

ference, and said that the first sounded like père Martin blowing up his wife, and the second like her little godson trying to make the peace between them.

She was quite tone-deaf, and didn't know it; and he would pay her extravagant compliments on her musical talent, till Taffy would say: "Look here, Svengali, let's hear *you* sing a song!"

And he would tickle him so masterfully under the ribs that the creature howled and became quite hysterical.

Then Svengali would vent his love of teasing on Little Billee, and pin his arms behind his back and swing him round, saying: "Himmel! what's this for an arm? It's like a girl's!"

"It's strong enough to paint!" said Little Billee.

"And what's this for a leg? It's like a mahlstick!"

"It's strong enough to kick, if you don't leave off!"

And Little Billee, the young and tender, would let out his little heel and kick the German's shins; and just as the German was going to retaliate, big Taffy would pin *his* arms and make him sing another song, more discordant than Trilby's—for he didn't dream of kicking Taffy; of that you may be sure!

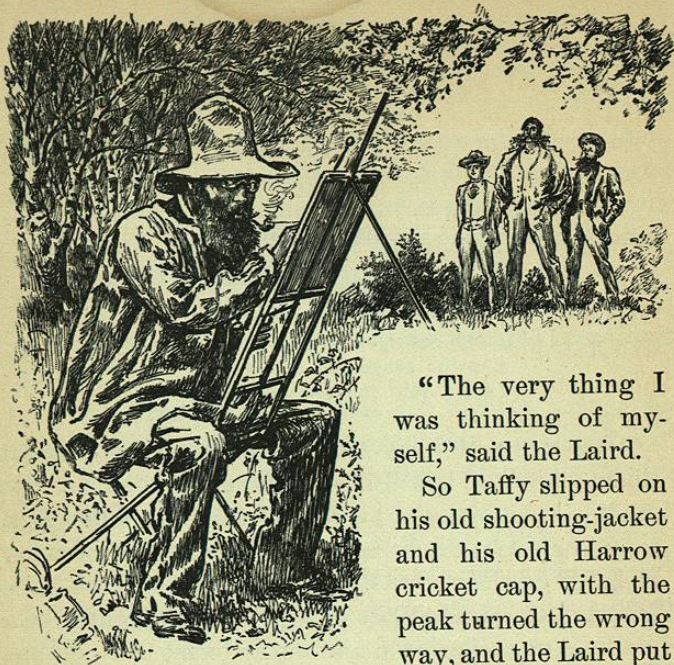
Such was Svengali—only to be endured for the sake of his music—always ready to vex, frighten, bully, or torment anybody or anything smaller and weaker than himself—from a woman or a child to a mouse or a fly.

Part Third

"Par deçà, ne delà la mer
Ne sçay dame ni damoiselle
Qui soit en tous biens parfaits telle—
C'est un songe que d'y penser :
Dieu ! qu'il fait bon, la regarder !"

ONE lovely Monday morning in late September, at about eleven or so, Taffy and the Laird sat in the studio—each opposite his picture, smoking, nursing his knee, and saying nothing. The heaviness of Monday weighed on their spirits more than usual, for the three friends had returned late on the previous night from a week spent at Barbizon and in the forest of Fontainebleau—a heavenly week among the painters: Rousseau, Millet, Corot, Daubigny, let us suppose, and others less known to fame this day. Little Billee, especially, had been fascinated by all this artistic life in blouses and sabots and immense straw hats and panamas, and had sworn to himself and to his friends that he would some day live and die there—painting the forest as it is, and peopling it with beautiful people out of his own fancy—leading a healthy out-door life of simple wants and lofty aspirations.

At length Taffy said: "Bother work this morning! I feel much more like a stroll in the Luxembourg Gardens and lunch at the Café de l'Odéon, where the omelets are good and the wine isn't blue."



THE HAPPY LIFE

"The very thing I was thinking of myself," said the Laird.

So Taffy slipped on his old shooting-jacket and his old Harrow cricket cap, with the peak turned the wrong way, and the Laird put on an old great-coat of Taffy's that reached to his heels, and a battered straw hat they had found in the studio when they took it; and both sallied forth into the mellow sunshine on the way to Carrel's. For they meant to seduce Little Billee from his work, that he might share in their laziness, greediness, and general demoralization.

And whom should they meet coming down the narrow turreted old Rue Vieille des Mauvais Ladres but Little Billee himself, with an air of general demoralization so tragic that they were quite alarmed. He had his paint-box and field-easel in one hand and his little valise in the other. He was pale, his hat on the back

of his head, his hair staring all at sixes and sevens, like a sick Scotch terrier's.

