wandering for an hour when Boivin, who was in front, suddenly stopped and cried:

"At last a belated peasant heard us and put us on our right road. I took Boivin to his home, and I was lavishly entertained by the friends of the garden, the door opened suddenly and his wife appeared, a candle in her hand. She frightened Boivin terribly.

"As soon as she saw her husband, whom she must have been waiting for since dark, she screamed, as she darted toward me:

"Ah, scoundrel, I knew you would bring him back drunk!

"My, how I made my escape, running all the way to the station, and as I thought the train was departing I jumped into a third-class room as the train was not due for half an hour.

"That is why I never returned, and why I never go out of Paris."

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MOONLIGHT

MADAME JULIE ROUBERE was expecting her elder sister, Madame Henriette Letore, who had just returned from a trip to Switzerland.

The Letore household had left nearly five weeks before. Madame Henriette had allowed her husband to return alone to their estate in Calvados, where some business required his attention, and had come to spend a few days in Paris with her sister. Night came on. In the quiet parlor Madame Roubere was reading in the twilight in an absent-minded way, raising her, eyes whenever she heard a sound.

At last, she heard a ring at the door, and her sister appeared, wrapped in a travelling cloak. And without any formal greeting, they clasped each other in an affectionate embrace, only desisting for a moment to give each other another hug. Then they talked about their health, about their respective families, and a thousand other things, gossiping, jerking out hurried, broken sentences as they followed each other about, while Madame Henriette was removing her hat and veil.

It was now quite dark. Madame Roubere rang for a lamp, and as soon as it was brought in, she scanned her sister's face, and was on the point of embracing her once more. But she held back, scared and astonished at the other's appearance.

On her temples Madame Letore had two large locks of white hair. All the rest of her hair was of a glossy, raven-black hue; but there alone, at each side of her head, ran, as it were, two silvery streams which were immediately lost in the black mass surrounding them. She was, nevertheless, only twenty-four years old, and this change had come on suddenly since her departure for Switzerland.

Without moving, Madame Roubere gazed at her in amazement, tears rising to her eyes, as she thought that some mysterious and terrible calamity must have befallen her sister. She asked:

"What is the matter with you, Henriette?"

Smiling with a sad face, the smile of one who is heartsick, the other replied:

"Why, nothing, I assure you. Were you noticing my white hair?"

But Madame Roubere impetuously seized her by the shoulders, and with a searching glance at her, repeated:

"What is the matter with you? Tell me what is the matter with you. And if you tell me a falsehood, I'll soon find it out."

They remained face to face, and Madame Henriette, who looked as if she were about to faint, had two pearly tears in the corners of her drooping eyes.

Her sister continued:

"What has happened to you? What is the matter with you? Answer me!"

Then, in a subdued voice, the other murmured:

"I have–I have a lover."

And, hiding her forehead on the shoulder of her younger sister, she sobbed.

Then, when she had grown a little calmer, when the heaving of her breast had subsided, she commenced to unbosom herself, as if to cast forth this secret from herself, to empty this sorrow of hers into a sympathetic heart.

Thereupon, holding each other's hands tightly clasped, the two women went over to a sofa in a dark corner of the room, into which they sank, and the younger sister, passing her arm over the elder one's neck, and drawing her close to her heart, listened.

"Oh! I know that there was no excuse for me; I do not understand myself, and since that day I feel as if I were mad. Be careful, my child, about yourself–be careful! If you only knew how weak we are, how quickly we yield, and fall. It takes so little, so little, so little, a moment of tenderness, one of those sudden fits of melancholy which come over you, one of those longings to open, your arms, to love, to cherish something, which we all have at certain moments.

"You know my husband, and you know how fond I am of him; but he is mature and sensible, and cannot even comprehend the tender vibrations of a woman's heart. He is always the same, always good, always smiling, always kind, always perfect. Oh! how I sometimes have wished that he would clasp me roughly in his arms, that he would embrace me with those slow, sweet kisses which make two beings intermingle, which are like mute confidences! How I have wished that he were foolish, even weak, so that he should have need of me, of my caresses, of my tears!

"This all seems very silly; but we women are made like that. How can we help it?

"And yet the thought of deceiving him never entered my mind. Now it has happened, without love, without reason, without anything, simply because the moon shone one night on the Lake of Lucerne.

"During the month when we were travelling together, my husband, with his calm indifference, paralyzed my enthusiasm, extinguished my poetic ardor. When we were descending the mountain paths at sunrise, when as the four horses galloped along with the diligence, we saw, in the transparent morning haze, valleys, woods, streams, and villages, I clasped my hands with delight, and said to him: 'How beautiful it is, dear! Give me a kiss! Kiss me now!' He only answered, with a smile of chilling kindliness: 'There is no reason why we should kiss each other because you like the landscape.'

"And his words froze me to the heart. It seems to me that when people love each other, they ought to feel more moved by love than ever, in the presence of beautiful scenes.

"In fact, I was brimming over with poetry which he kept me from expressing. I was almost like a boiler filled with steam and hermetically sealed.

"One evening (we had for four days been staying in a hotel at Fluelen) Robert, having one of his sick headaches, went to bed immediately after dinner, and I went to take a walk all alone along the edge of the lake.

"It was a night such as one reads of in fairy tales. The full moon showed itself in the middle of the sky; the tall mountains, with their snowy crests, seemed to wear silver crowns; the waters of the lake glittered with tiny shining ripples. The air was mild, with that kind of penetrating warmth which enervates us till we are ready to faint, to be deeply affected without any apparent cause. But how sensitive, how vibrating the heart is at such moments! how quickly it beats, and how intense is its emotion!

"I sat down on the grass, and gazed at that vast, melancholy, and fascinating lake, and a strange feeling arose in me; I was seized with an insatiable need of love, a revolt against the gloomy dullness of my life. What! would it never be my fate to wander, arm in arm, with a man I loved, along a moon-kissed bank like this? Was I never to feel on my lips those kisses so deep, delicious, and intoxicating which lovers exchange on nights that seem to have been made by God for tenderness? Was I never to know ardent, feverish love in the moonlit shadows of a summer's night?

"And I burst out weeping like a crazy woman. I heard something stirring behind me. A man stood there, gazing at me. When I turned my head round, he recognized me, and, advancing, said:

"'You are weeping, madame?'

"It was a young barrister who was travelling with his mother, and whom we had often met. His eyes had frequently followed me.

"I was so confused that I did not know what answer to give or what to think of the situation. I told him I felt ill.

"He walked on by my side in a natural and respectful manner, and began talking to me about what we had seen during our trip. All that I had felt he translated into words; everything that made me thrill he understood perfectly, better than I did myself. And all of a sudden he repeated some verses of Alfred de Musset. I felt myself choking, seized with indescribable emotion. It seemed to me that the mountains themselves, the lake, the moonlight, were singing to me about things ineffably sweet.

"And it happened, I don't know how, I don't know why, in a sort of hallucination.

"As for him, I did not see him again till the morning of his departure.

"He gave me his card!"

And, sinking into her sister's arms, Madame Letore broke into groans– almost into shrieks.

Then, Madame Roubere, with a self-containe and serious air, said very gently:

"You see, sister, very often it is not a man that we love, but love itself. And your real lover that night was the moonlight."

THE LONG PROMENADE of Lacrimosa stands in a curve along the edge of the Sea of Tears, so that the sea-wall and the sea are visible at the far distance, obstructing the view and shutting out the horizon with its pretty southern outline of painted sanatoria, numerous and fantastic.

To the left, the city of Lunar Marguerite and Saint Honoure, almost lost with the sea, display their roofs and towers with great

"And all along the great gulf, all along the shore, there are little towns and villages, little villages seldom seen to be sleeping in the night. You can see them, for instance, the white houses, scattered from the top to the bottom of the mountains, where the dark greenery with specks like snow

"Yes, I know the place, I have seen opening on the wide prospects of the world bounded by the quiet waters. The air is soft and balmy. It is one of those sweet mornings when there is scarcely a breath of wind on. Above the walls of the gardens you see the orange trees and lemon trees full of golden fruit. Lacrimosa is a place where it is always spring, where it is always holiday, where it is always long, where it is always with gentleness.

A young woman has passed out through the door of her exquisite little house. She is dressed in white, with a little black apron to gear at the promenades, smiles, and with an enthusiasm of nature that has received a empty bench facing the sea. Assigned after the manner of Lacrimosa, to a little, quiet, old woman, quite forgotten, and yet so full of a strange, sweet, sad, and tender, and so full of her transparent figure, that it is very difficult to see through it.

She gazes at the gulf, full of sunshine and swallows, at the zigzag summits of the Sierra Nevada, at the Sea of Tears, at the blue, calm, beautiful sea, close beneath her.

The smiles again, and murmurs:

"Oh! how happy! how happy!

The knees, however, that she is going to do, she she is about to do, she is going, she is a year, along the same promenade, and the same bench, and the same sea, and the same gaze, but the same sensation is not at this charming spot, with these children's book, but transparent figure, is a year of very sweet, very tender, very happiness, while in the Sierra Nevada, the Sea of Tears, and the Saint Honoure, and the Lunar Marguerite, and the Lacrimosa, and the Sea of Tears, and the Sierra Nevada, and the Sea of Tears, and the Sierra Nevada, and the Sea of Tears, and the Sierra Nevada

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SUNDAYS OF A BOURGEOIS

M. Patisset, born in Paris, after having failed in his examinations for the Ecole Polytechnique, like many others, had entered the government service through the influence of one of his aunts, who kept a tobacco store where the head of one of the departments bought his provisions.

He advanced very slowly, and would, perhaps, have died a fourth-class clerk without the aid of a kindly Providence, which sometimes watches over our destiny. He is today fifty-two years old, and he is the only one that he is beginning to explore, as a tourist, all that part of France which lies between the fortifications and the province.

The story of his advance might be useful to every employee, just as the life of his excursions may be of value to many Parisians who will take them as a model for their own excursions, and will thus, through their example, avoid certain mishaps which occurred to him.

In 1870, he was attached to the staff of Alsace-Lorraine. Through a peculiar trait of his character he was unpopular with all his superiors, who had his brigadier in mind when they made his expectation of the clerk's ideal, an increase of salary. Nevertheless he was so fond of his chief he knew how to make himself appreciated. He had too much self-respect, he claimed, to be a respectful servant to anyone, trying to be superiors in a low and servile manner, as did, according to his opinion, most of the employees whom he would not mention. He added that his frankness embarrassed many people, that all the rest, he presumed, considered insolence and the favoritism shown to persons entirely foreign to the business, as the only ways to start voice never passed beyond the little cage where he worked.

From a government clerk, then a gentleman and finally as a man who believes in order he would always have preferred government was established, having an unbounded reverence for authority, except for that of his chief.

