

THE WANDERING JEW.

BY EUGENE SUE

CHAPTER XXVIII
THE STRANGER.

The following scene took place on the morning of the day in which Father d'Aigrigny had been so rudely degraded by Rodin to the subaltern position formerly occupied by the socius.

It is well known that the Rue Clovis is one of the most solitary streets in the Montague St. Genevieve district. At the epoch of this narrative, the house No. 4, in this street, was composed of one principal building, through which ran a dark passage, leading to a little, gloomy court, at the end of which was a second building, in a singularly miserable and dilapidated condition. On the ground-floor, in front of the house, was a half-subterranean shop, in which was sold charcoal, faggots, vegetables and milk. Nine o'clock in the morning had just struck. The mistress of the shop, one Mother Arsene, an old woman of a mild, sickly countenance, clad in brown stuff dress, with a red bandanna round her head, was mounted on the top step of the stairs which led down to her door, and was employed in setting out her goods—that is, on one side of the door she placed a tin milk-can, and on the other some bunches of stale vegetables, flanked with yellowed cabbages. At the bottom of the steps, in the shadowy depths of the cellar, one could see the light of the burning charcoal in a little stove. This situated at the side of the passage, served as a portor's lodge, and the old woman acted as portress. On a sudden, a pretty little creature, coming from the house, entered lightly and merrily the shop. This young girl was Rose-Pompon, the intimate friend of the Bacchanal Queen. Rose-Pompon, a widow for the moment, whose bacchanalian cicerone was Ninny Moulin, the orthodox scapegrace, who, on occasion, after drinking his fill could transform himself into Jacques Dumoulin, the religious writer, and pass gaily from dishevelled dances to ultramontane polemics, from Storm-blown Tulips to Catholic pamphlets.

Rose-Pompon had just quitted her bed, as appeared by the negligence of her strange morning costume; no doubt for want of any other head-dress, on her beautiful light hair, smooth and well-combed, was stuck jauntily a foraging-cap, borrowed from her masquerading costume. Nothing could be more sprightly than that face, seventeen years old, rosy, fresh, dimpled, and brilliantly lighted up by a pair of gay, sparkling blue eyes. Rose-Pompon was so closely enveloped from the neck to the feet in a red and green plaid cloak, rather faded, that one could guess the cause of her modest embarrassment. Her naked feet, so white that one could not tell if she wore stockings or not, were slipped into little morocco shoes, with plated buckles. It was easy to perceive that her cloak concealed some article which she held in her hand.

"Good day, Rose-Pompon," said Mother Arsene with a kindly air; "you are early this morning. Had you no dance last night?"

"Don't talk of it Mother Arsene; I had no heart to dance. Poor Cephyse—the Bacchanal Queen—has done nothing but cry all night. She cannot console herself, that her lover should be in prison."

"Now, look here, my girl," said the old woman, "I must speak to you about your friend Cephyse. You won't be angry?"

"Am I ever angry?" said Rose-Pompon, shrugging her shoulders.

"Don't you think that M. Philemon will scold me on his return?"

"Scold you! what for?"

"Because of his rooms, that you occupy."

"Why, Mother Arsene, did not Philemon tell you, that, in his absence, I was to be as much mistress of his two rooms as I am of myself?"

"I do not speak of you, but of your friend Cephyse, whom you have also brought to occupy M. Philemon's lodgings."

"And where would she have gone without me, my good Mother Arsene? Since her lover was arrested, she has not dared to return home, because she owes ever so many quarters. Seeing her troubles, I said to her: 'Come, lodge at Philemon's. When he returns, we must find another place for you.'"

"Well, little lovely—if you only assure me that M. Philemon will not be angry—"

"Angry! for what? That we spoil his things? A fine set of things he has to spoil! I broke his last cup yesterday—and am forced to fetch the milk in this comic concern."

So saying, laughing with all her might, Rose-Pompon drew her pretty little white arm from under her cloak, and presented to Mother Arsene one of those champagne glasses of colossal capacity, which hold about a bottle.

"Oh, dear!" said the greengrocer in amazement; "it is like a glass trumpet."

"It is Philemon's grand gala-glass, which they gave him when he took his degrees in boating," said Rose-Pompon, gravely.

"And to think you must put your milk in it—I am really ashamed," said Mother Arsene.

"So am I! If I were to meet any one on the stairs, holding this glass in my hand like a Roman candlestick, I should burst out laughing, and break the last remnant of Philemon's bazaar, and he would give me his malediction."

"There is no danger that you will meet any one. The first-floor is gone out, and the second gets up very late."

"Talking of lodgers," said Rose-Pompon, "is there not a room to let on the second-floor in the rear house? It might do for Cephyse, when Philemon comes back."

"Yes, there is a little closet in the roof—just over the two rooms of the mysterious old fellow," said Mother Arsene.

"Oh, yes! Father Charlemagne. Have you found out anything more about him?"

"Dear me, no, my girl! only that he came this morning at break of day, and knocked at my shutters. 'Have you received a letter for me, my good lady?' said he—for he is always so polite, the dear man!—'No, sir,' said I.—'Well, then, pray don't disturb yourself, my good lady,' said he; 'I will call again.' And so he went away."

"Does he never sleep in the house?"

"Never. No doubt, he lodges somewhere else—but he passes some hours here, once every four or five days."

"And always comes alone?"

"Always."

"Are you quite sure? Does he never manage to slip in some little puss of a woman? Take care, or Philemon will give you notice to quit," said Rose-Pompon, with an air of mock-modesty.

"M. Charlemagne with a woman! Oh, poor dear man!" said the greengrocer, raising her hands to heaven; "if you saw him, with his greasy hat, his old grey coat, his patched umbrella, and his simple face, he looks more like a saint than anything else."