"Good Lord! what's the matter?" said Taffy.

"Oh! oh! oh! she's sitting at Carrel's!"

"Who's sitting at Carrel's?"

"Trilby! sitting to all those ruffians! There she was, just as I opened the door; I saw her, I tell you! The sight of her was like a blow between the eyes, and I bolted! I shall never go back to that beastly hole again! I'm off to Barbizon, to paint the forest; I was coming round to tell you. Good-bye! . . ."

"Stop a minute—are you mad?" said Taffy, collar-ing him.

"Let me go, Taffy—let me go, damn it! I'll come back in a week—but I'm going now! Let me go; do you hear?"

"But look here—I'll go with you."

"No; I want to be alone—quite alone. Let me go, I tell you!"

"I sha'n't let you go unless you swear to me, on your honor, that you'll write directly you get there, and every day till you come back. Swear!"

"All right; I swear—honor bright! Now there! Good-bye—good-bye; back on Sunday—good-bye!" And he was off.

"Now, what the devil does all that mean?" asked Taffy, much perturbed.

"I suppose he's shocked at seeing Trilby in that guise, or disguise, or unguise, sitting at Carrel's—he's such an odd little chap. And I must say, I'm surprised at Trilby. It's a bad thing for her when we're away. What could have induced her? She never sat

in a studio of that kind before. I thought she only sat to Durien and old Carrel."

They walked for a while in silence.

"Do you know, I've got a horrid idea that the little fool's in love with her!"

"I've long had a horrid idea that *she's* in love with *him*."

"That would be a very stupid business," said Taffy.

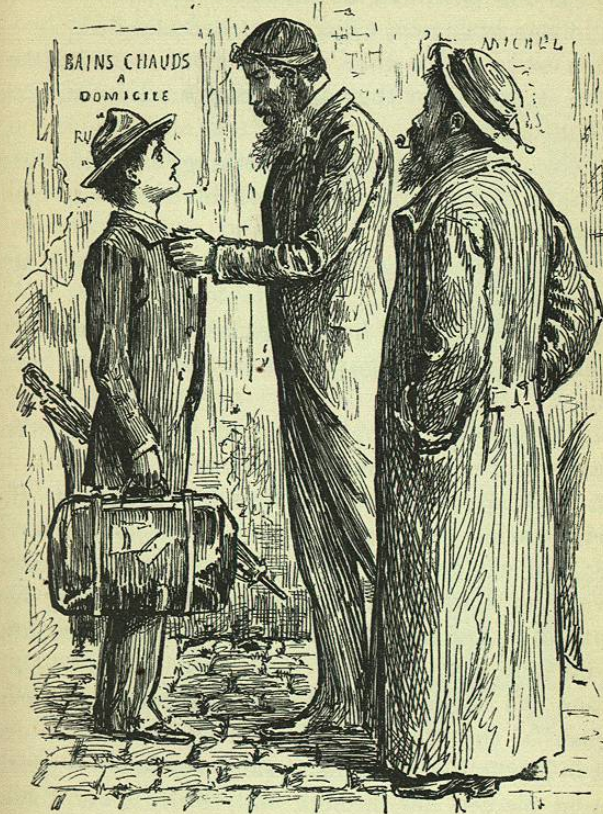
They walked on, brooding over those two horrid ideas, and the more they brooded, considered, and remembered, the more convinced they became that both were right.

"Here's a pretty kettle of fish!" said the Laird — "and talking of fish, let's go and lunch."

And so demoralized were they that Taffy ate three omelets without thinking, and the Laird drank two half-bottles of wine, and Taffy three, and they walked about the whole of that afternoon for fear Trilby should come to the studio—and were very unhappy.

This is how Trilby came to sit at Carrel's studio:

Carrel had suddenly taken it into his head that he would spend a week there, and paint a figure among his pupils, that they might see and paint with—and if possible like—him. And he had asked Trilby as a great favor to be the model, and Trilby was so devoted to the great Carrel that she readily consented. So that Monday morning found her there, and Carrel posed her as Ingres's famous figure in his picture called "La Source," holding a stone pitcher on her shoulder.



"LET ME GO, TAFFY . . ."

And the work began in religious silence. Then in five minutes or so Little Billee came bursting in, and as soon as he caught sight of her he stopped and stood as one petrified, his shoulders up, his eyes staring. Then lifting his arms, he turned and fled.

"Qu'est ce qu'il a donc, ce Litrebili?" exclaimed one or two students (for they had turned his English nickname into French).

"Perhaps he's forgotten something," said another. "Perhaps he's forgotten to brush his teeth and part his hair!"