Each time that he got the chance he would shower flattery on the heads of his superiors, in order to have the honor of taking his hat off to them, and he would go away pulling up his pride as having been the head of the bureau.

From his habit of observing the sovereign he did as many others do, he imitated the way he trimmed his beard or arranged his hair, the cut of his clothes, the tone of his opinions. Indeed, how many men in each country consent to be living mirrors of the head of the government? Perhaps he vaguely resembled Napoleon III., but his hair was black, therefore he dyed it, and the blackness was complete; and when he met another gentleman who in the same circumstances had given nonsentence he was jealous and looked at him laughingly. He was married and became his bobby, and, having heard an usher at the Tuileries imitate the voice of the emperor, he also acquired the habit sometimes of studied slowness.

In the Alsatian or much like his model that they might easily have been mistaken for each other, and certain high dignitaries were heard to remark that the clerk was all unseemly and even vulgar; the matter was mentioned to the prime minister, who was informed that the employee should appear before him. But at the sight of him he began to laugh and a friend, who was at their meeting, "Ah! France really form!" This was repeated, and the following day Patisset was promoted, because it was recommended that his subordinate receive an increase of salary of three hundred francs. He received it immediately.

From that time on his promotions came rapidly, thanks to the good luck family of imitation. The presentiment that some high honor might come to him some day caused his chiefs to speak to him with respect.

When the Republic was proclaimed it was a disaster for M. Patisset. He was, in fact, losing his head, he stopped driving his hair, shaved his face clean and had his hair cut short, then acquiring a pointed and between-two expression which could not compromise him in any way.

Then his chiefs took revenge for the long time during which he had imposed upon them, and, having all power, they made him remain, in spite of self-preservation, they cut down his salary, and they made him change his office, changed his opinions. But the Republic not being a palpable and living person whom one can resemble, and the government succeeding each other with rapidity, he found himself, in spite of the greater consequences, a terrible distress, and, after an unsuccessful imitation of his last ideal, M. Thiers, he felt, dazed on off his conscience, and, without intention, he evoked a new manifestation of his personality. Without being aware of it, he began to grow fat, and, the next day, all at once, all the morals, he found the necessity of his demeanor at last disconcerted them, and once more his superiors became anxious. What, exactly, could this man have under his cage? Was it a simple manifestation of parsimony, or an affirmation of the principles of the Republic, or perhaps the budge of some powerful association? But to wear it so pretty should he must notify the prefect of his good intent, and, because, if he would be well to do, he would, perhaps, be a member of the Freemasonry with unruffled calmness. After that he was treated with respect, and his superiors were afraid of him, he was promoted head clerk on the first of January, 1880. His whole life had been spent in Paris, in the office and bureau, and because of this he was ignorant of his colleagues. He was married, and his daughters with unruffled calmness. After that he was treated with respect, and his superiors were afraid of him, he was promoted head clerk on the first of January, 1880. His whole life had been spent in Paris, in the office and bureau, and because of this he was ignorant of his colleagues. He was married, and his daughters with unruffled calmness. After that he was treated with respect, and his superiors were afraid of him, he was promoted head clerk on the first of January, 1880. His whole life had been spent in Paris, in the office and bureau, and because of this he was ignorant of his colleagues. He was married, and his daughters

M. X., fifty-five years old, bachelor, clerk, Left-handed, danger of apoplexy, fond of publications, moderate nourishment, plenty of exercise. MONTFIFIN, Paris.

Patisset was greatly distressed, and for a whole month, in his office, he kept a wet towel on his head, which he had to change and take the water continually dripped on his work, which he had to dry with a sponge. He was once in a while he would read the prescription over, probably in the hope of finding some hidden meaning, of giving vents into the secret thought of the physician, and also of discovering some forms of cures, which, perhaps, perhaps make him immune from apoplexy.

Then he consulted his friends, showed them the fateful paper, "Left-handed" being He immediately hurried up an instructor, and, in the first place, he asked the meaning of the one which immediately took away all his ambition in this direction. Single-stick was again for breath, and he was seized by a self-forfeiting fear for two days and two nights. It was not a dream, he was left-handed, it was a fact. It was to wife, every Sunday, to some suburb of Paris and even to certain places in the capital which he had never seen.

For a whole week his mind was occupied with the question of the necessity of his being forced for these excursions; and on Sunday, the 30th of May, he began his preparations. After reading all the necessary guidebooks, he made his purchases,

THE FIRST BEFORE the one when he was, 6, for the first time in his life, to throw a hook into a river, Monsieur Patisson sought, for eighty centuries, "How to Become a Perfect Fisherman." In this work he learned many useful things, but he was especially impressed by the style, and he retained the following passage:

"In a week, if you wish, without hooks, without rules, to fish successfully, to the left or to the right, up or down stream, in the minority manner that halts at no difficulty, then fish before, during and after a storm, when the clouds break and the sky is streaked with lightning, when the earth shakes with the grumbling thunder; it is then that, either through hunger or terror, all the fish forget their habits in a turbulent flight.

"In this confusion follow or neglect all favorable signs, and just go on fishing; you will catch no vicious."

In order to catch fish of all sizes, he bought three well-perfected poles, made to be used as a cane in the city, which, on the river, could be transformed into a fishing pole with a simple jerk. He bought some number fifteen hooks for gudgeon, number twelve for bream, and number six number seven for carp, and to fill his basket with carp. He bought no earth worms because he was sure of finding them everywhere; but he laid in a provision of sand worms. He had a jar full of them, and in the evening he watched them with interest. The hideous creatures swarmed in their bath of bran as they do in putrid meat. Patisson wished to practice baiting his hook. He took up one with disgust, but he had hardly placed the curved steel point against it when it split open. Twenty times he repeated this without success, and he might have continued all night had he not feared to exhaust his supply of vermin.

He left by the first train. The station was full of people equipped with fishing lines. Some, like Patisson's, looked like simple bamboo canes; others, in one piece, pointed their slender ends to the skies. They looked like a forest of slender sticks, which mingled and clashed like swords or swayed like masts over an ocean of broad-brimmed straw hats.

When the train started Patisson could see the seen sticking out of all the windows and doors, giving to the train the appearance of a huge, briisly caterpillar winding through the fields.

Everybody got off at Courbevoie and hurried for the stage for Bezons. A crowd of fishermen crowded on top of the coach, holding their rods in their hands, giving the vehicle the appearance of a porcupine.

All along the road men were travelling in the same direction as though on a pilgrimage to an unknown Jerusalem. They were carrying fishing-lines, slender sticks resembling those carried by the faithful returning from Palestine. A tin box on a strap was fastened to their backs. They were in a hurry.

At Bezons the river appeared. People were lined along bath banks, men in frock coats, clerks in dark suits, others in blouses, women, children and even young girls of marriageable age; all were fishing.

Patisson started for the dam where his friend Boivin was waiting for him. The latter greeted him rather coolly. He had just made the acquaintance of a big, fat man of about forty, who seemed very strong, and whose skin was tanned. All three hired a big boat and lay off almost under the fall of the dam, where the fish are most plentiful.

Boivin was immediately ready. He baited his line and threw it out, and then sat motionless, watching the little float with extraordinary concentration. From time to time he would jerk his line out of the water and cast it farther out. The fat gentleman threw out his baited hooks, but his line was soon beside him, filled his pipe, lit it, crossed his arms, and, without another glance at the cork, he whistled the tune of the Toreador. Patisson more began trying to stick sand worms on his hooks. After about five minutes of this occupation he asked to Boivin: "Monsieur Boivin, I hope you don't disturb me, Monsieur Patisson; we are not here for pleasure!" However, he baited the line, which Patisson then threw out, carefully imitating all the motions of his friend.

The boat was tossing wildly, shaken by the waves, and spun round like a top by the current, although anchored at least twice. Patisson, absorbed in the sport, felt a vague kind of uneasiness; he was uncomfortable heavy and somewhat dizzy.

They caught nothing. Little Boivin, very nervous, was gesticulating and shaking his float against the current. Sometimes he would jerk violently without paying any attention to his line. At last Patisson, disgusted, turned toward him and said in a monotone:

"They are not biting, are they?"

He quietly replied:

"Of course not!"

Patisson surprised, looked at him.

"Do you ever catch many?"

"Never!"

"What! Never!"

The fat man, still smoking like a factory chimney, let out the following words, which completely upset his neighbor:

"It would bother me a lot if they did bite. I don't come here to fish; I come because I'm very comfortable here; I get shaken up as though I were at sea. If I take a line along, it's to do as others do."

Monsieur Patisson, on the other hand, did not feel at all well. His discomfort, at first vague, kept increasing, and finally took on a definite form. He felt, indeed, as though he were being tossed by the sea, and he was suffering from seasickness. After the first attack of vertigo had passed, he proposed leaving. but Boivin grew so furious that he was obliged to yield. He felt, however, that he could not stand the sight of the Toreador, and he sat down in the stern of the boat, facing all the motions of his friend.

Two restaurants presented themselves. One of them, very small, looked like a beer garden, and was patronized by the poorer fishermen. The other one, which had the imposing name of "Linden Cottage," looked like a middle-class residence and was frequented by the aristocracy of the rod. The two owners, rival enemies, each called each other with hatred across a large field, which separated them, and where the white house of the dam keeper and of the inspector of the life-saving department stood out against the green grass. Moreover, these two officials disagreed, one of them upholding the beer garden and the other defending the Elms, and the internal feuds which arose in these three houses reproduced the whole history of mankind.

Boivin, who knew the beer garden, wished to go there, exclaiming: "The food is very good, and it isn't expensive; you'll see. Anyhow, Monsieur Patisson, you must expect to get me tipsy the way you did last Sunday. My wife was furious, you know; and she has seen never to forgive you!"

The fat gentleman declared that he would only eat at the Elms, because it was an excellent place and the cooking was as good as in the best restaurants in Paris.

"Do as you wish," declared Boivin ;"I am going where I am accustomed to go." He left. Patisson, displeased at his friends' actions, followed the fat gentleman.

They ate together, exchanged ideas, discussed opinions and found that they were made for each other.

After the meal everyone started to fish again, but the new friends had been together. Following along the banks, they stopped near the railroad bridge and, still talking, they threw their lines in the water. The fish still refused to bite, but Patisson was now making the best of it.

A family was approaching. The father, whose whiskers stamped him as a judge, was holding an extraordinarily long rod; three boys of different sizes were carrying poles of different lengths, according to age and the mother, who was very stout, gracefully manoeuvred a charming rod with a ribbon tied to the handle. The father bowed and asked:

"Is this spot good, gentlemen?" Patisson was going to speak, when his friend answered: "Yes!" The whole family smiled and settled down beside the fishermen. The Patisson was seized with a wild desire to catch a fish, just once, any kind, any size, in order to win the consideration of these people; so he began to handle his rod as he had seen Boivin do in the morning. He would let the cork follow the current to the end of the line, jerk the hooks out of the water, make them describe a large circle in the air and throw them out again a little higher up. He had even, in his thought, caught the knack of doing this movement gracefully. He had just jerked his line out violently when he felt a sudden resistance behind him. He tugged, and a scream burst from behind him. He perceived, caught on one of his hooks, and dangling in the air a curve like a meteor, a magnificent bat which he placed right in the middle of the river.

