

THE MISER'S DAUGHTER

By HONRE DE BALZAC

CHAPTER VII.

M. Grandet entered the room, gave one sharp glance at the table and another at Charles. He saw how it was at once.

"Aha! you have been making a fete for your nephew. Good, very good, oh! very good, indeed!" he said, without stammering. "When the cat is away the mice may play."

"Fete?" thought Charles, who had not the remotest conception of affairs in the Grandet household.

Grandet drew from his waistcoat pocket a large clasp-knife with a stag's horn handle, cut a slice of bread, buttered it slowly and sparingly, and began to eat as he stood. Just then Charles put some sugar into his coffee; this called Grandet's attention to the pieces of sugar on the table; he looked hard at his wife, who turned pale and came a step or two toward him; he bent down and said in the poor woman's ear:

"Where did all that sugar come from?"

"Nanon went out to Fessard's for some; there was none in the house."

It is impossible to describe the painful interest that this dumb show possessed for the three women; Nanon had left her kitchen, and was looking into the dining room to see how things went there. Charles meanwhile tasted his coffee, found it rather strong, and looked round for another piece of sugar, but Grandet had already pounced upon it and taken it away.

"What do you want, nephew?" the old man inquired.

"The sugar."

"Pour in some more milk if your coffee is too strong," answered the master of the house.

Eugenie took up the saucer, of which Grandet had previously taken possession, and set it on the table, looking quietly at her father the while. Charles had not the remotest conception of what his cousin endured for him, or of the horrible dismay that filled her heart as she met her father's angry eyes; he would never even know of her sacrifice.

"You are eating nothing, wife?"

The poor bond-slave went to the table, cut a piece of bread in fear and trembling, and took a pear. Eugenie, grown reckless, offered the grapes to her father, saying as she did so:

"Just try some of my fruit, papa! You will take some, will you not, cousin? I brought those pretty grapes down on purpose for you!"

"Oh! if they could have their way, they would turn Saumur upside down for you, nephew! As soon as you have finished we will take a turn in the garden together; I have some things to tell you that would take a deal of sugar to sweeten them."

Eugenie and her mother both gave Charles a look, which the young man could not mistake.

"What do you mean by that, uncle? Since my mother died there is no misfortune possible for me."

"Who can know what afflictions heaven may send to make trial of us, nephew?" said his aunt.

"Tut, tut, tut," muttered Grandet, "here you are beginning with your folly already! I am sorry to see that you have such white hands, nephew."

He displayed the fists, like shoulders of mutton, with which nature had terminated his own arms.

"That is the sort of hand to rake the crows together! You put the kind of leather on your feet that we used to make pocketbooks of to keep bills in. That is the way you have been brought up. That's bad! That's bad!"

"What do you mean, uncle? I'll be hanged if I understand one word of this."

"Come along," said Grandet, and the miser shut his knife with a snap and opened the door.

"Oh! keep up your courage, cousin!"

Something in the girl's voice sent a sudden chill through Charles; he followed his formidable relative with dreadful misgivings. Eugenie and her mother and Nanon went into the kitchen; an uncontrollable anxiety led them to watch the two actors in the scene which was about to take place in the damp little garden.

Uncle and nephew walked together in silence at first. Grandet felt the situation to be a somewhat awkward one; not that he shrank at all from telling Charles of his father's death, but he felt a kind of pity for a young man left in this way without a penny in the world, and he cast about for phrases that should break the cruel news as gently as might be. "You have lost your father!" he could say that; there was nothing in that; fathers usually predecease their children. But, "You have not a penny!" All the woes of the world were summed up in those words, so for the third time the worthy man walked the whole length of the path in the center of the garden, crunching the gravel beneath his heavy boots, and no word was said.

"It is very fine; very warm," said Grandet, drawing in a deep breath of air. "Well, my boy, I have some bad news for you. Your father is very ill."

"What am I doing here?" cried Charles. "Nanon!" he shouted, "order post horses! I shall be sure to find a carriage of some sort in the place, I suppose," he added, turning to his uncle, who had not stirred from where he stood. "Horses and a carriage are of no use," Grandet answered, looking at Charles, who immediately stared straight before him in silence. "Yes, my poor boy, you guess what has happened; he is dead. But that is nothing; there is something worse; he has shot himself through the head."

