

The background of the image is composed of three vertical panels. The left panel is grayscale and features abstract, flowing, organic shapes. The middle panel is a vibrant purple and magenta, also with abstract, flowing patterns. The right panel is a fiery red and orange, with abstract, flowing patterns. The text is overlaid on these panels.

Sentimental Education Vol 1

Gustave Flaubert

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CHAPTER 1. A PROMISING PUPIL

On the 15th of September, 1840, about six o'clock in the morning, the *Ville de Montereau*, just on the point of starting, was sending forth great whirlwinds of smoke, in front of the Quai St. Bernard.

People came rushing on board in breathless haste. The traffic was obstructed by casks, cables, and baskets of linen. The sailors answered nobody. People jostled one another. Between the two paddle-boxes was piled up a heap of parcels; and the uproar was drowned in the loud hissing of the steam, which, making its way through the plates of sheet-iron, enveloped everything in a white cloud, while the bell at the prow kept ringing continuously.

At last, the vessel set out; and the two banks of the river, stocked with warehouses, timber-yards, and manufactories, opened out like two huge ribbons being unrolled.

A young man of eighteen, with long hair, holding an album under his arm, remained near the helm without moving. Through the haze he surveyed steeples, buildings of which he did not know the names; then, with a parting glance, he took in the Île St. Louis, the Cité, Notre Dame; and presently, as Paris disappeared from his view, he heaved a deep sigh.

Frederick Moreau, having just taken his Bachelor's degree, was returning home to Nogent-sur-Seine, where he would have to lead a languishing existence for two months, before going back to begin his legal studies. His mother had sent him, with enough to cover his expenses, to Havre to see an uncle, from whom she had expectations of his receiving an inheritance. He had returned from that place only yesterday; and he indemnified himself for not having the opportunity of spending a little time in the capital by taking the longest possible route to reach his own part of the country.

The hubbub had subsided. The passengers had all taken their places. Some of them stood warming themselves around the machinery, and the chimney spat forth with a slow, rhythmic rattle its plume of black smoke. Little drops of dew trickled over the copper plates; the deck quivered with the vibration from within; and the two paddle-wheels, rapidly turning round, lashed the water. The edges of the river were covered with sand. The vessel swept past rafts of wood which began to oscillate under the rippling of the waves, or a boat without sails in which a man sat fishing. Then the wandering haze cleared off; the sun appeared; the hill which ran along the course of the Seine to the right subsided by degrees, and another rose nearer on the opposite bank.

It was crowned with trees, which surrounded low-built houses, covered with roofs in the Italian style. They had sloping gardens divided by fresh

walls, iron railings, grass-plots, hot-houses, and vases of geraniums, laid out regularly on the terraces where one could lean forward on one's elbow. More than one spectator longed, on beholding those attractive residences which looked so peaceful, to be the owner of one of them, and to dwell there till the end of his days with a good billiard-table, a sailing-boat, and a woman or some other object to dream about. The agreeable novelty of a journey by water made such outbursts natural. Already the wags on board were beginning their jokes. Many began to sing. Gaiety prevailed, and glasses of brandy were poured out.

Frederick was thinking about the apartment which he would occupy over there, on the plan of a drama, on subjects for pictures, on future passions. He found that the happiness merited by the excellence of his soul was slow in arriving. He declaimed some melancholy verses. He walked with rapid step along the deck. He went on till he reached the end at which the bell was; and, in the centre of a group of passengers and sailors, he saw a gentleman talking soft nothings to a country-woman, while fingering the gold cross which she wore over her breast. He was a jovial blade of forty with frizzled hair. His robust form was encased in a jacket of black velvet, two emeralds sparkled in his cambric shirt, and his wide, white trousers fell over odd-looking red boots of Russian leather set off with blue designs.

The presence of Frederick did not discompose him. He turned round and glanced several times at the young man with winks of enquiry. He next offered cigars to all who were standing around him. But getting tired, no doubt, of their society, he moved away from them and took a seat further up. Frederick followed him.

The conversation, at first, turned on the various kinds of tobacco, then quite naturally it glided into a discussion about women. The gentleman in the red boots gave the young man advice; he put forward theories, related anecdotes, referred to himself by way of illustration, and he gave utterance to all these things in a paternal tone, with the ingenuousness of entertaining depravity.

He was republican in his opinions. He had travelled; he was familiar with the inner life of theatres, restaurants, and newspapers, and knew all the theatrical celebrities, whom he called by their Christian names.

Frederick told him confidentially about his projects; and the elder man took an encouraging view of them.

But he stopped talking to take a look at the funnel, then he went mumbling rapidly through a long calculation in order to ascertain "how much each stroke of the piston at so many times per minute would come to," etc., and having found the number, he spoke about the scenery, which he admired immensely. Then he gave expression to his delight at having got away from business.

Frederick regarded him with a certain amount of respect, and politely manifested a strong desire to know his name. The stranger, without a

moment's hesitation, replied:

"Jacques Arnoux, proprietor of *L'Art Industriel*, Boulevard Montmartre."