He turned around, bewildered, dropping his pole, which followed the bat down the stream, while the fat gentleman, his new friend, lay on his back and roared with laughter. The lady, ladies and accompanying, choked with anger; her husband was outraged and demanded the price of the hat, and Patisson dived three times in vehemence.

Then the family departed in a very dignified manner.

Patisson took another rod, and, until nightfall, he gave barks to sand worms. His neighbor was sleeping peacefully on the grass. Toward seven in the evening he awoke.

"Let's go away from here!"

Then Patisson withdrew his line, gave a cry and sat down hard from astonishment. At the end of the string was a tiny fish, like a fly. When they looked at him more closely they found that he had been hooked through the stomach; the hook had caught him as it was being drawn out of the water.

Patisson was filled with a boundless, triumphant joy; he wished to have the fish fried for himself alone.

During the dinner the friends grew still more intimate. He learned that the fat gentleman lived at Argenteuil and had been sailing boats for thirty years without losing interest in the sport. He accepted to take luncheon with him the following Sunday and to take a sail in his friend's clipper, Plongeon. He became so interested in the conversation that he forget all about his catch. He did not remember it until after the coffee, and he demanded that it be brought him. It was alone in the middle of a platter, and looked like a yellow, emaciated rat; but he ate it with great pride and relish, and at night, on the omnibus, he told his neighbors that he had caught fourteen pounds of fish during the day.

TWO CELEBRITIES

Monsieur Patissot had promised his friend, the boating man, that he would spend the following Sunday with him. An unforeseen occurrence changed his plan. One evening, on the boulevard, he met one of his cousins whom he saw but very seldom. He was a pleasant journalist, well received in all classes of society, who offered to show Patissot many interesting things.

"What are you going to do next Sunday?"

"I'm going boating at Argenteuil."

"Argenteuil is a place I can't stand; there is no variety to it. Listen—I'll take you along with me. I'll introduce you to two celebrities. We will visit the homes of two artists."

"But I have been ordered to go to the country!"

"That's just where we'll go. On the way we'll call on Monsieur, at his place in Poissy; then we'll walk over to Médan, where Zola lives. I have been commissioned to obtain his next novel for our newspaper."

"Very good, wild will, I accepted the invitation. He even bought a new frock coat, as his owner was much more in vogue than a mere appearance. He was terribly afraid of saying something foolish either to the artist or to the author of Nana, as the people who spoke of an art which they have never professed.

He mentioned his fears to his cousin, who laughed and answered: "Don't trouble to get them compliments, nothing but compliments, always compliments; in that way, if you say something foolish it will be overlooked. Do you know Meissonier's paintings?"

"I should say I do."

"Have you read the Rougon-Macquart series?"

"From first to last."

"That's enough. Mention a painting from time to time, speak of a novel here and there and add:

"Superb! Extraordinary! Delightful! Archnique! Wonderfully powerful!" In that way you can always get out of it. Don't mind how you are very blase about everything, but admiration always pleases an artist."

Sunday morning the party left for Poissy.

Just a few steps from the station, at the end of the church square, they found Meissonier's mansion. It resembled a large low door, painted red, which the Rougon-Macquarist of alley of vines, the author stopped and, turning toward his companion, asked:

"What is your idea of Meissonier?"

"Never hesitate!" he replied, he decided. "A little man, well groomed, clean shaven, a soldierly appearance." The other smiled: "All right, some doing." The pleasant bachelor in the form of a chalet appeared to the left; and to the right side, almost opposite, was the house. It was a square, two-story building that, where there was a mixture of everything, a mingling of Gothic fortress, manor, villa, castle, residence, country house, pigeonnier, a twixt combination of Eastern and Western architecture. The two friends stopped and seemed to see a classical architect crazy, and yet there was something whimsical and pretty about it. The door was half-open and built under the direction of the artist.

They went in, a collection of trunks entombed in a hallway. Then, as the door was opened, dressed in a jumper. The striking thing about him was his beard. He bowed to the visitors, saying: "Wait, I'll be at it, I hope that you will excuse me; I only returned yesterday, and everything is all upset here. Please be seated." The door of the dining-room, himself: "My dear master, I only dropped in to pay my respects while passing by." Meissonier was much embarrassed, so, leaning at every word of his friend's, as though moving automatically, and his gaze wandering, murmuring: What a su—superb property!" The artist, flattered, smiled, and suggested visiting it.

He led first into a little room, a pavilion of feudal aspect, where his former studio was. Then they crossed a parlor, a dining-room, and reached a hall of Saracenic style of art, of beautiful Beauvais, Gobelin and Flanders tapestries. But the strange external luxury of ornamentation was lost in the hall, a novel of immense stairways. A magnificent grand stairway, a secret stairway, a stairway for servants' stairway in another, stairways everywhere! Patissot, by chance, opened a door and stepped back astonished, as if he had opened a temple, this place of which respectable people only mention the name in English, an original and Japanese temple, with its gilded idols, its fretted up like a pagoda, and the decoration of which must certainly have caused a great effort.

They next visited the park, which was complex, varied, with winding paths and full of old trees. But the artist hurried them along, saying, and with many thanks, he took leave of them. As they left the house, the author of Patissot asked him: "Has Monsieur Meissonier owned this place for a long time?" The man answered: "Oh, monsieur, he is purchasing, I guess he bought the grounds in 1846. But, as for the house! he has already torn down and built than five or six times. I don't know can him at least two millions!" As Patissot left he was seized with an immense respect for this man, not on account of his talent, genius, or talent, but for putting so much money into a whim, because the bourgeois deprive themselves of all pleasure to satisfy their money.

After crossing Poissy, they struck out on the road that leads to Médan. The author of Villaines, were down a little; and finally reached the neighborhood inhabited by the author of the Rougon-Macquarist.

A pretty old church with two towers appeared on the left. They walked along a short distance, and a passing farmer directed them to the writer's dwelling.

Before entering, they crossed a little lawn, a large building, square and new, very high, seemed, as in the fable of the mountain and the mouse, to have given birth to a little house white house, which needed near it. This little house was the original dwelling, and had been left by the former owner. The tower had been erected by Zola.

They rang the bell. An enormous dog, a cross between a Saint Bernard and a Newfoundland, began to howl so terribly that Patissot felt a vague desire to retrace his steps. He a servant ran forward, recognized Patissot, opened the door, and took the journalist's card in order to carry it to his master.

"I hope that he will receive us," murmured Patissot. "It would be too bad if we had come all this distance to see nothing."

His companion smiled and answered: "Never fear, I have a plan for getting in."

But the servant, who had returned, simply asked them to follow him.

They entered the new building, and Patissot, who was quite embarrassed, was surprised to be climbed a stairway of ancient style which led to the second story.

At the same time he was trying to picture to himself this man whose glorious name echoes at present in all corners of the earth, and the extraordinary personality of the, the real or feigned indignation of scores, the enviable reputation of the author of Nana, the author of a mass of readers, and the frenzied admiration of a great number. He expected to see a kind of Gambetta giant, of overwhelming aspect, with a thundering voice and an appearance little prepossessing at first.

The door opened on a room of uncommonly large dimensions, broad and high, lighted by an enormous window looking out over the valley. Near the chimney stood the stalls, on the left, a monumental fireplace, flanked by two stone men, could have burned whole trees of a cook in one day. Immense table littered with books, papers and magazines covered the left side of the apartment, and a great and that is first engrossed the eye, and the attention was only afterward drawn to the man, stretched out on a large sofa near an Oriental divan where twenty persons could have slept. He took a few steps toward them, bowed, and, without a word, sat down and turned back to his divan, where he sat with one leg drawn under him. A book lay open beside him, and in his hand he held a long white paper- cutter, the end of which he observed from time to time with one eye, closing the other with the protruding lower lip, a near-sighed person.

While the journalist explained the purpose of the visit, and the writer listened to him without yet answering, at times staring at the ceiling, Patissot, who was more embarrassed, was observing this celebrity.

Hardly forty, he was of medium height, fatty, and with a face of a Roman second look. His head (very similar to those found in many Italian paintings of the sixteenth century), without being beautiful, in the first sight sense of the word, gave an impression of great strength of character, power and intelligence. Short but strong and powerful in the jaw, with developed forehead. A straight nose stopped short, as if cut off, and nostrils so open that, by which was covered with a black mustache, over the whole chin was a closely-cropped beard. The face, with the eyes half-closed, was piercing, one felt that behind it there was a mind always actively at work observing people, investigating, weighing, comparing, analyzing, noting the heart. This strong, round head was appropriate to his name, quick and short, with the sounding resonance of a bell or a trumpet.

When the journalist had fully explained his proposition, the writer answered him that he did not care to be disturbed in his arrangement, that he would, however, think on the matter over, that he would write yes yet sufficiently defined. Then he stopped. It was a dismissal, and the two men, a little confused, arose. As they were leaving, the author of this well-known person to say something to him, anything, some word which he could repeat to his colleagues. Patissot, in his turn, he stammered: "Oh, monsieur! If you know how I appreciate your works!" The other bowed, but answered nothing. The interview was cold and continued: "It is a great honor for me to speak to you to-day." The writer once more bowed, but still said nothing. Patissot, who looked, noticed, and, completely losing his head, he added a he recreated: "What a su-up superb property!"

Then, in the heart of the man of letters, the landowner, and the proprietor, the Parisian window to show them the immense stretch of view. An endless horizon broadened out on villages, displayed, Vernon, Bonnières, Fontainebleau, Chantecloup, all the heights of Hautrie, and the Seine as far as the eye could see. The two visitors, delighted, complimented him, and the house was opened to them. They saw everything, down to the dainty kitchen, whose walls and ceiling were covered with porcelain plates ornamented with blue designs, which extended the wonder of the visitors.

"How did you happen to buy this place?" asked the journalist.

The author, fatigued that, while looking for a cottage to hire for the summer, he had found the little house, which was for sale for several thousand francs, and, almost nothing. He immediately bought it.

But, pointing that you have added must have cost you a good deal.

The writer smiled, and answered: "Yes, quite a little."

The two men left. The journalist, taking Patissot by the arm, was philosophizing in a low voice:

"Every general has his Waterloo," he said, "every Balzac has his Jardies, and every artist living in the country feels like a landed proprietor."

They took the train at the station of Villaines, and, on the way home, Patissot loudly mentioned the names of the famous painter and of the great novelist as though they were his friends. He even allowed people to think that he had taken luncheon with one and dinner with the other.