"My father?"

"Yes, but that is nothing, either. The

newspapers are discussing it, as if it were any business of theirs. There, read for yourself."

Grandet had borrowed Cruchot's paper, and now he laid the fatal paragraph before Charles. The poor young fellow—he was only a lad as yet—made no attempt to hide his emotion, and burst into tears.

"Come, that is better," said Grandet to himself. "That look in his eyes frightened me. He is crying; he will pull through. Never mind, my poor nephew," Grandet resumed, aloud, not knowing whether Charles heard him or no. "That is nothing, you will get over it, but—"

"Never! never! My father! my father!"

"He has ruined you; you are penniless."

"What is that to me? Where is my father?" The sound of his sobbing filled the little garden, reverberated in ghastly echoes from the walls. Tears are as infectious as laughter; the three women wept with pity for him. Charles broke from his uncle without waiting to hear more, and sprang into the yard, found the staircase, and fled to his own room, where he flung himself across the bed and buried his face in the bedclothes, that he might give way to his grief.

"Let him alone till the first shower is over," said Grandet, going back to the parlor. Eugenie and her mother had hastily returned to their places, had dried their eyes, and were sewing with cold, trembling fingers. "But that fellow is good for nothing," went on Grandet; "he is so taken up with dead folk that he doesn't even think about the money."

Eugenie shuddered to hear the most sacred of sorrows spoken of in such a way; from that moment she began to criticize her father. Charles's sobs, smothered though they were, rang through that house of echoes; the sounds seemed to come from under the earth, a heartrending wail that grew fainter toward the end of the day, and only ceased as night drew on.

"Poor boy!" said Mme. Grandet.

It was an unfortunate remark. Goodman Grandet looked at his wife, then at Eugenie, then at the sugar basin, he recollected the sumptuous breakfast prepared that morning for their unhappy kinsman, and planted himself in the middle of the room.

"Look here, you two," he exclaimed, "there is to be no nonsense, mind! I am going to Cruchot's and have a talk with him about all this."

CHAPTER VIII.

Grandet went out. As soon as the door closed upon Grandet, Eugenie and her mother breathed more freely. The girl had never felt constraint in her father's presence until that morning; but a few hours had wrought rapid changes in her feelings.

"Mamma, how many louis is a hog's-head of wine worth?"

"Your father gets something between a hundred and a hundred and fifty francs for his; sometimes two hundred, I believe, from what I have heard him say."

"And would there be fourteen hundred hog's-heads in a vintage?"

"I don't know how many there are, child, upon my word; your father never talks about business to me."

"But, anyhow, papa must be rich."

"May be. But M. Cruchot told me that your father bought Froidfond two years ago. That would be a heavy pull on him."

"He did not even so much as see me, the poor dear!" said Nanon, entering the room. "He is lying there on his bed like a calf, crying, you never saw the like! Poor young man; what can be the matter with him?"

"Let us go up at once and comfort him, mamma; if we hear a knock, we will come downstairs."

There was something in the musical tones of her daughter's voice which Mme. Grandet could not resist. Eugenie was sublime; she was a girl no longer, she was a woman. With beating hearts they climbed the stairs and went together to Charles's room. The door was open. The young man saw nothing and heard nothing; he was absorbed in his grief.

"How he loves his father!" said Eugenie in a low voice, and in her tone there was an unmistakable accent and hopes of which she was unaware. Mme. Grandet, with the quick instinct of a mother's love, spoke in her ear.

"Take care," she said, "or you may love him."

"Love him!" said Eugenie. "Ah! if you only knew what my father said."

Charles moved slightly as he lay, and saw his aunt and cousin.

"I have lost my father," he cried; "my poor father! If he had only trusted me and told me about his losses, we might have worked together to repair them. My kind father! I was so sure that I should see him again, and I said good-by so carelessly."

"We will surely pray for him," said Mme. Grandet. "Submit yourself to the will of heaven!"

"Take courage, cousin," said Eugenie gently, "nothing can give your father back to you; you must now think how to save your honor."