A man-servant in a gold-laced cap came up and said:

"Would Monsieur have the kindness to go below? Mademoiselle is crying."

L'Art Industriel was a hybrid establishment, wherein the functions of an art-journal and a picture-shop were combined. Frederick had seen this title several times in the bookseller's window in his native place on big prospectuses, on which the name of Jacques Arnoux displayed itself magisterially.

The sun's rays fell perpendicularly, shedding a glittering light on the iron hoops around the masts, the plates of the barricades, and the surface of the water, which, at the prow, was cut into two furrows that spread out as far as the borders of the meadows. At each winding of the river, a screen of pale poplars presented itself with the utmost uniformity. The surrounding country at this point had an empty look. In the sky there were little white clouds which remained motionless, and the sense of weariness, which vaguely diffused itself over everything, seemed to retard the progress of the steamboat and to add to the insignificant appearance of the passengers. Putting aside a few persons of good position who were travelling first class, they were artisans or shopmen with their wives and children. As it was customary at that time to wear old clothes when travelling, they nearly all had their heads covered with shabby Greek caps or discoloured hats, thin black coats that had become quite threadbare from constant rubbing against writing-desks, or frock-coats with the casings of their buttons loose from continual service in the shop. Here and there some roll-collar waistcoat afforded a glimpse of a calico shirt stained with coffee. Pinchbeck pins were stuck into cravats that were all torn. List shoes were kept up by stitched straps. Two or three roughs who held in their hands bamboo canes with leathern loops, kept looking askance at their fellow-passengers; and fathers of families opened their eyes wide while making enquiries. People chatted either standing up or squatting over their luggage; some went to sleep in various corners of the vessel; several occupied themselves with eating. The deck was soiled with walnut shells, butt-ends of cigars, peelings of pears, and the droppings of pork-butchers' meat, which had been carried wrapped up in paper. Three cabinet-makers in blouses took their stand in front of the bottle case; a harp-player in rags was resting with his elbows on his instrument. At intervals could be heard the sound of falling coals in the furnace, a shout, or a laugh; and the captain kept walking on the bridge from one paddle-box to the other without stopping for a moment. Frederick, to get back to his place, pushed forward the grating leading into the part of the vessel reserved for first-class passengers, and in so doing disturbed two sportsmen with their dogs.

What he then saw was like an apparition. She was seated in the middle of a bench all alone, or, at any rate, he could see no one, dazzled as he was by her eyes. At the moment when he was passing, she raised her head; his shoulders bent involuntarily; and, when he had seated himself, some distance away, on the same side, he glanced towards her.

She wore a wide straw hat with red ribbons which fluttered in the wind behind her. Her black tresses, twining around the edges of her large brows, descended very low, and seemed amorously to press the oval of her face. Her robe of light muslin spotted with green spread out in numerous folds. She was in the act of embroidering something; and her straight nose, her chin, her entire person was cut out on the background of the luminous air and the blue sky.

As she remained in the same attitude, he took several turns to the right and to the left to hide from her his change of position; then he placed himself close to her parasol which lay against the bench, and pretended to be looking at a sloop on the river.

Never before had he seen more lustrous dark skin, a more seductive figure, or more delicately shaped fingers than those through which the sunlight gleamed. He stared with amazement at her work-basket, as if it were something extraordinary. What was her name, her place of residence, her life, her past? He longed to become familiar with the furniture of her apartment, all the dresses that she had worn, the people whom she visited; and the desire of physical possession yielded to a deeper yearning, a painful curiosity that knew no bounds.

A negress, wearing a silk handkerchief tied round her head, made her appearance, holding by the hand a little girl already tall for her age. The child, whose eyes were swimming with tears, had just awakened. The lady took the little one on her knees. "Mademoiselle was not good, though she would soon be seven; her mother would not love her any more. She was too often pardoned for being naughty." And Frederick heard those things with delight, as if he had made a discovery, an acquisition.

He assumed that she must be of Andalusian descent, perhaps a Creole: had she brought this negress across with her from the West Indian Islands?

Meanwhile his attention was directed to a long shawl with violet stripes thrown behind her back over the copper support of the bench. She must have, many a time, wrapped it around her waist, as the vessel sped through the midst of the waves; drawn it over her feet, gone to sleep in it!

Frederick suddenly noticed that with the sweep of its fringes it was slipping off, and it was on the point of falling into the water when, with a bound, he secured it. She said to him:

"Thanks, Monsieur."

Their eyes met.

"Are you ready, my dear?" cried my lord Arnoux, presenting himself at the hood of the companion-ladder.

Mademoiselle Marthe ran over to him, and, clinging to his neck, she began pulling at his moustache. The strains of a harp were heard—she wanted to see the music played; and presently the performer on the instrument, led forward by the negress, entered the place reserved for saloon passengers. Arnoux recognized in him a man who had formerly been a model, and "thou'd" him, to the astonishment of the bystanders. At length the harpist, flinging back his long hair over his shoulders, stretched out his hands and began playing.

