

hawk-like sense. But she had promised to help him, and she would.

'You must let me know what I owe you for teaching her and introducing her,' said David firmly. 'Yes, you must, Miss Dora. It's business, and you mustn't make any bones about it. A girl doesn't learn a trade and get an opening found her for nothing.'

'Oh no, nonsense!' she said quickly, but with decision equal to his own. 'I won't take anything. She don't want much teaching; she's so clever; she sees a thing almost before the words are out of your mouth. Look here, Mr. Grieve, I want to tell you about Lucy.'

She looked up at him, flushing. He, too, coloured.

'Well,' he said; 'that's what I wanted to ask you.'

She told him the whole story of Lucy's flight from her father, of her illness and departure, of the probable stepmother.

'Old brute!' said David between his teeth. 'I say, Miss Dora, can nothing be done to make him treat her decently?'

His countenance glowed with indignation and disgust. Dora shook her head sadly.

'I don't see what anyone can do; and the worst of it is she'll be such a long while getting over it. I've had a letter from her this morning, and she says the Hastings doctor declares she must stay there a year in the warm and not come home at all, or she'll be going off in a decline. I know Lucy gets nervous about herself, but it do seem bad.'

David sat silent, lost in a medley of feelings, most of them unpleasant. Now that Lucy Purcell was at the other end of England, both her service to him and his own curmudgeon behaviour to her loomed doubly large.

'I say, will you give me her address?' he said at last. 'I've got a smart book I've had bound for her. I'd like to send it her.'

Dora went to the table and wrote it for him. Then he got up to go.

'Upon my word, you do look tired,' he broke out. 'Can't you go to bed? It is hard lines.'

Which last words applied to that whole situation of hers with her father which he was beginning dimly to discern. In his boyish admiration and compassion he took both her hands in his. Dora withdrew them quickly.

'Oh, I'll pull through!' she said, simply, and he went.

When she had closed the door after him she stood looking at the clock with her hands clasped in front of her.

'How much longer will father be?' she said, sighing. 'Oh, I think I told him all Lucy wanted me to say; I think I did.'

CHAPTER X

THREE or four months passed away. During that period David had built up a shed in his back yard and had established a printing-press there, with a respectable, though not extensive, fount

of type—bought, all of it, secondhand, and a bargain. John and he spent every available moment there, and during their first experiments would often sit up half the night working off the sheets of their earliest productions, in an excitement which took no count of fatigue. They began with reprinting some scarce local tracts, with which they did well. Then David diverged into a Radical pamphlet or two on the subject of the coming Education Bill, finding authors for them among the leading ministers of the town; and these timely wares, being freely pushed on the stall, on the whole paid their expenses, with a little profit to spare—the labour being reckoned at nothing. And now David was beginning to cherish the dream of a new history of Manchester, for which among his own collections he already possessed a great deal of fresh material. But that would take time and money. He must push his business a bit further first.

That business, however, was developing quite as rapidly as the two pairs of arms could keep pace with it. Almost everything the young fellow touched succeeded. He had instinct, knowledge, a growing tact, and an indomitable energy, and these are the qualities which make, which are in themselves, success. The purchase of the collection at Cheadle, bearing on the early history of American states and towns, not only turned out well in itself, but brought him to the notice of a big man in London, who set the clever and daring beginner on several large quests both in Lancashire and Yorkshire by which both profited considerably. In another direction he was extending his stock of foreign scientific and technical books, especially such as bore upon the industries of Northern England. Old Barbier, who took a warmer and warmer interest in his pupil's progress, kept him constantly advised as to French books through old friends of his own in Paris, who were glad to do the exile a kindness.

'But why not run over to Paris for yourself, form some connections, and look about you?' suggested Barbier.

Why not, indeed? The young man's blood, quick with curiosity and adventure, under all his tradesman's exterior, leapt at the thought. But prudence restrained him for the present.

As for German books, he was struggling with the language, and feeling his way besides through innumerable catalogues. How he found time for all the miscellaneous acquisitions of these months it would be difficult to say. But whether in his free times or in trade-hours he was hardly ever without a book or a catalogue beside him, save when he was working the printing press; and, although his youth would every now and then break out against the confinement he imposed upon it, and drive him either to long tramps over the moors on days when the spring stirred in the air, or to a spell of theatre-going, in which Louie greedily shared, yet, on the whole, his force of purpose was amazing, and the success which it brought with it could only be regarded as natural and inevitable. He was beginning to be well known to the old-established men in his own business, who could

not but show at times some natural jealousy of so quick a rise. The story of his relations to Purcell spread, and the two were watched with malicious interest at many a book-sale, when the nonchalant self-reliance and prosperous look of the younger drove the elder man again and again into futile attempts to injure and circumvent him. It was noticed that never till now had Purcell lost his head with a rival.