A woman always has her wits about her, even in her capacity of comforter, and with instinctive tact Eugenie sought to divert her cousin's mind from his sorrow by leading him to think about himself.

"My honor?" cried the young man, hastily pushing back the hair from his eyes. He sat upright upon the bed, and folded his arms. "Ah! true. My uncle said that my father had failed. Leave me! leave me! Cousin Eugenie, he entreated. "Oh! heaven forgive my father, for he must have been terribly unhappy!"

There was something in the sight of this young sorrow that was terribly engaging. It was a sorrow that shrank from the gaze of others, and Charles's gesture of entreaty was understood by Eugenie and her mother. They went silently downstairs again, and sewed on for nearly an hour without a word to each other. About 4 o'clock a sharp knock at the door sent a sudden thrill of terror through Mme. Grandet.

"What can have brought your father back?" she said to her daughter.

"I have looked them, wife," said the vine grower, in high good humor. "I have them safe. Our wine is sold. The Belgians were setting out this morning; I hung about in the market place in front of their inn, looking as simple as I could. A man came up to me. All the best growers are hanging off and holding their vintages; they wanted to wait, and so they can, I have not hindered them. Our Belgian was at his wit's end, I saw that. So the bargain was struck; he is taking the whole of our vintage at two hundred francs the hog's-head, half of it paid down, at once in gold, and I have promissory notes for the rest. There are six louis for you. In three months' time prices will go down."

The last words came out quietly enough, but there was something so sardonic in the tone that if the little knots of growers, then standing in the twilight in the market place of Saumur, in dismay at the news of Grandet's sale, had heard him speak, they would have shuddered; there would have been a panic on the market—wines would have fallen fifty per cent.

"You have a thousand hog's-heads this year, father, have you not?" asked Eugenie. "That will mean two hundred thousand francs?"

"Yes, Mademoiselle Grandet."

"Well, then, father, you can easily help Charles."

The surprise, the wrath and bewilderment with which Belshazzar beheld Mme. Mene Tekel Upharsin written upon his palace wall were as nothing compared with Grandet's cold fury; he had forgotten all about Charles, and now he found that all his daughter's inmost thoughts were of his nephew, and that this arithmetic of hers referred to him. It was exasperating.

"Look here!" he thundered; "ever since that scapegrace set foot in my house everything has gone askew. You take it upon yourselves to buy sugar plums, and make a great set-out for him. I will not have these doings. I should think, at my age, I ought to know what is right and proper to do. At any rate, I have no need to take lessons from my daughter, nor from any one else. I shall do for my nephew whatever it is right and proper for me to do; you need not meddle in it. And now, Eugenie, if you say another word about it, I will send you and Nanon off to the Abbey at Noyers, see if I don't. Where is that boy? Has he come downstairs yet?"

"No. He is crying for his father," Eugenie said.

Grandet looked at his daughter, and found nothing to say. There was some touch of the father even in him. He took one or two turns up and down, and then went straight to his strong-room to think over possible investments. He had thoughts of buying consols. Those two thousand acres of woodland had brought him in six hundred thousand francs; then there was the money from the sale of the poplars, there was last year's income from various sources, and this year's savings, to say nothing of the bargain which he had just concluded; so that, leaving those two hundred thousand francs out of the question, he possessed a lump sum of nine hundred thousand livres. That twenty per cent, to be made in so short a time upon his outlay, tempted him. Consols stood at seventy. He jotted down his calculations on the margin of the paper that had brought the news of his brother's death; the moans of his nephew sounded in his ears the while, but he went on with his work till Nanon thumped vigorously on the thick wall to summon her master to dinner. On the last step of the staircase beneath the archway Grandet paused and thought.

"There is the interest beside the 8 per cent—I will do it. Fifteen hundred thousand francs in two years' time, in gold from Paris, too, full weight. Well, what has become of my nephew?"

"He said he did not want anything," replied Nanon. "He ought to eat, or he will fall ill."

"It is so much saved," was her master's comment. "He will not keep on crying forever. Hunger drives the wolf from the wood."

Dinner was a strangely silent meal. When the cloth had been removed Mme. Grandet spoke to her husband.

"We ought to go into mourning, dear."