It was an Oriental ballad all about poniards, flowers, and stars. The man in rags sang it in a sharp voice; the twanging of the harp strings broke the harmony of the tune with false notes. He played more vigorously: the chords vibrated, and their metallic sounds seemed to send forth sobs, and, as it were, the plaint of a proud and vanquished love. On both sides of the river, woods extended as far as the edge of the water. A current of fresh air swept past them, and Madame Arnoux gazed vaguely into the distance. When the music stopped, she moved her eyes several times as if she were starting out of a dream.

The harpist approached them with an air of humility. While Arnoux was searching his pockets for money, Frederick stretched out towards the cap his closed hand, and then, opening it in a shamefaced manner, he deposited in it a louis d'or. It was not vanity that had prompted him to bestow this alms in her presence, but the idea of a blessing in which he thought she might share—an almost religious impulse of the heart.

Arnoux, pointing out the way, cordially invited him to go below.

Frederick declared that he had just lunched; on the contrary, he was nearly dying of hunger; and he had not a single centime in his purse. After that, it occurred to him that he had a perfect right, as well as anyone else, to remain in the cabin.

Ladies and gentlemen were seated before round tables, lunching, while an attendant went about serving out coffee. Monsieur and Madame Arnoux were in the far corner to the right. He took a seat on the long bench covered with velvet, having picked up a newspaper which he found there.

They would have to take the diligence at Montereau for Châlons. Their tour in Switzerland would last a month. Madame Arnoux blamed her husband for his weakness in dealing with his child. He whispered in her ear something agreeable, no doubt, for she smiled. Then, he got up to draw down the window curtain at her back. Under the low, white ceiling, a crude light filled the cabin. Frederick, sitting opposite to the place where she sat, could distinguish the shade of her eyelashes. She just moistened her lips with her glass and broke a little piece of crust between her fingers. The lapis-lazuli locket fastened by a little gold

chain to her wrist made a ringing sound, every now and then, as it touched her plate. Those present, however, did not appear to notice it. At intervals one could see, through the small portholes, the side of a boat taking away passengers or putting them on board. Those who sat round the tables stooped towards the openings, and called out the names of the various places they passed along the river.

Arnoux complained of the cooking. He grumbled particularly at the amount of the bill, and got it reduced. Then, he carried off the young man towards the forecandle to drink a glass of grog with him. But Frederick speedily came back again to gaze at Madame Arnoux, who had returned to the awning, beneath which she seated herself. She was reading a thin, grey-covered volume. From time to time, the corners of her mouth curled and a gleam of pleasure lighted up her forehead. He felt jealous of the inventor of those things which appeared to interest her so much. The more he contemplated her, the more he felt that there were yawning abysses between them. He was reflecting that he should very soon lose sight of her irrevocably, without having extracted a few words from her, without leaving her even a souvenir!

On the right, a plain stretched out. On the left, a strip of pasture-land rose gently to meet a hillock where one could see vineyards, groups of walnut-trees, a mill embedded in the grassy slopes, and, beyond that, little zigzag paths over the white mass of rocks that reached up towards the clouds. What bliss it would have been to ascend side by side with her, his arm around her waist, while her gown would sweep the yellow leaves, listening to her voice and gazing up into her glowing eyes! The steamboat might stop, and all they would have to do was to step out of it; and yet this thing, simple as it might be, was not less difficult than it would have been to move the sun.

A little further on, a château appeared with pointed roof and square turrets. A flower garden spread out in the foreground; and avenues ran, like dark archways, under the tall linden trees. He pictured her to himself passing along by this group of trees. At that moment a young lady and a young man showed themselves on the steps in front of the house, between the trunks of the orange trees. Then the entire scene vanished.

The little girl kept skipping playfully around the place where he had stationed himself on the deck. Frederick wished to kiss her. She hid herself behind her nurse. Her mother scolded her for not being nice to the gentleman who had rescued her own shawl. Was this an indirect overture?

"Is she going to speak to me?" he asked himself.

Time was flying. How was he to get an invitation to the Arnoux's house? And he could think of nothing better than to draw her attention to the autumnal hues, adding:

"We are close to winter—the season of balls and dinner-parties."

But Arnoux was entirely occupied with his luggage. They had arrived at the point of the river's bank facing Surville. The two bridges drew nearer. They passed a ropewalk, then a range of low-built houses, inside which there were pots of tar and splinters of wood; and brats went along the sand turning head over heels. Frederick recognised a man with a sleeved waistcoat, and called out to him:

"Make haste!"

They were at the landing-place. He looked around anxiously for Arnoux amongst the crowd of passengers, and the other came and shook hands with him, saying:

"A pleasant time, dear Monsieur!"

When he was on the quay, Frederick turned around. She was standing beside the helm. He cast a look towards her into which he tried to put his whole soul. She remained motionless, as if he had done nothing. Then, without paying the slightest attentions to the obeisances of his man-servant:

"Why didn't you bring the trap down here?"