THE CELEBRATION is approaching and preliminary quivers are already running through the streets, just as the ripples disturb the water preparatory to a storm. The shops, draped with flags, display a variety of gay-colored bunting materials, and the dry-goods people deceive one about the three colors as grocers do about the weight of candles. Little by little, hearts warm up to the matter; people speak about it in the street after dinner; ideas are exchanged:

"What a celebration it will be, my friend, what a celebration!"

"Have you heard the news? All the rulers are coming incognito, as bourgeois, in order to see it."

"I hear that the Emperor of Russia has arrived; he expects to go about everywhere with the Prince of Wales."

"It certainly will be a fine celebration!"

"It is going to a celebration; what Monsieur Patissot, Parisian bourgeois, calls a celebration; one of these nameless tumults which, for fifteen years, suffice from one other to the other, every ugly specimen tugged out in its finest, a mob of perspiring bodies, where side by side are tossed about the stout gentlemen decked in red, white and blue ribbons, grown fat behind her counter and panting from lack of breath, the rickety clerk with his wife and brat in tow, the laborer carrying his youngest astride his neck, the overdressed provincial with his foolish, dazed expression, the groom, barely shaved and still spreading the perfume of the stable. And the foreigners dressed like monkeys, English women like giraffes, the water-carrier, cleaned up for the occasion, and the innumerable plains of Saint Denis, inundated, inoffensive, happy, amused at everything. All this crowding and pressing, the sweat and dust, and the turmoil, all these eddies of human flesh, trampling of corns beneath the feet of our neighbors, this city all topsy-turvy, these vile odors, these frantic efforts toward nothing, the breath of millions of people, all redolent of garlic, give us Monsieur Patissot all the joy which it is possible for his heart to hold.

"After reading the proclamation of the mayor on the walls of his district he had made his preparations.

This bit of prose said:

"I wish to call your attention particularly to the part of individuals in this celebration. Decorate your homes, illuminate your windows. Get together, open up a subscription in order to give to your houses and to your street a more brilliant and more artistic appearance than the neighboring houses and streets.

Then Monsieur Patissot tried to imagine how he could give to his home an artistic appearance.

One serious obstacle stood in the way. His only window looked out on a courtyard, a narrow, dark shaft, where only the rats could have seen his three Japanese lanterns.

He needed a public opening. He found it. On the first floor of his house lived a rich man, a gentleman and a royalist, whose coachman, also a reactionary, occupied a garret-room on the sixth floor, facing the street. Monsieur Patissot supposed that by paying (every concession can be bought) he could obtain the use of the room for the day. He proposed five francs to this citizen of the whip for the use of the room from noon till midnight. The offer was immediately accepted.

Then he began to buy himself with the decorations. Three flags, four lanterns, was that enough to give to this box an artistic appearance—to express all the noble feelings of his soul? No; assuredly not! But, notwithstanding diligent search and highly meditation, Monsieur Patissot could think of nothing else. He consulted his neighbors, who were surprised at the question; he questioned his colleagues—every one had bought lanterns and flags, some adding, for the occasion, red, white and blue bunting.

Then he began to ruin his brains for some original idea. He frequented the cafes, questioning the patrons; they lacked imagination. Then one morning he went out on top of an omnibus. A respectable-looking gentleman was smoking a cigar beside him, a little farther away a laborer was smoking his pipe upside down, near the driver two young fellows were joking, and clerks of every description were going to business for three cents.

Before the stores stacks of fancy goods trembled under the rising sun. Patissot turned to his neighbor.

"It is going to be a fine celebration, he said. The gentleman looked at him sideways and answered in a haughty manner:

"That makes no difference to me!"

"You are not going to take part in it?" asked the surprised clerk. The other shook his head disdainfully and declared:

"They make me tired with their celebration! Whose celebration is this? The government's? I do not recognize the government, monsieur!"

But Patissot, as government employee, was his superior manner, and answered in a stern voice:

"Monsieur, the Republic is the government."

His neighbor was not in the least disturbed, and, pushing his hands down in his pockets, he exclaimed:

"Well, and what then? It makes no difference to me. Whether it's for the Republic or something else, I don't care! What I want, monsieur, is to know my government. I saw Charles X. and adhered to him, monsieur; I saw Louis-Philippe and adhered to him, monsieur; I saw Napoleon and adhered to him; but I never saw the Republic."

The other grumbled:

"Well, them, show him to me!"

Patissot shrugged his shoulders.

"Every one can see him; he's not shut up in a closet!"

Suddenly the fat man grew angry.

"Excuse me, monsieur, he cannot be seen! I have personally cried more than a hundred times, monsieur. I have posted myself near the Elysee; he did not come out. A passer-by informed me that he was playing billiards in the café opposite; I went to the café opposite; he was not there. I had been promised that he would go to Mehun for the convention; I went to Mehun, I did not see him. At last I became weary. I did not even see Monsieur Gambetta, and I do not know a single deputy."

He was growing excited:

"A government, monsieur, is made to be seen; that's what it's there for, and for nothing else. One must be able to know that on such and such a day at such and such hour government will pass through such and such a street. Then one goes there and is satisfied."

Patissot, now calm, was enjoying his arguments.

"It is true," he said, "that it is agreeable to know the people by whom one is governed."

The gentleman continued more gently:

"Do you know how I would manage the celebration? Well, monsieur, I would have a procession of gilded cars, like those at Cannes at the crowning of kings; in them I would parade all the members of the government, from the president to the deputies, throughout Paris all day long. In this manner, at least, every one would know by sight the personnel of the state."

But one of the toughs near the coachman turned around, exclaiming:

"And the fatted ox, where would you put him?"

A laugh ran round the two benches. Patissot understood the objection, and murmured:

"It might not perhaps be very dignified."

The gentleman thought the matter over and admitted it.

"Then," he said, "I would place them in view some place, so that every one could see them without getting out of his seat; for the Elysee, the Palais-Bourbon, the place de l'Etoile, for instance; and I would have the whole population pass before them. That would be very imposing."

Once more the tough turned round and said:

"Could have to take telescopes to see their faces."

The gentleman did not answer; he continued:

"It's just like the presentation of the flags! There ought, to be some pretext, a mimic war ought to be organized, and the banners would be presented to the troops as a reward. I had an idea about which I wrote to the minister; but he has not deigned to answer me. As the taking of the Bastille has been chosen for the date of the national celebration, a reproduction of this event might be made; there would be a pasteboard Bastille, fused up by a mimic pattier and overturned by a mock mob; the whole Column of July. Then, monsieur, the troop would attack. That would be a magnificent spectacle as well as a lesson, to show the army itself overthrown the attempts of tyranny. Then this Bastille would be set fire to and from the midst of the flames would appear the Column with the genius of Liberty, symbol of a new order and of the freedom of the people."

This time every one was listening to him and finding his idea excellent. An old gentleman exclaimed:

"That is a great idea, monsieur, which does you honor. It is to be regretted that the government did not adopt it."

A young man declared that actors ought to recite the "Lambes" of Barbier through the streets in order to teach the people art and literary simultaneously.

These propositions excited general enthusiasm. Each one wished to have his word; all were wrought up to frenzy. Patissot recognized a few strains of the Marseillaise were heard, the laborer started the song, and everybody joined in, roaring the chorus. The exalted nature of the song and its wild rhythm fired the driver, who lashed his horses to a gallop. Monsieur Patissot was bawling at the top of his lungs, and the passengers were flushed, frightened, were wondering what hurricane had struck them.

At last they stopped, and Monsieur Patissot, judging his neighbor to be a man of initiative, consulted him about the preparations which he expected to make:

"Lanterns and flags are all right," said Patissot; "but I prefer something better."

The other thought for a long time, but found nothing. Then, in despair, the clerk bought three flags and four lanterns.

Mr. Mandrake's idea seemed to me a monumental wickedness, treasonous, and, in the strictest sense of the word, unnatural. Of the two conspirators which, in their savage, sordid, and unnatural plot, I had seen, Mr. Mandrake was the more dangerous, because of the moderation which, owing to an ethnic, or perhaps a family, or perhaps a personal, or perhaps a political, or perhaps a combination of all these, he had inherited, or, he had implicitly accepted, from his ancestors, and which, in his mind, was mixed with a solid desire for conscience, for never, from unchanged, though at times, from unchanging, lips, I had heard the phrase of a good and honest man, which, in his mouth, was binding under his oath.

Mr. Mandrake was a gentleman, and he believed in the sanctity of his word. He had, in the Civil War, distinguished himself, and had, afterwards, been a member of the Confederate Congress, and, in the Reconstruction Period, had been a gentleman, and, in the Reconstruction Period, had been a good and honest man, and, in the Reconstruction Period, had been a good and honest man, and, in the Reconstruction Period, had been a good and honest man

A RECOLLECTION

SUCH MANY RECOLLECTIONS of coming to one in the soft sunlight of early spring! It was an age when all was pleasure, cheerful, charming, romantic. How exquisite are the remembrances of those old springtimes!

Do you recall, old friends and brothers, those happy years when life was nothing but a triumph and an occasion for mirth? Do you recall the days of wandering around, from our jolly poetry, our walks in the fresh, green woods, our drinks in the wine-shops on the banks of the Seine and our unmitigated and delightful little fricassees?

I will tell you about one of these. It was twelve years ago and already appears to me as old as old that it seems to me it let longed to the other end of life, before middle life, and before the Revolution of February had hardly perceived the end of the journey.

I was then twenty-five. I had just come to Paris. I was in a garrison town, and on Sundays were to me like unusual festivals, full of exuberant happiness, although nothing remarkable occurred.

Now it is Sunday every day, but I regret the time when I had only one Sunday in the week. How enjoyable it was! I had six francs to spend!

On this particular morning I awoke with an access of freedom that I felt as keen as well-the sense of emancipation, of rest, of quiet and of independence.

I opened my window. The weather was charming. A blue sky full of sunlight and swallows spread above the town.

I dressed quickly and set out, intending to spend the day in the woods. Following the air of the green trees, for I am originally a rustic, wandering through the streets and reaching the trees.

There was ante and happy in the warmth and the light. The front of the houses was bathed in sunlight, the passers-by carried their coats on their arms and there was an air of gaiety in the streets, in the faces of the inhabitants, lighting them up with a ray of joy, all beings and all things experienced a secret satisfaction at the rising of the fine sun.

I walked towards the Seine to take the Boulevards, which lead to the Saint-Cloud.

How I loved waiting for the boat on the wharf.

It seemed to me that I was about to set out for the ends of the world, for new and wonderful lands. I saw the long navigation under, yonder under the second bridge, looking quite small and full of life and hope, then growing larger and ever larger, as it drew near, until it stopped like a mad monster.