"Really, Mme. Grandet, you must be hard up for ways of getting rid of money. Mourning is in the heart; it is not put on with clothes."

"But for a brother mourning is indispensable."

"Then buy mourning out of your six louis; a band of crape will do for me; you can get me a band of crape."

(To be continued.)

Psychological.

The cat and the infant sat upon the hearth rug, and regarded each other long and seriously.

The cat's attitude was that of pure contemplation, her look as of one whose rule it is neither to ask nor answer.

The infant mind plainly struggled with a thought, of which the outcome was presently this profound question: "Does a cat know she's a cat?"—Harper's Magazine.

However lady-like a girl may really be, she can't show it when chewing gum.

You're not in on some of the jokes the men laugh at; they're on you.



"Charging an enemy in fortifications," said Lieutenant John McGinnis of the Eighty-Sixth Illinois, "is uphill business. Whenever I think of the Japs going up those fortified hills north of Port Arthur I am reminded of our own experience at Kenesaw. On the morning of June 27, 1864, our regiment was ordered to leave in camp all camp equipage and to march with rations, full canteens and blankets. I was then a sergeant in company K, Eighty-Sixth Illinois, and I remember well the talk of the men as we moved forward.

"After a long march the regiment was halted and the captains went forward to receive their instructions. Each captain returned to his company with orders to charge the rebel works, go into them and hold them. We moved forward until we could see the rebel works, and there the brigade was formed for the charge. We waited some time for the signal gun, and when it was fired went forward with bayonets fixed, in good order, and without excitement.

"After we crossed James D. Morgan's works and Noyes creek we started at a double quick. In spite of a galling fire, we kept going, and were in pretty good order as we neared the rebel line. Gladfetter and Lair of our company had outrun the rest of us, and were within a few feet of the works, when the rebels let loose a volley, right in our faces. Lair and Gladfetter dropped to the ground unhurt, and the blue smoke from the rebel guns enveloped us.

"We fell back a few steps and lay down, and each man acted as his own commander. Lying flat on the ground, we were partially shielded from the rebel fire. The enemy's works were ten feet high, and to shoot at us the men had to raise their heads above their works. All our boys were quick to take in the situation, and by pouring a rain of bullets into the head logs opposite us kept rebels' heads down.

"Our wounded, however, lay between the lines, in danger of being shot by both sides. Just as I realized this Coburn called to me: 'John, Andy Keller is out there, and he is calling you.' Leaving my gun, I crept out to Keller and lay down beside him. He said he was badly hurt, and as he could not move, he feared mortality. He asked me not to let him fall into the hands of the rebels, and to be sure and write his mother that he fell at the front, doing his duty. I called Coburn and his brother Billy, and they crawled out to us. We three, hugging the ground all the time, placed a blanket on the ground, rolled the helpless Keller on it, and then the two Coburns taking him by the feet and holding the blanket about his head, we dragged him down to the company.

"Stretcher bearers carried Keller to the rear and he died in the hospital and is buried in Chattanooga cemetery. Julius Bridgroom, a recruit who had been with us only two days, caught three bullets that day, one through the shoulder and two through the arms. He recovered and is now president of a bank in Boston, Kan. As he went back that day I thought he wouldn't live an hour, and here he is, forty years later, with children and grandchildren, happy and prosperous. Many a poor fellow, wounded in the charge, died between the lines. We, who held the advance line, stayed there until the morning of July 3, or until the rebels left their works, not more than eighty-five feet away."

"Mention of the Eighty-Sixth Illinois," said Lieutenant E. C. Silliman, "reminds me of several stories of the Atlanta campaign. Harry Young, Colonel Fahnestock's orderly, was scouting out in front for forage for the colonel's horse, when he came upon three Confederates, who wished to find our lines. They gave Harry their guns and followed him to camp. When almost at headquarters Harry had the rebels march in front of him. As he approached the colonel's tent he assumed all the dignity of a conquering hero, and announced that he had taken three prisoners, and turned over their guns with great ceremony.