The man made excuses.

"What a clumsy fellow you are! Give me some money."

And after that he went off to get something to eat at an inn.

A quarter of an hour later, he felt an inclination to turn into the coachyard, as if by chance. Perhaps he would see her again.

"What's the use of it?" said he to himself.

The vehicle carried him off. The two horses did not belong to his mother. She had borrowed one of M. Chambrion, the tax-collector, in order to have it yoked alongside of her own. Isidore, having set forth the day before, had taken a rest at Bray until evening, and had slept at Montereau, so that the animals, with restored vigour, were trotting briskly.

Fields on which the crops had been cut stretched out in apparently endless succession; and by degrees Villeneuve, St. Georges, Ablon, Châtillon, Corbeil, and the other places—his entire journey—came back to his recollection with such vividness that he could now recall to mind fresh details, more intimate particulars.... Under the lowest flounce of her gown, her foot showed itself encased in a dainty silk boot of maroon shade. The awning made of ticking formed a wide canopy over her head, and the little red tassels of the edging kept perpetually trembling in the breeze.

She resembled the women of whom he had read in romances. He would have added nothing to the charms of her person, and would have taken nothing from them. The universe had suddenly become enlarged. She was the luminous point towards which all things converged; and, rocked by the movement of the vehicle, with half-dosed eyelids, and his face turned towards the clouds, he abandoned himself to a dreamy, infinite joy.

At Bray, he did not wait till the horses had got their oats; he walked on along the road ahead by himself. Arnoux had, when he spoke to her, addressed her as "Marie." He now loudly repeated the name "Marie!" His voice pierced the air and was lost in the distance.

The western sky was one great mass of flaming purple. Huge stacks of wheat, rising up in the midst of the stubble fields, projected giant shadows. A dog began to bark in a farm-house in the distance. He shivered, seized with disquietude for which he could assign no cause. When Isidore had come up with him, he jumped up into the front seat to drive. His fit of weakness was past. He had thoroughly made up his mind to effect an introduction into the house of the Arnoux, and to become intimate with them. Their house should be amusing; besides, he liked Arnoux; then, who could tell? Thereupon a wave of blood rushed up to his face; his temples throbbed; he cracked his whip, shook the reins, and set the horses going at such a pace that the old coachman repeatedly exclaimed:

"Easy! easy now, or they'll get broken-winded!"

Gradually Frederick calmed down, and he listened to what the man was saying. Monsieur's return was impatiently awaited. Mademoiselle Louise had cried in her anxiety to go in the trap to meet him.

"Who, pray, is Mademoiselle Louise?"

"Monsieur Roque's little girl, you know."

"Ah! I had forgotten," rejoined Frederick, carelessly.

Meanwhile, the two horses could keep up the pace no longer. They were both getting lame; and nine o'clock struck at St. Laurent's when he arrived at the parade in front of his mother's house.

This house of large dimensions, with a garden looking out on the open country, added to the social importance of Madame Moreau, who was the most respected lady in the district.

She came of an old family of nobles, of which the male line was now extinct. Her husband, a plebeian whom her parents forced her to marry, met his death by a sword-thrust, during her pregnancy, leaving her an estate much encumbered. She received visitors three times a week, and from time to time, gave a fashionable dinner. But the number of wax candles was calculated beforehand, and she looked forward with some impatience to the payment of her rents. These pecuniary embarrassments, concealed as if there were some guilt attached to them, imparted a certain gravity to her character. Nevertheless, she displayed no prudery, no sourness, in the practice of her peculiar virtue. Her most trifling charities seemed munificent alms. She was consulted about the selection of servants, the education of young girls, and the art of making preserves, and Monseigneur used to stay at her house on the occasion of his episcopal visitations.

Madame Moreau cherished a lofty ambition for her son. Through a sort of prudence grounded on the expectation of favours, she did not care to

hear blame cast on the Government. He would need patronage at the start; then, with its aid, he might become a councillor of State, an ambassador, a minister. His triumphs at the college of Sens warranted this proud anticipation; he had carried off there the prize of honour. When he entered the drawing-room, all present arose with a great racket; he was embraced; and the chairs, large and small, were drawn up in a big semi-circle around the fireplace. M. Gamblin immediately asked him what was his opinion about Madame Lafarge. This case, the rage of the period, did not fail to lead to a violent discussion. Madame Moreau stopped it, to the regret, however, of M. Gamblin. He deemed it serviceable to the young man in his character of a future lawyer, and, nettled at what had occurred, he left the drawing-room.

Nothing should have caused surprise on the part of a friend of Père Roque! The reference to Père Roque led them to talk of M. Dambreuse, who had just become the owner of the demesne of La Fortelle. But the tax-collector had drawn Frederick aside to know what he thought of M. Guizot's latest work. They were all anxious to get some information about his private affairs, and Madame Benoît went cleverly to work with that end in view by inquiring about his uncle. How was that worthy relative? They no longer heard from him. Had he not a distant cousin in America?