Nevertheless, the lad had far fewer enemies than might have been expected. His manner had always been radiantly self-confident; but there was about him a conspicuous element of quick feeling, of warm humanity, which grew rather than diminished with his success. He was frank, too, and did not try to gloss over a mistake or a failure. Perhaps in his lordly way he felt he could afford himself a few now and then, he was so much cleverer than his neighbours.

Upon no one did David's development produce more effect than upon Mr. Ancrum. The lame, solitary minister, who only got through his week's self-appointed tasks at a constant expense of bodily torment, was dazzled and bewildered by the spectacle of so much vitality spent with such ease and impunity.

'How many years of Manchester must one give him?' said Ancrum to himself one night, when he was making his way home from a reading of the 'Electra' with David. 'That six hundred pounds has quickened the pace amazingly! Ten years, perhaps. Then London, and anything you like. Bookselling slips into publishing, and publishing takes a man into another class, and within reach of a hundred new possibilities. Some day I shall be bragging of having taught him! *Taught* him! He'll be turning the tables on me precious soon. Caught me out twice to-night, and got through the tough bit of the chorus much better than I did. How does he do it?—and with that mountain of other things on his shoulders! There's *one* speck in the fruit, however, as far as I can see—Miss Louie!'

From the first moment of his introduction to her, Ancrum had taken particular notice of David's handsome sister, who, on her side, had treated her old minister and teacher with a most thoroughgoing indifference. He saw that now, after some three months of life together, the brother and sister had developed separate existences, which touched in two points only—a common liking for Dora Lomax, and a common keenness for business.

Here, in this matter of business, they were really at one. David kept nothing from her, and consulted her a good deal. She had the same shrewd head that he had, and as it was her money as well as his that was in question she was determined to know and to understand what he was after. Anybody who had come upon the pair on the nights when they made up their accounts, their dark heads touching under the lamp, might have gone away moralising on the charms of fraternal affection.

And all the while David had once more tacitly given up the attempt either to love her or to control her. How indeed could

he control her? He was barely two years older, and she had a will of iron. She made disreputable friends whom he loathed the sight of. But all he could do was to keep them out of the house. She led John by this time a dog's life. From the temptress she had become the tease and tyrant, and the clumsy fellow, consumed with feverish passion, slaved for her whenever she was near him with hardly the reward of a kind look or a civil word in a fortnight. David set his teeth and tried to recover possession of his friend. And as long as they two were at the press or in the shop together alone, John was often his old self, and would laugh out in the old way. But no sooner did Louie appear than he followed her about like an animal, and David could make no more of him. Whenever any dispute, too, arose between the brother and sister, he took her part, whatever it might be, with an acrimony which pushed David's temper hard.

Yet, on the whole, so Ancrum thought, the brother showed a wonderful patience. He was evidently haunted by a sense of responsibility towards his sister, and, at the same time, both tormented and humiliated by his incompetence to manage or influence her. It was curious, too, to watch how by antagonism and by the constant friction of their life together, certain qualities in her developed certain others in him. Her callousness, for instance, did but nurture a sensitive humanity in him. She treated the lodgers in the first pair back with persistent indifference and even brutality, seeing that Mrs. Mason was a young, helpless creature approaching every day nearer to a confinement she regarded with terror, and that a little common kindness from the only other woman in the house could have softened her lot considerably. But David's books were stacked about in awkward and inconvenient places waiting for the Masons' departure, and Louie had no patience with them—with the wife at any rate. It once or twice occurred to David that if the husband, a good-looking fellow and a very hard-worked shopman, had had more hours at home, Louie would have tried her blandishments upon him.

He on his side was goaded by Louie's behaviour into an unusual complaisance and liberality towards his tenants. Louie once contemptuously told him he would make a capital 'general help.' He was Mrs. Mason's coal-carrier and errand-boy already.

In the same way Louie beat and ill-treated a half-starved collie—one of the short-haired black sort familiar to the shepherd of the north, and to David himself in his farm days—which would haunt the shop and kitchen. Whereupon David felt all his heart melt towards the squalid, unhandsome creature. He fed and cherished it; it slept on his bed by night and followed him by day, he all the while protecting it from Louie with a strong hand. And the more evil was the eye she cast upon the dog, who, according to her, possessed all the canine vices, the more David loved it, and the more Tim was fattened and caressed.

In another direction, too, the same antagonism appeared.