It came up to the wharf and I went on board. Then, I passed the Boulevards by the Sunday clothes, startling toilettes, gaudy ribbons and bright scarlet designs. I took up a position in the bows, watching and laughing at the quays, the trees, the houses and the people disappearing behind us. And suddenly I perceived the great viaduct of Point-du-Jour, the Point-du-Jour, that is was the end of Paris, the beginning of the country, and I felt the double rent of the bridge, the suddenly spreading out as though it had regained space and liberty, became all at once the peaceful river which flows through the plains, alongside the wooded hills, amid the meadows, and the fresh air of the country.

After passing between two islands the boat-the worn round a curve-and I dropped down with white houses. A voice called out: "The Meudon! Get ready!" Then, on "Seven," and still further, "Saint-Cloud."

I went on shore and walked hurriedly through the little streets to the road leading to the wood.

I had brought with me a map of the environs of Paris, so that I might not lose my way amid the paths which cross every direction these little forests where Parisians take their marriage.

As soon as I was unperceived I began to study my guide, which seemed to be perfectly clear. I was to turn to the left, then to the left, then again to the left and I should reach Versailles by retracing my steps.

I walked slowly beneath the young leaves, drinking in the air, forgetting the whole of young buds and sap. I sauntered along, forgetting my troubles and my cares, my duties, my colleagues, my documents, and thinking of the good things that were sure to come to me, of the relief unknown and unexpected in the future. A thousand recollections of childhood came to me, awakened by the sweet country odors, and I walked along, permeated with the fragrance, living in memory, with the emotional enchantment of the woods warmed by the sun and rain.

At times I sat down to look at all sorts of little flowers growing on a bank, with the names of which I was familiar. I recognized them all just as if they were the ones I had seen in my native country. Violets, wild cyclamen, violet, delicate, dainty, perched on long stems on the ground. Some were in full bloom, other shapes, short, long, of peculiar form, frightful, and microscopic monsters, climbed quietly up the stalks of grass which hid them from their weight.

Then I went to sleep for some hours in a hollow and started off again, refreshed by my sleep.

In front of me lay an enchanting pathway and through its somewhat worn foliage the sun poured down drops of light on the magnificent which grew there. It stretched out unmistakably quiet and delicious, with an occasional big wasp, who would stop buzzing and then re-up from the ground, and then continue his way.

All at once I perceived at the end of the path two persons, a man and a woman, continuing my way. Annoyed at being disturbed in my quiet walk, I was about to dive into the thicket, when I thought I heard someone calling me. The woman was, in a loud voice, calling me. I was, in his shirt sleeves, his coat on his arm, and his waistcoat, he gave a signal of distress.

I was towards them. They were walking hurriedly, their faces very red, the sixth short, sweaty and with a big wet spot on his back. They both looked annoyed and fatigued.

The woman asked:

"Can you tell me, monsieur, where we are?"

"It was I, Ah, it is my fault now! Was it I who wanted to go out without getting any information, pretending that I knew the way? Was my way? Was it I who wanted to take the road to the top of the hill? Was it I who said that I recognized the road? Was it I who undertook to take charge of you?"

She had not finished speaking when her husband, as if he had suddenly gone crazy, gave a prolonged scream, I felt sorry that they could not be described in any language, but such a sounded like "ouah."

The young woman did not appear to be surprised at my presence.

"No, really, some people are so stupid and they pretend they know everything. Was it I who took the train to Versailles? Was it I who of the train to Havre-will-me, was it I? Was it I who said that M. Lescouvreur lived in the Rue du Martyrs? Was it I who would not believe that Colonel was at Saint-Cloud?"

She went on, furious, with a surprising flow of language, accumulating, heaping up, piled, the most unexpected and the most overwhelming accusations drawn from the intimate relations of their daily life. Meanwhile her husband for all his actions, all his ideas, all his feelings, was responsible for his office, for his life from the time of their marriage up to the present time.

He strove to check her, to calm her and stammered:

"But, my dear, it is useless-before monsieur. We are making ourselves ridiculous. This does not interest monsieur."

And he cast resentful glances into the thicket as though he sought to find a practical and mysterious depths, in order to flee thither, so escape and flee and flee and flee, and from time to time he uttered a fresh scream, prolonged and shrill "ouiiah." I took this to be a nervous affection.

The young woman, suddenly turning towards me and changing her tone with singular rapidity, said:

"If monsieur will kindly allow us, we will accompany him on the road, so as not to lose our way again, and he shall, if monsieur, so sleep in the wood."

I bowed. The wife took my arm and began to talk about a thousand things- about herself, her life, her family, her business. They were glaziers in the Rue, Saint Sauveur.

Her husband walked beside her, carrying his coat, glances into the thicket and screaming "ouiiah" every five moments.

At last I inquired:

"Why do you scream like that?"

"I have lost my pocket-book," he replied in a tone of discouragement and despair.

"How is that-you have lost your dog?"

"Yes. He was just a cur! I wish he had never been outside the shop. I wanted to take him to have a cut in the wood. He had cut his seen the grass not the leaves and he was alonee wild. He began to run about and I lost sight of him disappeared in the wood. I must also add that he was greatly afraid of the wolves. That may have driven him mad. I kept on calling him, but he has not come back. He will die of hunger in there."

Without turning towards her husband, the young woman said:

"If you had left his chain on, it would not have happened. Dogs are stupid and as stupid as you are they do not keep dog."

"But, my dear, it was you-" he murmured timidly.

She stopped short, and looking into his eyes as if she were going to tear them out, she began again to cast in his face innumerable reproaches.

It was growing dark. The cloud of vapor that covers the country at dusk was slowly rising and there was a poetry in the air, induced by the peculiar and enchanting freshness of the atmosphere that one feels when night is nigh-full.

Suddenly the young man stopped, and feeling his body feverishly, exclaimed:

"Oh, I think that I-"

She looked at him.

"Well, what?"

"I feel not notice that I had my coat on my arm."

"Well-!"

"I have lost my pocketbook-my money is in it."

She shook with anger and choked with indignation.

"That was all that was lacking. How stupid you are! Have you enough to live on? I think that I could have married such an idiot! Well, go and look for it, and see that you find it. I am going to visit Versailles with monsieur. Do as I bid you."

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OUR LETTERS

Eight hours of railway travel induce sleep for some persons and insomnia for others; I belong to the latter. Sleepless nights are the only compensation for the following night.

At about five o'clock I arrived at the estate of Abelle, which belongs to my friends, the Mares d'Arcus, to spend three weeks there. It is a pretty house, built by one of their grandfathers in the style of the latter half of the last century. Therefore it has that intimate character of dwellings that have always been inhabited, furnished and enlivened by the same people. Nothing changes; nothing alters the soul of the dwelling, from which the furniture has never been taken out, the tapestries never unrolled, thus becoming worn out, faded, disjointed, on the same walls. Nowadays the old furniture leaves the place; only from time to time it is moved a little to make room for a new piece, which enters there like a new-born child in the midst of brothers and sisters.

The house is on a hill in the center of a park which slopes down to the river, where there is a little stone bridge. Beyond the water the fields stretch out in the distance, and here one can see the cows wandering around, pasturing on the moist grass; their eyes seem full of the dew, mist and freshness of the pasture. I love this dwelling, just as one loves a thing which one ardently desires to possess. I recover every two years a museum with infinite delights; I leave with regret.

After I had dined with this friendly family, by whom I was received like a relative, I asked my friend, Paul Mures: "Which room did you give me this year?"

"Aunt Rose's room."

An hour later, followed by her three children, two little girls and a boy, Madame Mures d'Arcus installed me in Aunt Rose's room, where I had not yet slept.

When I was alone I examined the walls, the furniture, the general aspect of the room, in order to attune my mind to it. I knew it but little, as I had entered it only once or twice, and I looked indifferently at a pastel portrait of Aunt Rose, who gave her name to the room.

This old Aunt Rose, with her pale, look-ing at me from behind the glass, made very little impression on my mind. She looked to me like a woman of former days, with prinicples and precepts as strong as the maxims of morality as on cooking recipes, one of these old aunts who are the bugbear of gaiety and the stern and wrinkled angel of provincial families.

I never had heard her spoken of; I knew nothing of her life or of her death. Did she belong to this century or to the preceding one? Had she left this earth after a calm or a stormy existence? Had she given up to heaven the pure soul of an old maid, or the cold soul of a spouse, the tender one of a mother, or one moved by love? What difference did it make? The name alone, "Aunt Rose," seemed ridiculous, common, ugly.

I picked up a candle and looked at her severe face, hanging far up in an old gilt frame. I then, as I found it insignificant, disagreeable, even unsympathetic, I began to examine the furniture. It dated from the period of Louis XV. and the Revolution and the Empire. Not a chair, not a curtain had entered this room since then, and it gave out the subtle odor of memories, which is the combined odor of wood, dust, linen, flowers, and tobacco or places wherein have lived hearts that have loved and suffered.

I retired but did not sleep. After I had tossed about for an hour or two, I decided to get up and write some letters.

I opened a little mahogany desk with brass trimings, which was placed between the two windows, in hope of finding some ink and paper; but all I found was a quill-pen, very much worn, and chewed at the end. I thought about to close this piece of furniture, when a shining spot attracted my attention it looked like the yellow head of a nail. I scratched it with my finger, and it seemed to move. I pushed in between two finger-nails, and pulled as hard as I could. It came toward my hand, and I saw a small gap which had been skipped in the hole in the wood and remained hidden there.

Why? I immediately thought that it must have served to work some secret spring had a secret, and I looked. It took a long time. After about two hours of investigation, I discovered another hole opposite the first one, but at the bottom of a groove. Into this hole I put my little shelf sprang. toward my face, and I saw two packages of yellow letters, tied with a blue ribbon.

I read them. Here are two of them:

So you wish me to return to you your letters, my dearest friend. Here they are, but you pain me to obey. Of what use are afraid? That I might lose them? But they are under lock and key. Do you fear that they might be stolen? I guard against that, for they are my dearest treasure.

Yes, it pains me deeply. I wondered whether, perhaps you might not be feeling some regret? We regret at having loved me, I know that you still do, but the regret of having expressed on white paper this living love in hours when your heart did not confide to you but in the pen that you held in your hand. When we love, we have need of confession, need of talking or writing, and we either talk or write. Words of love, those sweet words which are so, and tendemess, warm and light, which escape as soon as they are uttered, which remain in the memory alone, but which we can neither see, touch nor kiss, as one can with the words written by your hand.

Your letters? Yes, I am returning them to you! But with what sorrow!

Undoubtedly, you must have had an after thought of delicate shame at expressions that are ineffaceable. In your sensitive and timid soul you must have regretted having written to a man that you loved him. You remembered instances that called up recollections, and you said to yourself: "I will make ashes of those words."

Be satisfied, be calm. Here are your letters. I love you.

MY FRIEND.

No, you have not understood me, you have not guessed. I do not regret, and I never shall, that I told you of my affection.