The cook announced that Monsieur's soup was served. The guests discreetly retired. Then, as soon as they were alone in the dining-room, his mother said to him in a low tone:

"Well?"

The old man had received him in a very cordial manner, but without disclosing his intentions.

Madame Moreau sighed.

"Where is she now?" was his thought.

The diligence was rolling along the road, and, wrapped up in the shawl, no doubt, she was leaning against the cloth of the coupé, her beautiful head nodding asleep.

He and his mother were just going up to their apartments when a waiter from the Swan of the Cross brought him a note.

"What is that, pray?"

"It is Deslauriers, who wants me," said he.

"Ha! your chum!" said Madame Moreau, with a contemptuous sneer.

"Certainly it is a nice hour to select!"

Frederick hesitated. But friendship was stronger. He got his hat.

"At any rate, don't be long!" said his mother to him.

CHAPTER 2. DAMON AND PYTHIAS

Charles Deslauriers' father, an ex-captain in the line, who had left the service in 1818, had come back to Nogent, where he had married, and with the amount of the dowry bought up the business of a process-server,¹ which brought him barely enough to maintain him. Embittered by a long course of unjust treatment, suffering still from the effects of old wounds, and always regretting the Emperor, he vented on those around him the fits of rage that seemed to choke him. Few children received so many whackings as his son. In spite of blows, however, the brat did not yield. His mother, when she tried to interpose, was also ill-treated. Finally, the captain planted the boy in his office, and all the day long kept him bent over his desk copying documents, with the result that his right shoulder was noticeably higher than his left.

In 1833, on the invitation of the president, the captain sold his office. His wife died of cancer. He then went to live at Dijon. After that he started in business at Troyes, where he was connected with the slave trade; and, having obtained a small scholarship for Charles, placed him at the college of Sens, where Frederick came across him. But one of the pair was twelve years old, while the other was fifteen; besides, a thousand differences of character and origin tended to keep them apart. Frederick had in his chest of drawers all sorts of useful things—choice articles, such as a dressing-case. He liked to lie late in bed in the morning, to look at the swallows, and to read plays; and, regretting the comforts of home, he thought college life rough. To the process-server's son it seemed a pleasant life. He worked so hard that, at the end of the second year, he had got into the third form. However, owing to his poverty or to his quarrelsome disposition, he was regarded with intense dislike. But when on one occasion, in the courtyard where pupils of the middle grade took exercise, an attendant openly called him a beggar's child, he sprang at the fellow's throat, and would have killed him if three of the ushers had not intervened. Frederick, carried away by admiration, pressed him in his arms. From that day forward they became fast friends. The affection of a *grandee* no doubt flattered the vanity of the youth of meaner rank, and the other accepted as a piece of good fortune this devotion freely offered to him. During the holidays Charles's father allowed him to remain in the college. A translation of

Plato which he opened by chance excited his enthusiasm. Then he became smitten with a love of metaphysical studies; and he made rapid progress, for he approached the subject with all the energy of youth and the self-confidence of an emancipated intellect. Jouffroy, Cousin, Laromiguière, Malebranche, and the Scotch metaphysicians—everything that could be found in the library dealing with this branch of knowledge passed through his hands. He found it necessary to steal the key in order to get the books.

Frederick's intellectual distractions were of a less serious description. He made sketches of the genealogy of Christ carved on a post in the Rue des Trois Rois, then of the gateway of a cathedral. After a course of mediæval dramas, he took up memoirs—Froissart, Comines, Pierre de l'Estoile, and Brantôme.

The impressions made on his mind by this kind of reading took such a hold of it that he felt a need within him of reproducing those pictures of bygone days. His ambition was to be, one day, the Walter Scott of France. Deslauriers dreamed of formulating a vast system of philosophy, which might have the most far-reaching applications.

They chatted over all these matters at recreation hours, in the playground, in front of the moral inscription painted under the clock. They kept whispering to each other about them in the chapel, even with St. Louis staring down at them. They dreamed about them in the dormitory, which looked out on a burial-ground. On walking-days they took up a position behind the others, and talked without stopping. They spoke of what they would do later, when they had left college. First of all, they would set out on a long voyage with the money which Frederick would take out of his own fortune on reaching his majority. Then they would come back to Paris; they would work together, and would never part; and, as a relaxation from their labours, they would have love-affairs with princesses in boudoirs lined with satin, or dazzling orgies with famous courtesans. Their rapturous expectations were followed by doubts. After a crisis of verbose gaiety, they would often lapse into profound silence.

On summer evenings, when they had been walking for a long time over stony paths which bordered on vineyards, or on the high-road in the open country, and when they saw the wheat waving in the sunlight, while the air was filled with the fragrance of angelica, a sort of suffocating sensation took possession of them, and they stretched themselves on their backs, dizzy, intoxicated. Meanwhile the other lads, in their shirt-sleeves, were playing at base or flying kites. Then, as the usher called in the two companions from the playground, they would return, taking the path which led along by the gardens watered by brooklets; then they would pass through the boulevards overshadowed by the old city walls. The deserted streets rang under their tread. The

grating flew back; they ascended the stairs; and they felt as sad as if they had had a great debauch.