The sister's license of speech and behaviour towards the men who became her acquaintances provoked in the brother what often seemed to Ancrum—who, of course, remembered Reuben, and had heard many tales of old James Grieve, the lad's grandfather—a sort of Puritan reaction, the reaction of his race and stock against 'lewdness.' Louie's complete independence, however, and the distance she preserved between his amusements and hers, left David no other weapon than sarcasm, which he employed freely. His fine sensitive mouth took during these weeks a curve half mocking, half bitter, which changed the whole expression of the face.

He saw, indeed, with great clearness after a month or so that Louie's wildness was by no means the wildness of an ignorant innocent, likely to slip unawares into perdition, and that, while she had a passionate greed for amusement and pleasure, and a blank absence of principle, she was still perfectly alive to the risks of life, and meant somehow both to enjoy herself and to steer herself through. But this gradual perception—that, in spite of her mode of killing spare time, she was not immediately likely to take any fatal false step, as he had imagined in his first dread—did but increase his inward repulsion.

A state of feeling which was the more remarkable because he himself, in Ancrum's eyes, was at the moment in a temper of moral relaxation and bewilderment! His absorption in George Sand, and through her in all the other French Romantics whose books he could either find for himself or borrow from Barbier, was carrying a ferment of passion and imagination through all his blood. Most social arrangements, including marriage, seemed to have become open questions to him. Why, then, this tone towards Louie and her friends? Was it that, apart from the influence of heredity, the young fellow's moral perception at this time was not ethical at all, but æsthetic—a matter of taste, of the presence or absence of certain ideal and poetic elements in conduct?

At any rate his friendship for old Barbier drew closer and closer, and Ancrum, who had begun to feel a lively affection for him, could see but little of him.

As to Barbier, it was a significant chance which had thrown him across David's path. In former days this lively Frenchman had been a small Paris journalist, whom the *coup d'état* had struck down with his betters, and who had escaped to England with one suit of clothes and eight francs in his pocket. He reminded himself on landing of a cousin of his mother's settled as a clerk in Manchester, found his way northwards, and had now, for some seventeen years, been maintaining himself in the cotton capital, mainly by teaching, but partly by a number of small arts—ornamental calligraphy, *menu*-writing, and the like—too odd and various for description. He was a fanatic, a Red, much possessed by political hatreds which gave savour to an existence otherwise dull and peaceable enough. Religious beliefs were

very scarce with him, but he had a certain literary creed, the creed of 1830, when he had been a scribbler in the train of Victor Hugo, which he did his best to put into David.

He was a formidable-looking person, six feet in height, and broad in proportion, with bushy white eyebrows, and a mouth made hideous by two projecting teeth. In speech he hated England and all her ways, and was for ever yearning towards the misguided and yet unequalled country which had cast him out. In heart he was perfectly aware that England is free as not even Republican France is free; and he was also sufficiently alive to the fact that he had made himself a very tolerable niche in Manchester, and was pleasantly regarded there—at least, in certain circles—as an oracle of French opinion, a commodity which, in a great commercial centre, may at any time have a cash value. He could, in truth, have long ago revisited *la patrie* had he had a mind, for governments are seldom vindictive in the case of people who can clearly do them no harm. This, however, was not at all his own honest view of the matter. In the mirror of the mind he saw himself perpetually draped in the pathos of exile and the dignity of persecution, and the phrases by which he was wont to impress this inward vision on the brutal English sense had become, in the course of years, an effective and touching habit with him.

David had been Barbier's pupil in the first instance at one of the classes of the Mechanics' Institute. Never in Barbier's memory had any Manchester lad so applied himself to learn French before. And when the boy's knowledge of the Encyclopædists came out, and he one day put the master right in class on some points connected with Diderot's relations to Rousseau, the ex-journalist gaped with astonishment, and then went home and read up his facts, half enraged and half enraptured. David's zeal piqued him, made him a better Frenchman and a better teacher than he had been for years. He was a vain man, and David's capacities put him on his mettle.

Very soon he and the lad had become intimate. He had described to David the first night of *Hernani*, when he had been one of the long-haired band of *rapins*, who came down in their scores to the Théâtre Français to defend their chief, Hugo, against the hisses of the Philistine. The two were making coffee in Barbier's attic, at the top of a side street off the Oxford Road, when these memories seized upon the old Romantic. He took up the empty coffee-pot, and brandished it from side to side as though it had been the sword of *Hernani*; the miserable Academy hugging its Molière and Racine fled before him; the world was once more regenerate, and Hugo its high priest. Passages from the different parts welled to his old lips; he gave the play over again—the scene between the lover and the husband, where the husband lays down the strange and sinister penalty to which the lover submits—the exquisite love-scene in the fifth act—and the cry of agonised passion with which *Dofia Sol* defends her love

against his executioner. All these things he declaimed, stumping up and down, till the terrified landlady rose out of her bed to remonstrate, and got the door locked in her face for her pains, and till the *bourgeois* baby in the next room woke up and roared, and so put an abrupt end to the performance. Old Barbier sat down swearing, poked the fire furiously, and then, taking out a huge red handkerchief, wiped his brow with a trembling hand. His stiff white hair, parted on either temple, bristled like a high *toupie* over his round, black eyes, which glowed behind his spectacles. And meanwhile the handsome boy sat opposite, glad to laugh by way of reaction, but at bottom stirred by the same emotion, and ready to share in the same adorations.

