

THE MISER'S DAUGHTER

By HONRE DE BALZAC

CHAPTER XV.—(Continued.)

In every situation a woman is bound to suffer in many ways that a man does not, and to feel her troubles more acutely than he can; for a man's vigor and energy is constantly brought into play; he thinks and acts, comes and goes, busies himself in the present, and looks to the future for consolation. This was what Charles was doing. But a woman cannot help herself—she is a passive part; she is left face to face with her trouble and has nothing to divert her mind from it, she sounds the depths of the abyss of sorrow, and its dark places are filled with her prayers and tears. So it was with Eugenie. She was beginning to understand that the web of a woman's life will always be woven of love and sorrow and hope and fear and self-sacrifice; hers was to be a woman's lot in all things without a woman's consolations, and her moments of happiness were to be like the scattered nails driven into the wall, when all collected together they scarcely filled the hollow of the hand. Troubles seldom keep us waiting for them, and for Eugenie they were gathering thick and fast.

On New Year's morning, when Grandet entered the dining room, Mme. Grandet and Eugenie wished him a prosperous New Year, each in her own way. Mme. Grandet was grave and ceremonious, but his daughter put her arms round his neck and kissed him. "Aha! child," he said, "I am thinking and working for you, you see? I want you to be happy, and if you are to be happy, you must have money, for you won't get anything without it. Look here is a grand new napoleon, I sent to Paris on purpose for it. There is not a speck of gold in the house, except yours, you are the one who has the gold. Let me see your gold, little girl."

"It is too cold, let us have breakfast," Eugenie answered.

"Well, then, after breakfast we will have a look at it, eh? It will be good for our digestions. That great des Grassins sent us this, all the same," he went on, "so get your breakfast, children, for it costs us nothing. Des Grassins is going on nicely; I am pleased with him; the old fish is doing Charles a service, and all free gratis. Really, he is managing poor Grandet's affairs very cleverly."

By 11 o'clock they had finished breakfast. "Clear everything away," Grandet told Nanon, "but leave us the table. We can look over your little treasure more comfortably," he said, with his eyes on Eugenie. "Little, said I? 'Tis not so small, though, upon my word. Your coins altogether are actually worth 5,945 francs, then with forty more this morning, that makes 6,000 francs all but one. Well, I will give you another franc to make up the sum. Listen, Eugenie, you must let me have your gold. You will not refuse to let your papa have it? Eh, little daughter?"

Neither of the women spoke.

"I myself have no gold left. I had some once, but I have none now. I will give you 6,000 francs in silver for it, and you shall invest it; I will show you how. There is really no need to think of a dowry. When you are married I will find a husband for you who will give you the handsomest dowry that has ever been heard of hereabouts. There is a splendid opportunity just now; you can invest your 6,000 francs in government stock, and every six months when dividends are due you will have about 200 francs coming in, all clear of taxes. You don't like to part with your gold, eh? Is that it, little girl? Never mind, let me have it all the same. I will look out for gold coins for you, ducats from Holland, and genovines and Portuguese moidores and rупees, the Mogul's rupees; and what with the coins I shall give you on your birthday and so forth, you will have half your little hoard again in three years time, besides the six thousand francs in the funds. What do you say, little girl? Look up, child! There! There! bring it here, my pet. You owe me a good kiss for telling you business secrets and the mysteries of the life and death of five-franc pieces. Yes, indeed, the coins live and gad about just like men do; they go and come and sweat and multiply."

CHAPTER XVI.

Eugenie rose and made a few steps toward the door; then she turned abruptly, looked her father full in the face, and said:

"All my gold is gone; I have none left."

"All your gold is gone?" echoed Grandet, starting up, as a horse might rear when the cannon thunders not ten paces from him.

"Grandet! you will kill me with your angry fits," said the poor wife.

"Tut, tut, none of your family ever die. Now, Eugenie, what have you done with your money?" he burst out as he turned upon her.

The girl was on her knees beside Mme. Grandet.

"Look, sir," she said, "my mother is very ill . . . do not kill her."