The proctor maintained that they mutually cried up each other.

Nevertheless, if Frederick worked his way up to the higher forms, it was through the exhortations of his friend; and, during the vacation in 1837, he brought Deslauriers to his mother's house.

Madame Moreau disliked the young man. He had a terrible appetite. He was fond of making republican speeches. To crown all, she got it into her head that he had been the means of leading her son into improper places. Their relations towards each other were watched. This only made their friendship grow stronger, and they bade one another adieu with heartfelt pangs when, in the following year, Deslauriers left the college in order to study law in Paris.

Frederick anxiously looked forward to the time when they would meet again. For two years they had not laid eyes on each other; and, when their embraces were over, they walked over the bridges to talk more at their ease.

The captain, who had now set up a billiard-room at Villenauxe, reddened with anger when his son called for an account of the expense of tutelage, and even cut down the cost of victuals to the lowest figure. But, as he intended to become a candidate at a later period for a professor's chair at the school, and as he had no money, Deslauriers accepted the post of principal clerk in an attorney's office at Troyes. By dint of sheer privation he spared four thousand francs; and, by not drawing upon the sum which came to him through his mother, he would always have enough to enable him to work freely for three years while he was waiting for a better position. It was necessary, therefore, to abandon their former project of living together in the capital, at least for the present.

Frederick hung down his head. This was the first of his dreams which had crumbled into dust.

"Be consoled," said the captain's son. "Life is long. We are young. We'll meet again. Think no more about it!"

He shook the other's hand warmly, and, to distract his attention, questioned him about his journey.

Frederick had nothing to tell. But, at the recollection of Madame Arnoux, his vexation disappeared. He did not refer to her, restrained by a feeling of bashfulness. He made up for it by expatiating on Arnoux, recalling his talk, his agreeable manner, his stories; and Deslauriers urged him strongly to cultivate this new acquaintance.

Frederick had of late written nothing. His literary opinions were changed. Passion was now above everything else in his estimation. He was equally enthusiastic about Werther, René, Franck, Lara, Lélia, and other ideal creations of less merit. Sometimes it seemed to him that music alone was capable of giving expression to his internal agitation.

Then, he dreamed of symphonies; or else the surface of things seized hold of him, and he longed to paint. He had, however, composed verses. Deslauriers considered them beautiful, but did not ask him to write another poem.

As for himself, he had given up metaphysics. Social economy and the French Revolution absorbed all his attention. Just now he was a tall fellow of twenty-two, thin, with a wide mouth, and a resolute look. On this particular evening, he wore a poor-looking paletot of lasting; and his shoes were white with dust, for he had come all the way from Villenauxe on foot for the express purpose of seeing Frederick. Isidore arrived while they were talking. Madame begged of Monsieur to return home, and, for fear of his catching cold, she had sent him his cloak.

"Wait a bit!" said Deslauriers. And they continued walking from one end to the other of the two bridges which rest on the narrow islet formed by the canal and the river.

When they were walking on the side towards Nogent, they had, exactly in front of them, a block of houses which projected a little. At the right might be seen the church, behind the mills in the wood, whose sluices had been closed up; and, at the left, the hedges covered with shrubs, along the skirts of the wood, formed a boundary for the gardens, which could scarcely be distinguished. But on the side towards Paris the high road formed a sheer descending line, and the meadows lost themselves in the distance under the vapours of the night. Silence reigned along this road, whose white track clearly showed itself through the surrounding gloom. Odours of damp leaves ascended towards them. The waterfall, where the stream had been diverted from its course a hundred paces further away, kept rumbling with that deep harmonious sound which waves make in the night time.

Deslauriers stopped, and said:

"'Tis funny to have these worthy folks sleeping so quietly! Patience! A new '89 is in preparation. People are tired of constitutions, charters, subtleties, lies! Ah, if I had a newspaper, or a platform, how I would shake off all these things! But, in order to undertake anything whatever, money is required. What a curse it is to be a tavern-keeper's son, and to waste one's youth in quest of bread!"

He hung down his head, bit his lips, and shivered under his threadbare overcoat.

Frederick flung half his cloak over his friend's shoulder. They both wrapped themselves up in it; and, with their arms around each other's waists, they walked down the road side by side.

"How do you think I can live over there without you?" said Frederick. The bitter tone of his friend had brought back his own sadness.

"I would have done something with a woman who loved me. What are you laughing at? Love is the feeding-ground, and, as it were, the

atmosphere of genius. Extraordinary emotions produce sublime works. As for seeking after her whom I want, I give that up! Besides, if I should ever find her, she will repel me. I belong to the race of the disinherited, and I shall be extinguished with a treasure that will be of paste or of diamond—I know not which."