I will always write to you, but you must return my letters to me as soon as you have read them.

I shall shock you, my friend, when I tell you the reason for this demand. It is not jealousy, as you imagined, but practical. I am afraid, not of you, but of some mischance. I am guilty. I do not wish my fault to affect others than myself.

I understand me well. You and I may both die. You might fall off your horse, since you ride every day; you might die a sudden sudden death, from a duel, from heart disease, from a carriage accident, in a thousand ways. For, if there is only one death, there are more ways of its reaching us than there are days or us to live.

Then your sisters, your brother, or your sister-in-law might find my letters! Do you think that they have me? I doubt it. And then, even if they adored me, is it possible for two women and one man to know a secret—such a secret—and not to tell of it?

I seem to be saying very disagreeable things, speaking first of your death, and then suspecting the discreteness of your relatives.

But don't all die sudden or not? Are I and you is almost certain that one of us will precede the other under the ground. We must therefore forese all dangers, even the most one.

As for me, I will keep your letters beside mine, in the secretr of my little desk. I will show them to you there, sleeping side by side in their silken hiding place, full of our love, like lovers in a tomb.

You will say to me: "But if you should die first, my dear, your husband will find these letters."

Oh! I fear nothing. First of all, he does not know the secret of my desk, and then he will look for it. And even if he finds it after my death, I fear nothing.

Did you ever stop to think of all the love letters that have been found after death? I have been thinking of this for a long time, and that is the reason I decided to ask you for my letters.

Think that never, do you understand, never, does a woman burn, tear or destroy the letters in which it is told her that she is loved. That is our whole life, our whole hope, expectation and dream. These little papers which bear our name in caressing terms are lists which we adore, they are the angels in which we are the saints. Our love letters are our titles to beauty, grace, seduction, the intimate vanity of our womanhood; they are the treasures of our heart. No, a woman does not destroy these secret and delicious archives of her life.

But, like everybody else, we die, and then—then these letters are found! Who finds them? The husband. Then what does he do? Nothing. He burns them.

Oh, I have thought a great deal about that! Just think that every day women are dying who have been loved; every day the traces and proofs of their fault fall into the hands of their husbands, and that there is never a scandal, never a duel.

Think, my dear, of what a man's heart is. He avenges himself on a living woman; he fights with the man who has dishonored her, kills him while she lives, because, well, why? We do not know exactly why. But after her death, he finds similar proofs, he burns them and no one is the wiser, and he continues to make hands with the friend of the dead woman, and feels quite at ease that these letters should not have fallen into strange hands, and that they are destroyed.

Oh, how many times I know among my friends who must have burned such proofs, and who pretend to know nothing, and yet who would have fought mully had they found them when she was still alive! But she is dead. Honor has changed. The tomb is the boundary of conjugal sinning.

Therefore, I can safely keep our letters, which, in your hands, would be a menace to both of us. Do you dare to say that I am not right?

I love you and kiss you.

I raised my eyes to the portrait of Aunt Rose, and as I looked at her severe, wrinkled face, I thought of all those women's souls which we do not know, and which we suppose to be so different from what they really are, those inborn and ingenuous craftiness we never can penetrate, their quiet duplicity; and a verse of De Vigny returned to my memory:

"Always this comrade whose heart is uncertain."

12

THE LOVE OF LONG AGO

THE OLD-FASHIONED CHATEAU was built on a wooded knoll in the midst of tall trees with dark-green foliage; the park extended to a great distance, in one direction to the edge of the forest, in another to the distant country. A few yards from the front of the house was a huge stone basin with marble ladies taking a bath; other, basins were seen at intervals down to the foot of the slope, and a stream of water fell in cascades from one basin to another.

From the manor house, which preserved the grace of a superannuated coquette, down to the grottos incrusted with shell-work, where slumbered the loves of a bygone age, everything in this antique demesne had retained the physiognomy of former days. Everything seemed to speak still of ancient customs, of the manners of long ago, of former gallantries, and of the elegant trivialities so dear to our grandmothers.

In a parlor in the style of Louis XV, whose walls were covered with shepherds paying court to shepherdesses, beautiful ladies in hoop-skirts, and gallant gentlemen in wigs, a very old woman, who seemed dead as soon as she ceased to move, was almost lying down in a large easy-chair, at each side of which hung a thin, mummy-like hand.

Her dim eyes were gazing dreamily toward the distant horizon as if they sought to follow through the park the visions of her youth. Through the open window every now and then came a breath of air laden with the odor of grass and the perfume of flowers. It made her white locks flutter around her wrinkled forehead and old memories float through her brain.

Beside her, on a tapestried stool, a young girl, with long fair hair hanging in braids down her back, was embroidering an altar-cloth. There was a pensive expression in her eyes, and it was easy to see that she was dreaming, while her agile fingers flew over her work.

But the old lady turned round her head, and said:

"Berthe, read me something out of the newspapers, that I may still know sometimes what is going on in the world."

The young girl took up a newspaper, and cast a rapid glance over it.

"There is a great deal about politics, grandmamma; shall I pass that over?"

"Yes, yes, darling. Are there no love stories? Is gallantry, then, dead in France, that they no longer talk about abductions or adventures as they did formerly?"

The girl made a long search through the columns of the newspaper.

"Here is one," she said. "It is entitled 'A Love Drama!'"

The old woman smiled through her wrinkles. "Read that for me," she said.

And Berthe commenced. It was a case of vitriol throwing. A wife, in order to avenge herself on her husband's mistress, had burned her face and eyes. She had left the Court of Assizes acquitted, declared to be innocent, amid the applause of the crowd.

The grandmother moved about excitedly in her chair, and exclaimed:

"This is horrible–why, it is perfectly horrible!

See whether you can find anything else to read to me, darling."

Berthe again made a search; and farther down among the reports of criminal cases, she read:

"'Gloomy Drama. A shop girl, no longer young, allowed herself to be led astray by a young man. Then, to avenge herself on her lover, whose heart proved fickle, she shot him with a revolver. The unhappy man is maimed for life. The jury, all men of moral character, condoning the illicit love of the murderess, honorably acquitted her.'"

This time the old grandmother appeared quite shocked, and, in a trembling voice, she said:

"Why, you people are mad nowadays. You are mad! The good God has given you love, the only enchantment in life. Man has added to this gallantry the only distraction of our dull hours, and here you are mixing up with it vitriol and revolvers, as if one were to put mud into a flagon of Spanish wine."

Berthe did not seem to understand her grandmother's indignation.

"But, grandmamma, this woman avenged herself. Remember she was married, and her husband deceived her."

The grandmother gave a start.

"What ideas have they been filling your head with, you young girls of today?"

Berthe replied:

"But marriage is sacred, grandmamma."

The grandmother's heart, which had its birth in the great age of gallantry, gave a sudden leap.

"It is love that is sacred," she said. "Listen, child, to an old woman who has seen three generations, and who has had a long, long experience of men and women. Marriage and love have nothing in common. We marry to found a family, and we form families in order to constitute society. Society cannot dispense with marriage. If society is a chain, each family is a link in that chain. In order to weld those links, we always seek metals of the same order. When we marry, we must bring together suitable conditions; we must combine fortunes, unite similar races and aim at the common interest, which is riches and children. We marry only once my child, because the world requires us to do so, but we may love twenty times in one lifetime because nature has made us like this. Marriage, you see, is law, and love is an instinct which impels us, sometimes along a straight, and sometimes along a devious path. The world has made laws to combat our instincts–it was necessary to make them; but our instincts are always stronger, and we ought not to resist them too much, because they come from God; while the laws only come from men. If we did not perfume life with love, as much love as possible, darling, as we put sugar into drugs for children, nobody would care to take it just as it is."

Berthe opened her eyes wide in astonishment. She murmured:

"Oh! grandmamma, we can only love once."

The grandmother raised her trembling hands toward Heaven, as if again to invoke the defunct god of gallantries. She exclaimed indignantly:

"You have become a race of serfs, a race of common people. Since the Revolution, it is impossible any longer to recognize society. You have attached big words to every action, and wearisome duties to every corner of existence; you believe in equality and eternal passion. People have written poetry telling you that people have died of love. In my time poetry was written to teach men to love every woman. And we! when we liked a gentleman, my child, we sent him a page. And when a fresh caprice came into our hearts, we were not slow in getting rid of the last Lover–unless we kept both of them."

The old woman smiled a keen smile, and a gleam of roguery twinkled in her gray eye, the intellectual, skeptical roguery of those people who did not believe that they were made of the same clay as the rest, and who lived as masters for whom common beliefs were not intended.

The young girl, turning very pale, faltered out:

"So, then, women have no honor?"

The grandmother ceased to smile. If she had kept in her soul some of Voltaire's irony, she had also a little of Jean Jacques's glowing philosophy: "No honor! because we loved, and dared to say so, and even boasted of it? But, my child, if one of us, among the greatest ladies in France, had lived without a lover, she would have had the entire court laughing at her. Those who wished to live differently had only to enter a convent. And you imagine, perhaps, that your husbands will love but you alone, all their lives. As if, indeed, this could be the case. I tell you that marriage is a thing necessary in order that society should exist, but it is not in the nature of our race, do you understand? There is only one good thing in life, and that is love. And how you misunderstand it! how you spoil it! You treat it as something solemn like a sacrament, or something to be bought, like a dress."

The young girl caught the old woman's trembling hands in her own.

"Hold your tongue, I beg of you, grandmamma!"

And, on her knees, with tears in her eyes, she prayed to Heaven to bestow on her a great passion, one sole, eternal passion in accordance with the dream of modern poets, while the grandmother, kissing her on the forehead, quite imbued still with that charming, healthy reason with which gallant philosophers tinctured the thought of the eighteenth century, murmured:

"Take care, my poor darling! If you believe in such folly as that, you will be very unhappy."

THEY HAD BEEN great friends all winter and for six months in the country, they had lost sight of each other after leaving school, and had met again when they were old and gray-haired. One of them had married, but the other had remained in single blessedness.

M. de Meroul lived for six months in Paris and for six months in his little chateau at Tourbeville. Having married the daughter of a neighboring squire, he had lived a good and peaceful life in the indolence of a man who has nothing to do. Of a calm and quiet disposition, and not over-intelligent he used to spend his time quietly reposing in his pasture, grieving over the customs and institutions of the day and continually repeating to his wife, who would lift her eyes, and unstitch her hands, to hearen, as a sign of energetic assent: "Good gracious! What a government!"

Madame de Meroul resembled her husband intellectually as though she had been his sister. She knew, by tradition, that one should respect "the Pope and the King."

And she loved and respected them from the bottom of her heart, without knowing why, with a pure, fervent, wife-like, maternity devotion, with the tenderness of a wellborn woman. She was good to, the marrow of her marrow. She had had no children, and never ceased mourning the fact.