Grandet was alarmed; his wife's dark, sallow complexion had grown so white.

"Nanon, come and help me up to bed," she said in a feeble voice. "This is killing me—"

Nanon gave an arm to her mistress, and Eugenie supported her on the other side; but it was only with the greatest difficulty that they reached her room, for the poor mother's strength completely failed her. Grandet was left alone in the parlor. After a while, however, he came part of the way upstairs, and called out:

"Eugenie, come down again as soon as your mother is in bed."

In so long time she returned to him, after comforting her mother as best she could.

"Now, my daughter," Grandet addressed her, "you will tell me where your money is."

"If I am not perfectly free to do as I like with your presents, father, please take them back again," said Eugenie calmly. She went to the chimney piece, took the napoleon, and gave it to her father.

Grandet examined upon it, and slipped it into his pocket.

"I will never give you anything again,"

"I know," he said, biting his thumb at her. "You look down on your father, do you? You have no confidence in him? Do you know what a father is? If he is not everything to you, he is nothing. Now, where is your gold?"

"I do respect you and love you, father, in spite of your anger; but I would very humbly point out to you that I am twenty-two years old. You have told me that I am of age often enough for me to know it. I have done as I liked with my money, and rest assured that it is in good hands."

"Whose?"

"That is an inviolable secret," she said. "It must be something very unsatisfactory, Mlle. Grandet, if you cannot tell your own father about it."

"It is perfectly satisfactory, and I cannot tell my father about it."

"Tell me, at any rate, when you parted with your gold. You still had it on your birthday, hadn't you? Eh?"

But if greed had made her father crafty, love had taught Eugenie to be wary; she shook her head again.

"Did any one ever hear of such obstinacy, or of such a hobby?" cried Grandet, in a voice which gradually rose till it rang through the house. "What! here in my house, in my own house, some one has taken your gold! And I am not to know who it was? Gold is a precious thing. The best of girls go wrong and throw themselves away one way or another; that happens among great folk, and even among decent citizens; but think of throwing gold away! For you gave it to somebody, I suppose, eh? If you have parted with your money, you must have a receipt for it—"

"Was I free to do as I wished with it—yes or no? Was it mine?"

At first Grandet was struck dumb by his daughter's daring to argue with him, and in this way. He turned pale, stamped, and finding words at last he shouted:

"Miserable girl! Oh! you know well that I love you, and you take advantage of it! You ungrateful child! She would rob and murder her own father! You would have thrown all we have at the feet of that vagabond with the morocco boots. By my father's pruning hook, I cannot disinherit you, but I can curse you; you and your cousin and your children. Nothing good can come out of this; do you hear? If it was to Charles that . . . But, no, that is impossible. What if that miserable puppy should have robbed me?"

He glared at his daughter, who was still silent and unmoved.

"She does not stir! She does not flinch! She is more of a Grandet than I am. You did not give your gold away for nothing, anyhow. Come, now, tell me about it."

Eugenie looked up at her father; her satirical glance exasperated him.

"Eugenie, this is my house; so long as you are under your father's roof you must do as your father bids you. You are wounding all my tenderest feelings," he went on. "Get out of my sight until you are ready to obey me. Go to your room and stay there until I give you leave to come out of it. Nanon will bring you bread and water. Do you hear what I say? Go!"

CHAPTER XVII.

Eugenie burst into tears, and fled away to her mother. Grandet took several turns in his garden without heeding the snow or the cold; then, suspecting that his daughter would be in his wife's room, and delighted with the idea of catching them in flagrant disobedience to orders, he climbed the stairs as stealthily as a cat, and suddenly appeared in Mme. Grandet's room. He was right; she was stroking Eugenie's hair, and the girl lay with her face hidden in her mother's breast.

"Poor child! Never mind, your father will relent."

"She has no longer a father," said the cooper. "Is it really possible, Mme. Grandet, that we have brought such a disobedient daughter into the world! A pretty bringing up; and pious, too, above all things! Well! how is it you are not in your room? Come, off to prison with you; to prison, mist!"