Somebody's shadow fell across the road, and at the same time they heard these words:

"Excuse me, gentlemen!"

The person who had uttered them was a little man attired in an ample brown frock-coat, and with a cap on his head which under its peak afforded a glimpse of a sharp nose.

"Monsieur Roque?" said Frederick.

"The very man!" returned the voice.

This resident in the locality explained his presence by stating that he had come back to inspect the wolf-traps in his garden near the water-side.

"And so you are back again in the old spot? Very good! I ascertained the fact through my little girl. Your health is good, I hope? You are not going away again?"

Then he left them, repelled, probably, by Frederick's chilling reception. Madame Moreau, indeed, was not on visiting terms with him. Père Roque lived in peculiar relations with his servant-girl, and was held in very slight esteem, although he was the vice-president at elections, and M. Dambreuse's manager.

"The banker who resides in the Rue d'Anjou," observed Deslauriers. "Do you know what you ought to do, my fine fellow?"

Isidore once more interrupted. His orders were positive not to go back without Frederick. Madame would be getting uneasy at his absence.

"Well, well, he will go back," said Deslauriers. "He's not going to stay out all night."

And, as soon as the man-servant had disappeared:

"You ought to ask that old chap to introduce you to the Dambreses.

There's nothing so useful as to be a visitor at a rich man's house. Since you have a black coat and white gloves, make use of them. You must mix in that set. You can introduce me into it later. Just think!—a man worth millions! Do all you can to make him like you, and his wife, too. Become her lover!"

Frederick uttered an exclamation by way of protest.

"Why, I can quote classical examples for you on that point, I rather think! Remember Rastignac in the *Comédie Humaine*. You will succeed, I have no doubt."

Frederick had so much confidence in Deslauriers that he felt his firmness giving way, and forgetting Madame Arnoux, or including her in the prediction made with regard to the other, he could not keep from smiling.

The clerk added:

"A last piece of advice: pass your examinations. It is always a good thing to have a handle to your name: and, without more ado, give up your Catholic and Satanic poets, whose philosophy is as old as the twelfth century! Your despair is silly. The very greatest men have had more difficult beginnings, as in the case of Mirabeau. Besides, our separation will not be so long. I will make that pickpocket of a father of mine disgorge. It is time for me to be going back. Farewell! Have you got a hundred sous to pay for my dinner?"

Frederick gave him ten francs, what was left of those he had got that morning from Isidore.

Meanwhile, some forty yards away from the bridges, a light shone from the garret-window of a low-built house.

Deslauriers noticed it. Then he said emphatically, as he took off his hat:

"Your pardon, Venus, Queen of Heaven, but Penury is the mother of wisdom. We have been slandered enough for that—so have mercy."

This allusion to an adventure in which they had both taken part, put them into a jovial mood. They laughed loudly as they passed through the streets.

Then, having settled his bill at the inn, Deslauriers walked back with Frederick as far as the crossway near the Hôtel-Dieu, and after a long embrace, the two friends parted.

CHAPTER 3. SENTIMENT AND PASSION

Two months later, Frederick, having debarked one morning in the Rue Coq-Héron, immediately thought of paying his great visit. Chance came to his aid. Père Roque had brought him a roll of papers and requested him to deliver them up himself to M. Dambreuse; and the worthy man accompanied the package with an open letter of introduction in behalf of his young fellow-countryman.

Madame Moreau appeared surprised at this proceeding. Frederick concealed the delight that it gave him.

M. Dambreuse's real name was the Count d'Ambreuse; but since 1825, gradually abandoning his title of nobility and his party, he had turned his attention to business; and with his ears open in every office, his hand in every enterprise, on the watch for every opportunity, as subtle as a Greek and as laborious as a native of Auvergne, he had amassed a fortune which might be called considerable. Furthermore, he was an officer of the Legion of Honour, a member of the General Council of the Aube, a deputy, and one of these days would be a peer of France.

However, affable as he was in other respects, he wearied the Minister by his continual applications for relief, for crosses, and licences for tobacconists' shops; and in his complaints against authority he was inclined to join the Left Centre.

His wife, the pretty Madame Dambreuse, of whom mention was made in the fashion journals, presided at charitable assemblies. By wheedling the duchesses, she appeased the rancours of the aristocratic faubourg, and led the residents to believe that M. Dambreuse might yet repent and render them some services.

The young man was agitated when he called on them.

"I should have done better to take my dress-coat with me. No doubt they will give me an invitation to next week's ball. What will they say to me?"

His self-confidence returned when he reflected that M. Dambreuse was only a person of the middle class, and he sprang out of the cab briskly on the pavement of the Rue d'Anjou.

When he had pushed forward one of the two gateways he crossed the courtyard, mounted the steps in front of the house, and entered a vestibule paved with coloured marble. A straight double staircase, with red carpet, fastened with copper rods, rested against the high walls of shining stucco. At the end of the stairs there was a banana-tree, whose wide leaves fell down over the velvet of the baluster. Two bronze candelabra, with porcelain globes, hung from little chains; the atmosphere was heavy with the fumes exhaled by the vent-holes of the hot-air stoves; and all that could be heard was the ticking of a big clock fixed at the other end of the vestibule, under a suit of armour.