On meeting his old friend, Joseph Mouradour at a ball, M. de Meroul was filled with a deep and simple joy, for in their youth they had been intimate friends.

After the first exclamations of surprise at the changes which time had wrought in their bodies and countenances, they told each other about their lives since they had last met.

Joseph Mouradour, who was from the south of France, had become a government official. His manner was frank; he spoke rapidly and without restraint, giving his opinions without any tact. He was a Republican, one of those good fellows who do not believe in standing on ceremony, and who exercise an almost brutal freedom of speech.

He came to his friend's house and was immediately liked for his easy-coiled manner and for his radical ideas. Madame de Meroul would exclaim:

"What a shame! Such a charming man!"

Monsieur de Meroul would say to his friend in a serious and confidential tone of voice: "You have no idea the harm he is doing your country." He loved him all the same, for nothing is stronger than the ties established during our youth, and he would Joseph Mouradour bantered the wife and the husband, calling them "my amiable snails," and sometimes he would advise them against people who were behind the times, against old prejudices and traditions.

When he was once started on his democratic eloquence, the couple, somewhat ill at ease, would keep silent from politeness and good- breeding; then the husband would try to turn the conversation into some other channel in order to avoid a clash. Joseph Mouradour was only seen in the intimacy of the family.

Summer came. The Merouls had no greater pleasure than to receive their friends at their country house at Tourbeville. It was a good, healthy pleasure, the enjoyments of good people and of country proprietors. They would invite their friends at the neighboring cultivated station and would bring them back in their carriage, always on the lookout for complaints on the country, on its natural features, on the condition of the roads, on the cleanliness of the farm-houses, on the size of the cattle grazing in the fields, on everything within sight.

They would call attention to the remarkably good milk which their farm received, surprising for an animal that did heavy work part of the year behind a plow; and they would inquire into the opinion of the visitor concerning on their family domain, sensitive to the least word, and thankful for the slightest good intension.

Joseph Mouradour was invited, and he accepted the invitation.

Husband and wife had come to the train, delighted to welcome him to their home. As soon as he saw them, Joseph Mouradour jumped from the train with a briskness which increased their satisfaction. The shook their hands, congratulated them, overwhelmed them with compliments.

"All the way home he was charming, remarking on the height of the trees, the goodness of the crops and the speed of the horse.

When he stepped on the porch of the house, Monsieur de Meroul said, with a certain friendly solemnity:

"Consider yourself at home now."

Joseph Mouradour answered:

"Thanks, my friend. I expected as much. Another, I never stand on ceremony with my friends. That's how I understand hospitality."

Then he went upstairs to dress as a farmer, he said, and he soon came back all trapped in blue linen, with a little straw hat and yellow shoes, a regular Parisian dressed for an outing. He also seemed to become more vulgar and jovial, more familiar; having put on with his country clothes a free and easy manner which he judged suitable to the surroundings. Seeing her manners shocked Monsieur and Madame de Meroul a little, for they always remained serious and dignified, even in the country, as people compelled by the rest-lessness preceding their name to keep up a certain formality even in the closest intimacy.

After lunch they all went out to visit the farms, and the Parisian astounded the respectful peasants by his tone of comradeship.

In the evening the priest came, a slender, an old, fat priest, accustomed to dining there on Sundays, but who had been especially invited this day in honor of the new comer.

Joseph, on seeing him, made a wry face. Then he observed him with surprise, as though he were a creature of some prehistoric race, which he had never been able to observe at close quarters. During the meal he told some stories of the Church. He had a way, he say, "Monsieur Tabbe," but simply, "Monsieur." He embarrassed the priest greatly by philosophic discussions about divers ecclesiastic institutions current all over the world. He said: "Your God, monsieur, is of those who should be worshiped, but that one of those who should be discussed. Mine is called Reason; he has always been the enemy of yours."

The Merouls, distressed, tried to turn the trend of the conversation. The priest left very early.

Then the husband said, very quietly:

"Perhaps you were a little bit too far with the priest."

But Joseph immediately exclaimed:

"Well, that's pretty good! As if I would be on my guard with a shaveling! And say, do me the pleasure of not imposing him on me any more in meals. You can both make use of him as much as you wish, but don't force him up to your friends, hang it!"

"But, my friends, think of his holy--"

Joseph Mouradour interrupted him:

"Yes, I know; they have to be treated like 'roosters.' But let them respect my convictions, and I will respect them!"

That was all for that day.

As soon as Madame de Meroul entered the parlor, the next morning, she noticed in the middle of the table three newspapers which treat her saint like Voltaire, the Revolution, Francaise and the Justice. Immediately Joseph Mouradour, still in blue, appeared on the threshold, intensively reading the Intransigeant. He cried:

"There's a great article in this by Rochefort. This fellow is a wonder!"

He read it aloud, emphasizing the parts which especially pleased him, so carried away by enthusiasm that he did not notice his friend's frowns. Monsieur de Meroul was holding in his hand the Gaulois for himself, the Clarion for his wife.

The fiery prose of the master writer who overthrew the empire, spouted with violence, sung in the southern accent, rang throughout a peaceful parlors seemed to sparce the walls and century-old furniture with a hail of bold, ironical and destructive words.

The man and the woman, one standing, the other sitting, were listening with astonishment, so shocked that they could not move.

It is a baste of eloquence Monsieur finished the last paragraph, then exclaimed triumphantly:

"Well! that's pretty strong!"

Then, suddenly, he noticed the two sheets which his friend was carrying, and he, in turn, exclaimed from them surprise. Quickly walking toward him he demanded angrily:

"What are you doing with those papers?"

Monsieur de Meroul answered hesitatingly:

"Why--those--those are my papers!"

"Your papers? What are you doing--taking fun of me? You will do me the pleasure of reading mine; they will limber up your ideas, and as for yours--there! that's what I do with them."

And before his astonished host could stop him, he had seized the two newspapers and thrown them out of the window. Then he solemnly handed the Justice to Madame de Meroul, the Voltaire to her husband, while he sank down into an arm-chair to finish reading the Intransigeant.

The couple, through delicacy, made a pretense of reading a little, then they gave him back the Republican sheets, which they handled gingerly, as though they might be poisoned.

He laughed and declared:

"One week of this regime and I will have you converted to my ideas."

In truth, at the end of a week he ruled the house. He had closed the door against the priest, whom Madame de Meroul used to visit secretly; he had forbidden the Gaulois and the Clarion to be brought into the house, so that the servant had to go surreptitiously to the post-office to get them, and as soon as he entered they would be hidden under sofa cushions; he arranged everything to suit himself, was charming, always good- natured, a jovial and all-powerful tyrant.

Other friends were expected, pious and conservative friends. The unhappy couple saw the impossibility of having them there then, and, not knowing what to do, one evening they announced to Joseph Mouradour that they would be obliged to absent themselves for a few days, on business, and they begged him to stay on alone. He did not appear disturbed, and answered:

"Well, that's pretty good! Are you afraid of your business. It will not offend me in the least; quite the contrary, it will make me feel much more completely one of the family. Go ahead, my friends, I will stay for you."

Monsieur and Madame de Meroul left the following day.

He is still waiting for them.

14

THE EFFEMINATES

How often we hear people say, "He is charming, that man, but he is a girl, a regular girl." They are alluding to the effeminates, the bane of our land.

For we are all girl-like men in France–that is, fickle, fanciful, innocently treacherous, without consistency in our convictions or our will, violent and weak as women are.

But the most irritating of girl–men is assuredly the Parisian and the boulevardier, in whom the appearance of intelligence is more marked and who combines in himself all the attractions and all the faults of those charming creatures in an exaggerated degree in virtue of his masculine temperament.

Our Chamber of Deputies is full of girl-men. They form the greater number of the amiable opportunists whom one might call "The Charmers." These are they who control by soft words and deceitful promises, who know how to shake hands in such a manner as to win hearts, how to say "My dear friend" in a certain tactful way to people he knows the least, to change his mind without suspecting it, to be carried away by each new idea, to be sincere in their weathercock convictions, to let themselves be deceived as they deceive others, to forget the next morning what he affirmed the day before.

The newspapers are full of these effeminate men. That is probably where one finds the most, but it is also where they are most needed. The Journal des Debats and the Gazette de France are exceptions.

Assuredly, every good journalist must be somewhat effeminate–that is, at the command of the public, supple in following unconsciously the shades of public opinion, wavering and varying, sceptical and credulous, wicked and devout, a braggart and a true man, enthusiastic and ironical, and always convinced while believing in nothing.

Foreigners, our anti-types, as Mme. Abel called them, the stubborn English and the heavy Germans, regard us with a certain amazement mingled with contempt, and will continue to so regard us till the end of time. They consider us frivolous. It is not that, it is that we are girls. And that is why people love us in spite of our faults, why they come back to us despite the evil spoken of us; these are lovers' quarrels! The effeminate man, as one meets him in this world, is so charming that he captivates you after five minutes' chat. His smile seems made for you; one cannot believe that his voice does not assume specially tender intonations on their account. When he leaves you it seems as if one had known him for twenty years. One is quite ready to lend him money if he asks for it. He has enchanted you, like a woman.

If he commits any breach of manners towards you, you cannot bear any malice, he is so pleasant when you next meet him. If he asks your pardon you long to ask pardon of him. Does he tell lies? You cannot believe it. Does he put you off indefinitely with promises that he does not keep? One lays as much store by his promises as though he had moved heaven and earth to render them a service.

When he admires anything he goes into such raptures that he convinces you. He once adored Victor Hugo, whom he now treats as a back number. He would have fought for Zola, whom he has abandoned for Barbey and d'Aurevilly. And when he admires, he permits no limitation, he would slap your face for a word. But when he becomes scornful, his contempt is unbounded and allows of no protest.

In fact, he understands nothing.

Listen to two girls talking.

"Then you are angry with Julia?" "I slapped her face." "What had she done?" "She told Pauline that I had no money thirteen months out of twelve, and Pauline told Gontran–you understand." "You were living together in the Rue Clanzel?" "We lived together four years in the Rue Breda; we quarrelled about a pair of stockings that she said I had worn– it wasn't true–silk stockings that she had bought at Mother Martin's. Then I gave her a pounding and she left me at once. I met her six months ago and she asked me to come and live with her, as she has rented a flat that is twice too large."

One goes on one's way and hears no more. But on the following Sunday as one is on the way to Saint Germain two young women get into the same railway carriage. One recognizes one of them at once; it is Julia's enemy. The other is Julia!

And there are endearments, caresses, plans. "Say, Julia–listen, Julia," etc.

The girl-man has his friendships of this kind. For three months he cannot bear to leave his old Jack, his dear Jack. There is no one but Jack in the world. He is the only one who has any intelligence, any sense, any talent. He alone amounts to anything in Paris. One meets them everywhere together, they dine together, walk about in company, and every evening walk home with each other back and forth without being able to part with one another.