"But then, Mother Arsene, what does the saint do here, all alone for hours, in that hole at the bottom of the court, where one can hardly see at noonday?"

"That's what I ask myself, my dove, what can he be doing? It can't be that he comes to look at his furniture, for he has nothing but a flock-bed, a table, a stove, a chair and an old trunk."

"Somewhat in the style of Philemon's establishment," said Rose-Pompon.

"Well, notwithstanding that, Rosey, he is as much afraid that any one should come into his room, as if we were all thieves, and his furniture was made of massy gold. He has had a patent lock on the door, at his own expense; he never leaves me his key; and he lights his fire himself, rather than let anybody into his room."

"And you say he is old?"

"Yes, fifty or sixty."

"And ugly?"

"Just fancy, little viper's eyes, looking as if they had been bored with a gimlet, in a face as pale as death—so pale, that the lips are white. That's for his appearance. As for his character, the good old man is so polite!—he pulls off his hat so often, and makes you such low bows, that it is quite embarrassing."

"But, to come back to the point," resumed Rose-Pompon, "what can he do all alone in those two rooms? If Cephyse should take the closet, on Philemon's return, we may amuse ourselves by finding out something about it. How much do they want for the little room?"

"Why, it is in such bad condition, that I think the landlord would let it go for fifty or fifty-five francs a-year, for there is no room for a stove, and the only light comes through a small pane in the roof."

"Poor Cephyse!" said Rose, sighing, and shaking her head sorrowfully. "After having amused herself so well, and flung away so much money with Jacques Rennepont, to live in such a place, and support herself by hard work! She must have courage!"

"Why, indeed, there is great difference between that closet and the coach-and-four in which Cephyse came to fetch you the other day, with all the fine masks, that looked so gay—particularly the fat man in the silver paper helmet, with the plume and the top boots. What a jolly fellow!"

"Yes, Ninny Moulin. There is no one like him to dance the forbidden fruit. You should see him with Cephyse, the Bacchanal Queen. Poor laughing, noisy thing!—the only noise she makes now is crying."

"Oh! these young people—these young people!" said the greengrocer.

"Easy, Mother Arsene; you were young once."

"I hardly know. I have always thought myself much the same as I am now."

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W. A. SAUNDERS,
Attorney, Merchants National Bank.

SHERIFF'S SALE.—By virtue of an order of sale issued out of the District Court for Douglas county, Nebraska, and to me directed, I will, on the 31st day of May, A. D. 1898, at ten o'clock A. M. of said day, at the EAST front door of the county court house in the city of Omaha, Douglas county, Nebraska, sell at public auction, to the highest bidder for cash the property described in said order of sale as follows, to-wit:

Lot 4 in block 134, above described, the sum of \$1,897.00, together with an attorney's fee of \$150.00;

On lot 5 in block 164, above described the sum of \$673.45, together with an attorney's fee of \$75.00;

Which said amounts according to the judgment of the district court bear interest at the rate of ten per cent. per annum from September 28th, 1896, and are first lien upon said property.

To satisfy the further sum of three hundred and nineteen and 15/100 (\$319.15) dollars costs herein, together with accruing costs according to a judgment rendered by the district court of said Douglas county, at its September term, A. D. 1896, in a certain action then and there pending, wherein Walter E. Keeler is plaintiff and Phoebe Rebecca Elizabeth Elwine Linton and Adolphus Frederick Linton, her husband, John Morris, William Morris and Frank Crisp, co-partners doing business as Ashurst, Morris, Crisp & Company, John Whittaker Cooper and William Isaac Shard are defendants.

Omaha, Nebraska, March 11th, 1897.

JOHN W. McDONALD,
Sheriff of Douglas County, Nebraska.
W. A. Saunders, Attorney.
Keeler vs. Linton et al.
Doc. 62, No. 233.
4-29-5

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The north one-half (N. 1/2) of the northwest quarter of section one (1) township fifteen (15) range twelve (12) east in Douglas county, as surveyed and recorded, all situated in said Douglas County, and state of Nebraska.

Said property to be sold to satisfy Walter E. Keeler, plaintiff herein, the sum of one hundred and thirty-seven and 7/100 (\$137.70) dollars judgment, together with interest thereon at the rate of ten (10) per cent. per annum from September 28th, 1897, together with an attorney's fee amounting to the sum of thirteen and 7/100 (\$13.77) dollars, which said amounts the court finds to be a first valid and existing lien upon said real estate above described.

To satisfy the further sum of thirty-four and 10/100 (\$34.10) dollars costs herein, together with accruing costs, according to a judgment rendered by the district court of said Douglas county, at its September term, A. D. 1897, in a certain action then and there pending, wherein Walter E. Keeler is plaintiff and Phoebe Rebecca Elizabeth Elwine Linton and Adolphus Frederick Linton, her husband, are defendants.

Omaha, Nebraska, April 28th, 1898.

JOHN W. McDONALD,
Sheriff of Douglas County, Nebraska.
W. A. Saunders, attorney.
Keeler vs. Linton et al.
Doc. 62, No. 233.
4-29-5

W. A. SAUNDERS,
Attorney, Merchants National Bank.

NOTICE TO NON-RESIDENT DEFENDANTS.

To Archie T. Shaver, non-resident defendant:

You are hereby notified that on the 26th day of April 1898, Kittle P. Shaver filed her petition in the District Court of Douglas County, Nebraska, the object and prayer of which are to obtain a divorce from you on the ground that you have willfully abandoned and deserted her, without good cause, for the term of two years last past, and have failed to support her for more than three years.

You are required to answer said petition on or before the 30th day of June, A. D. 1898.

KITTLE P. SHAVER, Plaintiff.

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