"Perhaps he's forgotten to say his prayers!" said Barizel.

"He'll come back, I hope!" exclaimed the master.

And the incident gave rise to no further comment.

But Trilby was much disquieted, and fell to wondering what on earth was the matter.

At first she wondered in French: French of the quartier latin. She had not seen Little Billee for a week, and wondered if he were ill. She had looked forward so much to his painting her—painting her beautifully—and hoped he would soon come back, and lose no time.

Then she began to wonder in English—nice clean English of the studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts—her father's English—and suddenly a quick thought pierced her through and through, and made the flesh tingle on her insteps and the backs of her hands, and bathed her brow and temples with sweat.

She had good eyes, and Little Billee had a singularly expressive face.

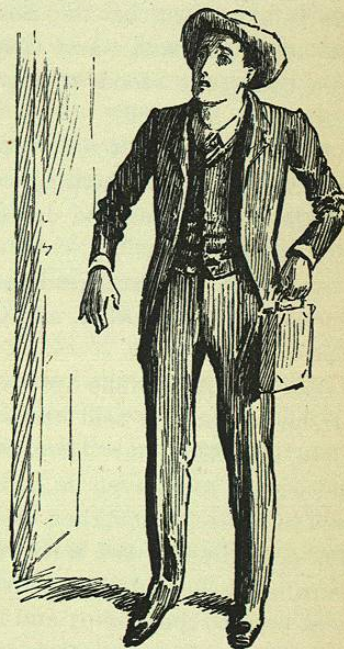
Could it possibly be that he was *shocked* at seeing her sitting there?

She knew that he was peculiar in many ways. She remembered that neither he nor Taffy nor the Laird had ever asked her to sit for the figure, though she would have been only too delighted to do so for them. She also remembered how Little Billee had always been silent whenever she alluded to her posing for the "altogether," as she called it, and had sometimes looked pained and always very grave.

She turned alternately pale and red, pale and red all over, again and again, as the thought grew up in her—and soon the growing thought became a torment.

This new-born feeling of shame was unendurable—its birth a travail that racked and rent every fibre of her moral being, and she suffered agonies beyond anything she had ever felt in her life.

"What is the matter with you, my child? Are you



ill?" asked Carrel, who, like every one else, was very fond of her, and to whom she had sat as a child ("l'Enfance de Psyché," now in the Luxembourg Gallery, was painted from her).

She shook her head, and the work went on.

Presently she dropped her pitcher, that broke into bits; and putting her two hands to her face she burst into tears and sobs—and there, to the amazement of everybody, she stood crying like a big baby—"La source aux larmes?"

"What *is* the matter, my poor dear child?" said Carrel, jumping up and helping her off the throne.

"Oh, I don't know—I don't know—I'm ill—very ill—let me go home!"

And with kind solicitude and despatch they helped her on with her clothes, and Carrel sent for a cab and took her home.

And on the way she dropped her head on his shoulder, and wept, and told him all about it as well as she could, and Monsieur Carrel had tears in his eyes too, and wished to Heaven he had never induced her to sit for the figure, either then or at any other time. And pondering deeply and sorrowfully on such terrible responsibility (he had grown-up daughters of his own), he went back to the studio; and in an hour's time they got another model and another pitcher, and went to work again.

And Trilby, as she lay disconsolate on her bed all that day and all the next, and all the next again, thought of her past life with agonies of shame and remorse that made the pain in her eyes seem as a

light and welcome relief. For it came, and tortured worse and lasted longer than it had ever done before. But she soon found, to her miserable bewilderment, that mind-aches are the worst of all.

Then she decided that she must write to one of the *trois Angliches*, and chose the Laird.

She was more familiar with him than with the other two: it was impossible not to be familiar with the Laird if he liked one, as he was so easy-going and demonstrative, for all that he was such a canny Scot! Then she had nursed him through his illness; she had often hugged and kissed him before the whole studio full of people—and even when alone with him it had always seemed quite natural for her to do so. It was like a child caressing a favorite young uncle or elder brother. And though the good Laird was the least susceptible of mortals, he would often find these innocent blandishments a somewhat trying ordeal! She had never taken such a liberty with Taffy; and as for Little Billee, she would sooner have died!

So she wrote to the Laird. I give her letter without the spelling, which was often faulty, although her nightly readings had much improved it:

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am very unhappy. I was sitting at Carrel's, in the Rue des Potirons, and Little Billee came in, and was so shocked and disgusted that he ran away and never came back.

"I saw it all in his face.

"I sat there because M. Carrel asked me to. He has always been very kind to me—M. Carrel—ever

since I was a child; and I would do anything to please him, but never *that* again.