"Harry was noted for a vigorous, healthy and well-trained imagination, being cognizant of which, the colonel said: 'Harry, how did you get away with three of them? Did you surprise them?' Harry's undoing was the moment's waiting to give a proper answer. One of the Johnnies, seeing his dilemma, helped him out by giving the colonel a knowing wink and saying: 'He surrounded us, colonel.' The laugh the boys gave Harry took about 2,000 pounds of glory out of his act, and insured three Johnnies the best meal they had eaten for a year. Harry's great

exploits after that were always greeted with, 'Did you surround them, Harry?'

"When company C, Eighty-Sixth Illinois, was mustered in at Peoria, little Mike Donovan was rejected on account of his size by the captain of the regulars, acting as mustering officer. Mike cried over his rejection, but the next day, when the officer came back to camp to muster in the absentees from the day before, Mike took a stand on two bricks in the rear rank, and the officer, being a little full, passed him. Mike stood on his head and was happy.

"About two months afterward, one rainy morning, we were in Kentucky, marching in mud shoe top deep. Not a man had said a word for two hours, when Mike, who was a great favorite of the captain's, yelled out from the rear of the company. 'I say, Cap, do yees think I'd cry would they muster me out?' In the laugh that his sally produced all forgot their homesickness and marched in good humor.

"After Bentonville we were marching one morning, and General Sherman and Howard with their staff passed us on the roadside. General Sherman's cigar was leaving a long trail of smoke behind him. Every one knew that the general would often strike a score of matches and fail to get that cigar lighted. So Mike yelled out to the captain: 'The war is over, shure as the devil, for ould Billy's chegar is a smoking!' Sherman heard this and threw his head back and laughed heartily, every one in hearing joining. Mike came back with enough earned by his 'sweat cloth' to start him in business. He died fifteen years ago in Leavenworth, Kan."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Veteran's Career Was Unique.

A unique military record was that of John H. Brooks, the aged civil war veteran, whose funeral occurred Thursday afternoon. According to his niece, Mrs. Julia Porter, Mr. Brooks was one of the most famous scouts in the war of the rebellion. He had guarded this fact from his friends in Sioux City, and no one here knew of his career as a spy. Mrs. Porter said he had requested her to make known the facts after his death, and she has just related the interesting story of the old man's career.

Mr. Brooks' early life and his coming as a government teamster to the site of Sioux City before there was any town here have already been traced in the Journal in connection with the old man's death.

A short time before the civil war broke out Mr. Brooks and his family moved to New Orleans. He had the Northern spirit strongly. On attempting to interfere with a slave owner who was beating a negro Mr. Brooks was arrested and locked up in the New Orleans jail. He remained there for nearly six months. In the meantime the war had broken out, and on promise of joining the confederate forces he was released, and for three months fought side by side with the confederate forces. He told his niece that he never shot his rifle once during this time, although he was in a number of engagements. He said that he always either chewed up the paper shell or threw it away.

At the close of the three months' service he had won the confidence of the confederate officers, and at his own request became a spy in the army in order that he might have an opportunity to escape to the union forces, with which he sympathized. During one of his expeditions, in which he was sent to ascertain the strength of the union forces stationed in a certain locality, he found the opportunity for which he was seeking. A long line of sentinels of the union forces was stationed outside the main forces, and, approaching one of these, he told him who he was and that he was serving in the confederate army practically under compulsion. He was taken to headquarters, where the commanding general, realizing that he had the confidence of the confederate officers, and that he was in a position to gain much valuable news in regard to their forces, proffered him the position as scout in the union army. The offer was accepted, and from then to the close of the war he acted as a scout.

Mr. Brooks returned to the confederate forces, enjoying the peculiar position of being a spy in both armies. He remained with the confederate army as a spy for fifteen months longer, when he was suspected of giving out information to the union forces and sentenced to be hanged. On a big oak tree which stood just outside of camp a rope was tied, and a noose hung dangling to the ground. Mr. Brooks was taken to the tree, the noose adjusted, and all was ready for the execution when a tremendous storm came up, driving the would-be executioners to their tents. The prisoner loosened the bonds that held his hands, and seizing luckily upon the general's horse he dashed away to the union lines. Later he was placed at the head of a detachment of twelve scouts. He was regarded as one of the most valuable union scouts in the war. —Sioux City Journal.

Patient waiting is often the highest way of doing God's will.—Collier.