"Do you mean to take my daughter away from me, sir?" said Mme. Grandet, as she raised a flushed face and bright, feverish eyes.

"If you want to keep her, take her along with you, and the house will be rid of you both at once! Where is the gold? What has become of the gold?"

Eugenie rose to her feet, looked proudly at her father, and went into her room; the goodman turned the key in the door.

"Nanon!" he shouted, "you can rake out the fire in the parlor; then he came back and sat down in an easy chair, saying as he did so, "Of course she gave her gold to that miserable fellow Charles, who only cared for our money."

Mme. Grandet's love for her daughter gave her courage in the face of this danger; to all appearance she was deaf, dumb and blind to all that was implied in this speech. She turned on her bed so as to avoid the angry glitter of her husband's eyes.

"I know nothing about all this," she said. "Your anger makes me so ill that if my forebodings come true I shall only leave this room when they carry me out feet foremost. I think you might have spared me this scene, sir. I, at all events, have never caused you any vexation. Your daughter loves you, and I am sure she is as innocent as a new-born babe; so do not make her miserable, and take back your word. This cold is terribly sharp; it might make her seriously ill."

"I shall neither see her nor speak to her. She shall stop in her room on bread and water until she has done as her father bids her. She had the only reason that there are in France, for ought I know; then there were genovines besides, and Dutch ducats—"

"Eugenie is our only child, and even if she had sung them into the water—"

"Into the water!" shouted the worthy cooper. "Mme. Grandet, you are saving! When I say a thing I mean it, as you know. If you want to have peace in the house, get her to confess to you the secret. Women understand each other, and are cleverer at this sort of thing than we are. Whatever she may have done, I certainly shall not cut her out."

One trouble with the oldest inhabitant is that he remembers too many incidents of his boyhood days that never happened.

Dishonesty has passed the limit; when a man cheats at self-interest.

Is she afraid of me? If she had covered her cousin with gold from head to foot he is safe on the high seas by this time. We cannot run after him—"

"Really, sir, have I any more authority over her than you have? She has never said a word about it to me. She takes after you."

"Goodness! your tongue is hung in the middle this morning! Tut, tut, tut, you are going to fly in my face, I suppose? Perhaps you and she are both in it."

"Really, M. Grandet, if you want to kill me, you have only to keep on as you are doing. I tell you, sir, and if it were to cost me my life, I would say it again—you are too hard on your daughter; she is a great deal more sensible than you are. The money belonged to her; she could only have made a good use of it. Sir, I implore you take Eugenie back into favor. It will lessen the effect of the shock your anger gave me, and perhaps will save my life. My daughter, give me back my daughter!"

"I am off," he said. "It is unbearable here in my house, when a mother and daughter talk and argue. You have given me bitter New Year's gifts, Eugenie!" he called. "Yes, yes, cry away! You shall repent it, do you hear? You will find out what he is, that Charles of yours, with his morocco boots and his stand-off airs. He can have no heart and no conscience, either, when he dares to carry off a poor girl's money without the consent of her parents."

As soon as the street door was shut Eugenie stole out of her room and came to her mother's bedside.

"You were very brave for your daughter's sake," she said. "Oh! mother, I will pray to God to let all the punishment fall on me."

"Is it true?" asked Nanon, coming upstairs in dismay, that mademoiselle here is to be put on bread and water for the rest of her life?"

"What does it matter, Nanon?" asked Eugenie calmly.

"Why, before I would eat 'kitchen while the daughter of the house is eating dry bread I would . . . no, no, it won't do."

"Don't say a word about it, Nanon," Eugenie warned her.

Grandet dined alone, for the first time in twenty-four years.

"So you are a widower, sir," said Nanon. "It is a very dismal thing to be a widower when you have a wife and daughter in the house."

"I did not speak to you, did I? Keep a still tongue in your head, or you will have to go. There will be some people here this evening; light the fire."

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The Cruchots and their friends, Mme. des Grassins and her son, all came in about 8 o'clock, and to their amazement saw neither Mme. Grandet nor her daughter.