A bell rang; a valet made his appearance, and introduced Frederick into a little apartment, where one could observe two strong boxes, with pigeon-holes filled with pieces of pasteboard. In the centre of it, M. Dambreuse was writing at a roll-top desk.

He ran his eye over Père Roque's letter, tore open the canvas in which the papers had been wrapped, and examined them.

At some distance, he presented the appearance of being still young, owing to his slight figure. But his thin white hair, his feeble limbs, and, above all, the extraordinary pallor of his face, betrayed a shattered constitution. There was an expression of pitiless energy in his sea-green eyes, colder than eyes of glass. His cheek-bones projected, and his finger-joints were knotted.

At length, he arose and addressed to the young man a few questions with regard to persons of their acquaintance at Nogent and also with regard to his studies, and then dismissed him with a bow. Frederick went out through another lobby, and found himself at the lower end of the courtyard near the coach-house.

A blue brougham, to which a black horse was yoked, stood in front of the steps before the house. The carriage door flew open, a lady sprang in, and the vehicle, with a rumbling noise, went rolling along the gravel. Frederick had come up to the courtyard gate from the other side at the same moment. As there was not room enough to allow him to pass, he was compelled to wait. The young lady, with her head thrust forward past the carriage blind, talked to the door-keeper in a very low tone. All he could see was her back, covered with a violet mantle. However, he took a glance into the interior of the carriage, lined with blue rep, with silk lace and fringes. The lady's ample robes filled up the space within. He stole away from this little padded box with its perfume of iris, and, so to speak, its vague odour of feminine elegance. The coachman slackened the reins, the horse brushed abruptly past the starting-point, and all disappeared.

Frederick returned on foot, following the track of the boulevard.

He regretted not having been able to get a proper view of Madame Dambreuse. A little higher than the Rue Montmartre, a regular jumble of vehicles made him turn round his head, and on the opposite side, facing him, he read on a marble plate:

"JACQUES ARNOUX."

How was it that he had not thought about her sooner? It was Deslauriers' fault; and he approached the shop, which, however, he did not enter. He was waiting for *her* to appear.

The high, transparent plate-glass windows presented to one's gaze statuettes, drawings, engravings, catalogues and numbers of *L'Art Industriel*, arranged in a skilful fashion; and the amounts of the subscription were repeated on the door, which was decorated in the centre with the publisher's initials. Against the walls could be seen large

pictures whose varnish had a shiny look, two chests laden with porcelain, bronze, alluring curiosities; a little staircase separated them, shut off at the top by a Wilton portière; and a lustre of old Saxe, a green carpet on the floor, with a table of marqueterie, gave to this interior the appearance rather of a drawing-room than of a shop.

Frederick pretended to be examining the drawings. After hesitating for a long time, he went in. A clerk lifted the portière, and in reply to a question, said that Monsieur would not be in the shop before five o'clock. But if the message could be conveyed——

"No! I'll come back again," Frederick answered blandly.

The following days were spent in searching for lodgings; and he fixed upon an apartment in a second story of a furnished mansion in the Rue Hyacinthe.

With a fresh blotting-case under his arm, he set forth to attend the opening lecture of the course. Three hundred young men, bare-headed, filled an amphitheatre, where an old man in a red gown was delivering a discourse in a monotonous voice. Quill pens went scratching over the paper. In this hall he found once more the dusty odour of the school, a reading-desk of similar shape, the same wearisome monotony! For a fortnight he regularly continued his attendance at law lectures. But he left off the study of the Civil Code before getting as far as Article 3, and he gave up the Institutes at the *Summa Divisio Personarum*.

The pleasures that he had promised himself did not come to him; and when he had exhausted a circulating library, gone over the collections in the Louvre, and been at the theatre a great many nights in succession, he sank into the lowest depths of idleness.

His depression was increased by a thousand fresh annoyances. He found it necessary to count his linen and to bear with the door keeper, a bore with the figure of a male hospital nurse who came in the morning to make up his bed, smelling of alcohol and grunting. He did not like his apartment, which was ornamented with an alabaster time-piece. The partitions were thin; he could hear the students making punch, laughing and singing.

Tired of this solitude, he sought out one of his old schoolfellows named Baptiste Martinon; and he discovered this friend of his boyhood in a middle-class boarding-house in the Rue Saint-Jacques, cramming up legal procedure before a coal fire. A woman in a print dress sat opposite him darning his socks.

Martinon was what people call a very fine man—big, chubby, with a regular physiognomy, and blue eyes far up in his face. His father, an extensive land-owner, had destined him for the magistracy; and wishing already to present a grave exterior, he wore his beard cut like a collar round his neck.

As there was no rational foundation for Frederick's complaints, and as he could not give evidence of any misfortune, Martinon was unable in