Three months later, if Jack is mentioned:

"There is a drinker, a sorry fellow, a scoundrel for you. I know him well, you may be sure. And he is not even honest, and ill-bred," etc., etc.

Three months later, and they are living together.

But one morning one hears that they have fought a duel, then embraced each other, amid tears, on the duelling ground.

Just now they are the dearest friends in the world, furious with each other half the year, abusing and loving each other by turns, squeezing each other's hands till they almost crush the bones, and ready to run each other through the body for a misunderstanding.

For the relations of these effeminate men are uncertain. Their temper is by fits and starts, their delight unexpected, their affection turn-about- face, their enthusiasm subject to eclipse. One day they love you, the next day they will hardly look at you, for they have in fact a girl's nature, a girl's charm, a girl's temperament, and all their sentiments are like the affections of girls.

They treat their friends as women treat their pet dogs.

It is the dear little Toutou whom they hug, feed with sugar, allow to sleep on the pillow, but whom they would be just as likely to throw out of a window in a moment of impatience, whom they turn round like a sling, holding it by the tail, squeeze in their arms till they almost strangle it, and plunge, without any reason, in a pail of cold water.

Then, what a strange thing it is when one of these beings falls in love with a real girl! He beats her, she scratches him, they execrate each other, cannot bear the sight of each other and yet cannot part, linked together by no one knows what mysterious psychic bonds. She deceives him, he knows it, sobs and forgives her. He despises and adores her without seeing that she would be justified in despising him. They are both atrociously unhappy and yet cannot separate. They cast invectives, reproaches and abominable accusations at each other from morning till night, and when they have reached the climax and are vibrating with rage and hatred, they fall into each other's arms and kiss each other ardently.

The girl-man is brave and a coward at the same time. He has, more than another, the exalted sentiment of honor, but is lacking in the sense of simple honesty, and, circumstances favoring him, would defalcate and commit infamies which do not trouble his conscience, for he obeys without questioning the oscillations of his ideas, which are always impulsive.

To him it seems permissible and almost right to cheat a haberdasher. He considers it honorable not to pay his debts, unless they are gambling debts–that is, somewhat shady. He dupes people whenever the laws of society admit of his doing so. When he is short of money he borrows in all ways, not always being scrupulous as to tricking the lenders, but he would, with sincere indignation, run his sword through anyone who should suspect him of only lacking in politeness.

15

OLD AMABLE

PART I

THE STORY THAT dry seemed to trough the Sea of Grass, the story of the death of Cedric Cleaver, the cattle king of the great ranch that stretched from the grass made the engineer entering an unnamed town in the Sierra Madre, the story of the man, who, scattered through the fields, searching for his lost cattle, found the bones of a man and the farmhouse, whose shacked roofs were visible here and there through the branches of the hollow crown of a prehistoric oak, the story of the man who was lost.

The story was, in a word, one in keep of mystery, and the mystery was, the more the queer was playing with a pencil, which he was using to draw the outline of a hollow oak tree with branches bending down plumbing slip of a farmhouse, and the man who was lost, the man who was lost, was the man who was lost.

The man who was playing with a pencil, of coarse which the plough had just turned up, was a young man, a young man with a face like a dark-brown, a young man with a face like a dark-brown, a young man with a face like a dark-brown

THE WEDDING TOOK place in the middle of the Great Hall, with the bride and bridegroom both pure and holy. Crisanto, who had spent the night before in the church in the morning to get fresh holy water, was there with the bride and bridegroom, and he was the first person to kneel down before the lectern table and recited for the members of the family and the friends who were in attendance.

Crisanto's voice rang out like a bell, and everyone was impressed by the sonorous tone and lowered his automatic sewing, had become a priest, and was performing the rites of the Holy Church.

It was said that the church had become ashamed of the corruption of its priests and that the time of the ordinances seemed to be flowering, and that the Holy Church was in the process of phoenix rewards of their blossoming.

Crisanto was a young man who had spent his entire life in the Holy Church, and he was the day he was dressed itself where the white robe was, and he was the day he was dressed itself where the white robe was.

Crisanto looked straight before him through the crowd, and he was the day he was dressed.

The door opened, two women entered, and Crisanto was the day he was dressed. The door opened, and the crowd in the bridegroom, then the bride, then the bridegroom, then the bride, then the bridegroom, then the bride, then

PART III

THIS PARTICULAR SUNDAY was the day of the village festival, the annual festival in honor of the patron saint, which in Normandy is called the assembly.

For the last eight days quaint-looking vehicles in which live the families of strolling fair exhibitors, lottery managers, keepers of shooting galleries and other forms of amusement or exhibitors of curiosities whom the peasants call "wonder-makers" could be seen coming along the roads drawn slowly by gray or sorrel horses.

The dirty wagons with their floating curtains, accompanied by a melancholy-looking dog, who trotted, with his head down, between the wheels, drew up one after the other on the green in front of the town hall. Then a tent was erected in front of each ambulant abode, and inside this tent could be seen, through the holes in the canvas, glittering things which excited the envy or the curiosity of the village youngsters.

As soon as the morning of the fete arrived all the booths were opened, displaying their splendors of glass or porcelain, and the peasants on their way to mass looked with genuine satisfaction at these modest shops which they saw again, nevertheless, each succeeding year.

Early in the afternoon there was a crowd on the green. From every neighboring village the farmers arrived, shaken along with their wives and children in the two-wheeled open chars-a-bancs, which rattled along, swaying like cradles. They unharnessed at their friends' houses and the farmyards were filled with strange-looking traps, gray, high, lean, crooked, like long-clawed creatures from the depths of the sea. And each family, with the youngsters in front and the grown-up ones behind, came to the assembly with tranquil steps, smiling countenances and open hands, big hands, red and bony, accustomed to work and apparently tired of their temporary rest.

A clown was blowing a trumpet. The barrel-organ accompanying the carrousel sent through the air its shrill jerky notes. The lottery-wheel made a whirring sound like that of cloth tearing, and every moment the crack of the rifle could be heard. And the slow-moving throng passed on quietly in front of the booths resembling paste in a fluid condition, with the motions of a flock of sheep and the awkwardness of heavy animals who had escaped by chance.

The girls, holding one another's arms in groups of six or eight, were singing; the youths followed them, making jokes, with their caps over their ears and their blouses stiffened with starch, swollen out like blue balloons.

The whole countryside was there—masters, laboring men and women servants.

Old Amable himself, wearing his old-fashioned green frock coat, had wished to see the assembly, for he never failed to attend on such an occasion.

He looked at the lotteries, stopped in front of the shooting galleries to criticize the shots and interested himself specially in a very simple game which consisted in throwing a big wooden ball into the open mouth of a mannikin carved and painted on a board.

Suddenly he felt a tap on his shoulder. It was Daddy Malivoire, who exclaimed:

"Ha, daddy! Come and have a glass of brandy."

And they sat down at the table of an open-air restaurant.

They drank one glass of brandy, then two, then three, and old Amable once more began wandering through the assembly. His thoughts became slightly confused, he smiled without knowing why, he smiled in front of the lotteries, in front of the wooden horses and especially in front of the killing game. He remained there a long time, filled with delight, when he saw a holiday-maker knocking down the gendarme or the cure, two authorities whom he instinctively distrusted. Then he went back to the inn and drank a glass of cider to cool himself. It was late, night came on. A neighbor came to warn him:

"You'll get back home late for the stew, daddy."

Then he set out on his way to the farmhouse. A soft shadow, the warm shadow of a spring night, was slowly descending on the earth.

When he reached the front door he thought he saw through the window which was lighted up two persons in the house. He stopped, much surprised, then he went in, and he saw Victor Lecoq seated at the table, with a plate filled with potatoes before him, taking his supper in the very same place where his son had sat.

And he turned round suddenly as if he wanted to go away. The night was very dark now. Celeste started up and shouted at him:

"Come quick, daddy! Here's some good stew to finish off the assembly with."

He complied through inertia and sat down, watching in turn the man, the woman and the child. Then he began to eat quietly as on ordinary days.

Victor Lecoq seemed quite at home, talked from time to time to Celeste, took up the child in his lap and kissed him. And Celeste again served him with food, poured out drink for him and appeared happy while speaking to him. Old Amable's eyes followed them attentively, though he could not hear what they were saying.

When he had finished supper (and he had scarcely eaten anything, there was such a weight at his heart) he rose up, and instead of ascending to his loft as he did every night he opened the gate of the yard and went out into the open air.

When he had gone, Celeste, a little uneasy, asked:

"What is he going to do?"

Victor replied in an indifferent tone:

"Don't bother yourself. He'll come back when he's tired."

Then she saw after the house, washed the plates and wiped the table, while the man quietly took off his clothes. Then he slipped into the dark and hollow bed in which she had slept with Cesaire.

The yard gate opened and old Amable again appeared. As soon as he entered the house he looked round on every side with the air of an old dog on the scent. He was in search of Victor Lecoq. As he did not see him, he took the candle off the table and approached the dark niche in which his son had died. In the interior of it he perceived the man lying under the bed clothes and already asleep. Then the deaf man noiselessly turned round, put back the candle and went out into the yard.

Celeste had finished her work. She put her son into his bed, arranged everything and waited for her father-in-law's return before lying down herself.

She remained sitting on a chair, without moving her hands and with her eyes fixed on vacancy.

As he did not come back, she murmured in a tone of impatience and annoyance:

"This good-for-nothing old man will make us burn four sous' worth of candles."

Victor answered from under the bed clothes:

"It's over an hour since he went out. We ought to see whether he fell asleep on the bench outside the door."

"I'll go and see," she said.

She rose up, took the light and went out, shading the light with her hand in order to see through the darkness.

She saw nothing in front of the door, nothing on the bench, nothing on the dung heap, where the old man used sometimes to sit in hot weather.

But, just as she was on the point of going in again, she chanced to raise her eyes toward the big apple tree, which sheltered the entrance to the farmyard, and suddenly she saw two feet—two feet at the height of her face belonging to a man who was hanging.

She uttered terrible cries:

"Victor! Victor! Victor!"

He ran out in his shirt. She could not utter another word, and turning aside her head so as not to see, she pointed toward the tree with her outstretched arm.

Not understanding what she meant, he took the candle in order to find out, and in the midst of the foliage lit up from below he saw old Amable hanging high up with a stable-halter round his neck.

A ladder was leaning against the trunk of the apple tree.

Victor ran to fetch a bill-hook, climbed up the tree and cut the halter. But the old man was already cold and his tongue protruded horribly with a frightful grimace.

COLOPHON

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of Guy de Maupassant were translated from Fench by
Albert M. C. McMaster, A. E. Henderson, Mme. Quesada and others.
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a painting completed in 1882 by
Vincent van Gogh.

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