"My wife is not very well to-day, and Eugenie is upstairs with her," replied the old cooper, without a trace of perturbation on his face.

After an hour spent in more or less trivial talk Mme. des Grassins, who had gone upstairs to see Mme. Grandet, came down again to the dining room, and was met with a general inquiry of "How is Mme. Grandet?"

"She is very far from well," the lady said gravely. "Her health seems to be in a very precarious state. At her time of life you ought to take great care of her. Papa Grandet?"

"We shall see," said the vine grower abstractedly, and the whole party took leave of him. As soon as the Cruchots were out in the street and the door was shut behind them, Mme. des Grassins turned to them and said, "Something has happened among the Grandets. The mother is very ill, and the girl's eyes are red, as if she had been crying for a long while. Are they wanting to marry her against her will?"

That night, when the cooper had gone to bed, Nanon, in list slippers, stole up to Eugenie's room and displayed a raised piece, which she had managed to bake in a saucapan.

"Here, mademoiselle," said the kind soul. "Cornellier brought a hare for me. You eat so little that the pie will last you for quite a week, and there is no fear of its spoiling in this frost. You shall not live on dry bread, at any rate; it is not at all good for you."

"Poor Nanon!" said Eugenie, as she pressed the girl's hand.

"I have made it very dainty and nice, and he never found out about it. I paid for the lard and the bay leaves out of my six francs; I can surely do as I like with my own money," and the old servant fled, thinking that she heard Grandet stirring.

(To be continued.)

Crippled Actor; Empty House.

E. V. Riley, who is associated with the management of the Studebaker Theater, was several years ago the manager of a traveling dramatic company in the far West. On one occasion his company had been engaged to open a new theater at Nanaimo, a coal-mining town near Victoria, on Vancouver's Island. The theater had been built by a butcher who had made more money than he knew what to do with, so he put some of it into this place that he called an opera house—of course.

The owner of the "opera house" was not up in dramatic literature, but he had got it into his head that he wanted his house opened with something from Shakespeare. Riley's company could play anything, not excepting draw poker, and "Richard III." was the bill for the first night. The house was filled to the sidewalks. Next night the box office receipts would not have paid the gas bill.

"What's the matter?" Riley asked the butcher-manager.

"Matter enough," was the decidedly ungracious reply. "How do you folks expect to do business comin' round here starvin' a cripple?"

The play went on that night and it was "The Lady of Lyons." Word went out that the chief actor had got over his lameness, and business was fairly good for the remainder of the week.—Chicago Record-Herald.

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Dishonesty has passed the limit; when a man cheats at self-interest.

DELICACY IS THE AIM.

LIGHT AND PERISHABLE COSTUMES ARE POPULAR.

Giving Out Before Season Is Over, They Have to Be Replaced and Reaction Now Setting in Will Undoubtedly Favor Simpler Goods and Trimmings.

New York correspondence:



liberal supply of fine costumes. A dressy gown or two no longer will suffice, and the consequent bills are enough even to

TYLISH women have been invited, even urged, to take up simple fashions, and have refused to do so. Now they are paying the penalty, and its nature is such as to make it seem likely that a period of less elaborate dressing may not be far away. It comes about through the fact that our stylish dresser this summer must not only get herself up elaborately, but she should have a

liberal supply of fine costumes. A dressy gown or two no longer will suffice, and the consequent bills are enough even to

make a fashionable woman pause and think, and that is saying much. The fancy for harmony in color throughout the entire costume only tends to make the wardrobe all the more costly, since it makes almost impossible putting parts and accessories to double use, a trick extremely helpful to economists, and (whisper) to many women who are nightly careful to conceal the mediums of their saving. Current usage in this matter of matching shades, or of fetching them into harmony, is so exacting that skimpers' tricks are practically taboo in all this field of dress. Then when standards were such that a dressy afternoon get-up rivalled evening finery for the extent and delicacy of its embellishments, the preparing of a wardrobe meant an outlay that would overwhelm most women.