“He was there too.

“I never thought anything about sitting before. I sat first as a child to M. Carrel. Mamma made me, and made me promise not to tell papa, and so I didn’t. It soon seemed as natural to sit for people as to run errands for them, or wash and mend their clothes. Papa wouldn’t have liked my doing that either, though we wanted the money badly. And so he never knew.

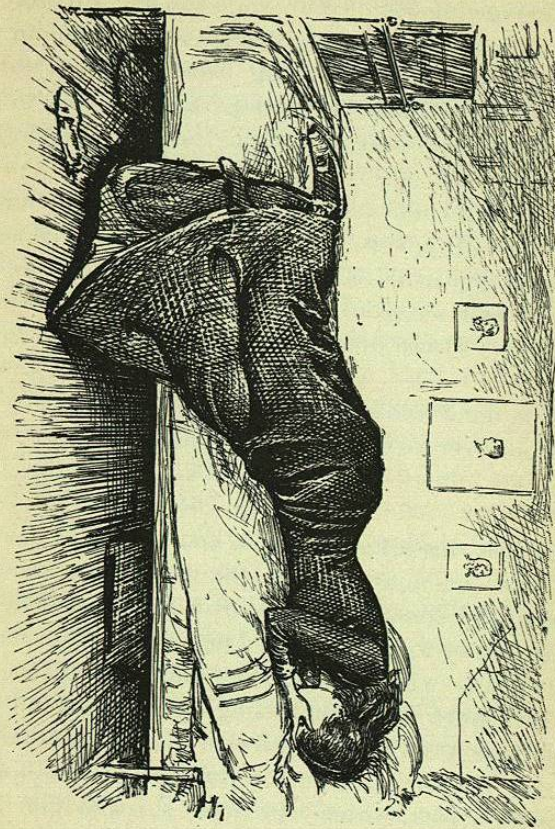
“I have sat for the altogether to several other people besides—M. Gérôme, Durien, the two Hennequins, and Émile Baratier; and for the head and hands to lots of people, and for the feet only to Charles Faure, André Besson, Mathieu Dumoulin, and Collinet. Nobody else.

“It seemed as natural for me to sit as for a man. Now I see the awful difference.

“And I have done dreadful things besides, as you must know—as all the quartier knows. Baratier and Besson; but not Durien, though people think so. Nobody else, I swear—except old Monsieur Penque at the beginning, who was mamma’s friend.

“It makes me almost die of shame and misery to think of it; for that’s not like sitting. I knew how wrong it was all along—and there’s no excuse for me, none. Though lots of people do as bad, and nobody in the quartier seems to think any the worse of them.

“If you and Taffy and Little Billee cut me, I really think I shall go mad and die. Without your friendship I shouldn’t care to live a bit. Dear Sandy, I love your little finger better than any man or woman I



REPENTANCE

ever met ; and Taffy's and Little Billee's little fingers too.

"What shall I do? I daren't go out for fear of meeting one of you. Will you come and see me?"

"I am never going to sit again, not even for the face and hands. I am going back to be a *blanchisseuse de fin* with my old friend Angèle Boisse, who is getting on very well indeed, in the Rue des Cloîtres Ste. Pétronille.

"You *will* come and see me, won't you? I shall be in all day till you do. Or else I will meet you somewhere, if you will tell me where and when; or else I will go and see you in the studio, if you are sure to be alone. Please don't keep me waiting long for an answer.

"You don't know what I'm suffering.

"Your ever-loving, faithful friend,

"TRILBY O'FERRALL"

She sent this letter by hand, and the Laird came in less than ten minutes after she had sent it; and she hugged and kissed and cried over him so that he was almost ready to cry himself; but he burst out laughing instead—which was better and more in his line, and very much more comforting—and talked to her so nicely and kindly and naturally that by the time he left her humble attic in the Rue des Pousse-Cailloux her very aspect, which had quite shocked him when he first saw her, had almost become what it usually was.

The little room under the leads, with its sloping roof and mansard window, was as scrupulously neat

and clean as if its tenant had been a holy sister who taught the noble daughters of France at some Convent of the Sacred Heart. There were nasturtiums and mignonette on the outer window-sill, and convolvulus was trained to climb round the window.