Turning to the very dresses prepared to replace the short-lived summer finery, it will be found that the change is not to be effected suddenly. At first glance these new dresses seem as highly wrought as were those of early summer. On consideration of many of them, however, it appears that a larger proportion of the embellishment consists of self-trimming—used lavishly in many cases, it is true, but even so, by no means so costly or so

to the season's millinery. It had, as appearing in the advance showings, the look of extreme frailness that somehow seemed to be almost the most desirable characteristic of the season—this from the standpoint of stylishness only. And much of it proved to be as perishable as it looked. Shoppers disregarded the likelihood of its proving so, and countless women who meant to put in dog days at the seashore or lakeside carried away best hats all trimmed with chiffon, tulle, ostrich plumes and steel glist. Twenty-four hours of fog brought ruin, and the trade in hats has been, in consequence, better than usual all summer. In the headwear now finding purchasers is less of the short-lived trimmings, but some is there, and hints of what is to rule in millinery during fall and winter are few indeed. Sample hats appear here. In the top row of the picture are a dark green straw trimmed round the brim with green and white straw and pierced with two black quills; a black cloth covered except at the top with straw trimmed with fancy stiff straw and topped by a bunch of grapes. Such headgear would indicate that the lesson of the perishable decorations had been learned, but the remaining two hats, of sorts plenti-

ful in the current showings, give the opposite indication. They were a draped hat of white chiffon and lace and another of green silk with crown of raffia lace and long ends of green silk ribbon. Fruit ornaments are likely to multiply as autumn approaches, and a run of gaily varied ribbon embellishments is indicated.

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they do so, now much more should ordinary folk. Taffeta seems to be a much liked medium for thus contriving to have fall and summer styles blend. This silk has had great favor all summer, but it seems likely that it will find even more supporters and uses in fall attire. It is to be had in all stylish colors, and is being made in all ways from the simplest shirt waist suits to the most dressy of fine feathers. It has a body and luster not possessed by other soft silk, and stands out most favorably when compared with the crisp taffetas of a few years ago, in that it will wear much longer without cracking.

The artist has put here model gowns of which taffeta was the chief material. They were planned for late summer wear, yet doubtless the wearers were quite aware of their entire suitability for fall, and most women will find their chief interest to be the foreshadowing of fall styles which they make. The dress of the initial picture was light gray, and its trimmings included guipure lace and black velvet bows. In the group, see for the first gown, brown taffeta, with brown velvet and fancy passementerie for trimmings; for the second, blue taffeta, cord and stitching, and for the seated figure, dotted apple green silk trimmed with Irish point lace and passementerie. The taffeta model gowns are very numerous, seeming now to take precedence even over those of the light weight woollens so much liked all summer. But the latter weaves—the voiles, canvases and kindred goods—are in the field, and are sure of fall indorsement.

No much of the foregoing as treats of the perishability of the dresses of early summer applies with considerable force

to the season's millinery. It had, as appearing in the advance showings, the look of extreme frailness that somehow seemed to be almost the most desirable characteristic of the season—this from the standpoint of stylishness only. And much of it proved to be as perishable as it looked. Shoppers disregarded the likelihood of its proving so, and countless women who meant to put in dog days at the seashore or lakeside carried away best hats all trimmed with chiffon, tulle, ostrich plumes and steel glist. Twenty-four hours of fog brought ruin, and the trade in hats has been, in consequence, better than usual all summer. In the headwear now finding purchasers is less of the short-lived trimmings, but some is there, and hints of what is to rule in millinery during fall and winter are few indeed. Sample hats appear here. In the top row of the picture are a dark green straw trimmed round the brim with green and white straw and pierced with two black quills; a black cloth covered except at the top with straw trimmed with fancy stiff straw and topped by a bunch of grapes. Such headgear would indicate that the lesson of the perishable decorations had been learned, but the remaining two hats, of sorts plenti-

ful in the current showings, give the opposite indication. They were a draped hat of white chiffon and lace and another of green silk with crown of raffia lace and long ends of green silk ribbon. Fruit ornaments are likely to multiply as autumn approaches, and a run of gaily varied ribbon embellishments is indicated.

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