As she sat by his side on the narrow white bed, clasping and stroking his painty, turpentine hand, and kissing it every five minutes, he talked to her like a father—as he told Taffy afterwards—and scolded her for having been so silly as not to send for him directly, or come to the studio. He said how glad he was, how glad they would all be, that she was going to give up sitting for the figure—not, of course, that there was any real harm in it, but it was better not—and especially how happy it would make them to feel she intended to live straight for the future. Little Billee was to remain at Barbizon for a little while; but she must promise to come and dine with Taffy and himself that very day, and cook the dinner; and when he went back to his picture, "Les Noces du Toréador"—saying to her as he left, "à ce soir donc, mille sacrés tonnerres de nong de Dew!"—he left the happiest woman in the whole Latin quarter behind him: she had confessed and been forgiven.

And with shame and repentance and confession and forgiveness had come a strange new feeling—that of a dawning self-respect.

Hitherto, for Trilby, self-respect had meant little more than the mere cleanliness of her body, in which she had always revelled; alas! it was one of the conditions of her humble calling. It now meant another kind of cleanliness, and she would luxuriate in it for

evermore; and the dreadful past—never to be forgotten by her—should be so lived down as in time, perhaps, to be forgotten by others.

The dinner that evening was a memorable one for Trilby. After she had washed up the knives and forks and plates and dishes, and put them by, she sat and sewed. She wouldn't even smoke her cigarette, it reminded her so of things and scenes she now hated. No more cigarettes for Trilby O'Ferrall.

They all talked of Little Billee. She heard about the way he had been brought up, about his mother and sister, the people he had always lived among. She also heard (and her heart alternately rose and sank as she listened) what his future was likely to be, and how rare his genius was, and how great—if his friends were to be trusted. Fame and fortune would soon be his—such fame and fortune as fell to the lot of very few—unless anything should happen to spoil his promise and mar his prospects in life, and ruin a splendid career; and the rising of the heart was all for him, the sinking for herself. How could she ever hope to be even the friend of such a man? Might she ever hope to be his servant—his faithful, humble servant?

Little Billee spent a month at Barbizon, and when he came back it was with such a brown face that his friends hardly knew him; and he brought with him such studies as made his friends "sit up."

The crushing sense of their own hopeless inferiority was lost in wonder at his work, in love and enthusiasm for the workman.



CONFESSION

Their Little Billee, so young and tender, so weak of body, so strong of purpose, so warm of heart, so light of hand, so keen and quick and piercing of brain and eye, was their master, to be stuck on a pedestal and looked up to and bowed down to, to be watched and warded and worshipped for evermore.

When Trilby came in from her work at six, and he shook hands with her and said "Hullo, Trilby!" her face turned pale to the lips, her under-lip quivered, and she gazed down at him (for she was among the tallest of her sex) with such a moist, hungry, wide-eyed look of humble craving adoration that the Laird felt his worst fears were realized, and the look Little Billee sent up in return filled the manly bosom of Taffy with an equal apprehension.

Then they all four went and dined together at le père Trin's, and Trilby went back to her *blanchisserie de fin*.

Next day Little Billee took his work to show Carrel, and Carrel invited him to come and finish his picture "The Pitcher Goes to the Well" at his own private studio—an unheard-of favor, which the boy accepted with a thrill of proud gratitude and affectionate reverence.

So little was seen for some time of Little Billee at the studio in the Place St. Anatole des Arts, and little of Trilby; a *blanchisseuse de fin* has not many minutes to spare from her irons. But they often met at dinner. And on Sunday mornings Trilby came to repair the Laird's linen and darn his socks and look after his little comforts, as usual, and spend a happy day. And on Sunday afternoons the studio would be as lively as

ever, with the fencing and boxing, the piano-playing and fiddling—all as it used to be.

And week by week the friends noticed a gradual and subtle change in Trilby. She was no longer slangy in French, unless it were now and then by a slip of the tongue, no longer so facetious and droll, and yet she seemed even happier than she had ever seemed before.

Also, she grew thinner, especially in the face, where the bones of her cheeks and jaw began to show themselves, and these bones were constructed on such right principles (as were those of her brow and chin and the bridge of her nose) that the improvement was astonishing, almost inexplicable.

Also, she lost her freckles as the summer waned and she herself went less into the open air. And she let her hair grow, and made of it a small knot at the back of her head, and showed her little flat ears, which were charming, and just in the right place, very far back and rather high; Little Billee could not have placed them better himself. Also, her mouth, always too large, took on a firmer and sweeter outline, and her big British teeth were so white and even that even Frenchmen forgave them their British bigness. And a new soft brightness came into her eyes that no one had ever seen there before. They were stars, just twin gray stars—or rather planets just thrown off by some new sun, for the steady mellow light they gave out was not entirely their own.

Favorite types of beauty change with each succeeding generation. These were the days of Buckner's aristocratic Album beauties, with lofty foreheads, oval