Gradually David learnt his way about this bygone world of Barbier's recollection. A vivid picture sprang up in him of these strange leaders of a strange band, these cadaverous poets and artists of Louis Philippe's early days,—beings in love with Lord Byron and suicide, having Art for God, and Hugo for prophet, talking of were-wolves, vampires, cathedrals, sunrises, forests, passion and despair, hatted like brigands, cloaked after Vandyke, curled like Absalom, making new laws unto themselves in verse as in morals, and leaving all petty talk of duty or common sense to the Academy and the nursery.

George Sand walking the Paris quays in male dress—George Sand at Fontainebleau roaming the midnight forest with Alfred de Musset, or wintering with her dying musician among the mountains of Palma; Gérard de Nerval, wanderer, poet, and suicide; Alfred de Musset flaming into verse at dead of night amid an answering and spendthrift blaze of wax candles; Baudelaire's blasphemies and eccentricities—these characters and incidents Barbier wove into endless highly coloured tales, to which David listened with perpetual relish.

'*Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!* What times! What memories!' the old Frenchman would cry at last, fairly re-transported to the world of his youth, and, springing up, he would run to the little cupboard by his bed head, where he kept a score or so of little paper volumes—volumes which the tradesman David soon discovered, from a curious study of French catalogues, to have a fast-rising money value—and out would come Alfred de Musset's 'Nuit de Mai,' or an outrageous verse from Baudelaire, or an harmonious nothing from Gautier. David gradually learnt to follow, to understand, to range all that he heard in a mental setting of his own. The France of his imagination indeed was a strange land! Everybody in it was either girding at priests like Voltaire, or dying for love like George Sand's Sténio.

But whether the picture was true to life or no, it had a very strongly marked effect on the person conceiving it. Just as the speculative complexion of his first youth had been decided by the chance which brought him into daily contact with the French eighteenth century—for no self-taught solitary boy of quick and covetous mind can read Voltaire continuously without bearing the

marks of him henceforward—so in the same way, when he passed, as France had done before him, from the philosophers to the Romantics, this constant preoccupation with the French literature of passion in its romantic and idealist period left deep and lasting results.

The strongest of these results lay in the realm of moral and social sense. What struck the lad's raw mind with more and more force as he gathered his French books about him was the profound gulf which seemed to divide the average French conception of the relation between the sexes from the average English one. In the French novels he read every young man had his mistress; every married woman her lover. Tragedy frequently arose out of these relations, but that the relations must and did obtain, as a matter of course, was assumed. For the delightful heroes and heroines of a whole range of fiction, from 'Manon Lescaut' down to Murger's 'Vie de Bohème,' marriage did not apparently exist, even as a matter of argument. And as to the duties of the married woman, when she passed on to the canvas, the code was equally simple. The husband might kill his wife's lover—that was in the game; but the young man's right to be was as good as his own. '*No human being can control love, and no one is to blame either for feeling it or for losing it. What alone degrades a woman is falsehood.*' So says the husband in George Sand's 'Jacques' when he is just about to fling himself down an Alpine precipice that his wife and Octave may have their way undisturbed. And all the time, what poetry and passion in the presentation of these things! Beside them the mere remembrance of English ignorance, prudishness, and conventionality would set the lad swelling, as he read, with a sense of superior scorn, and of wild sympathy for a world in which love and not law, truth and not legal fiction, were masters of human relations.

Some little time after Reuben's visit to him he one day told Barbier the fact of his French descent. Barbier declared that he had always known it, had always realised something in David distinct from the sluggish huckstering English temper. Why, David's mother was from the south of France; his own family came from Carcassonne. No doubt the rich Gascon blood ran in both their veins. *Salut au compatriote!*

Thenceforward there was a greater solidarity between the two than ever. Barbier fell into an incessant gossip of Paris—the Paris of Louis Philippe—reviving memories and ways of speech which had been long dead in him, and leaving on David's mind the impression of a place where life was from morning till night amusement, exhilaration, and seduction; where, under the bright smokeless sky, and amid the stateliest streets and public buildings in Europe, men were always witty and women always attractive.

Meanwhile the course of business during the spring months and the rise of his trade in foreign books rapidly brought the scheme of a visit to France, which had been at first a mere dream and fancy, within the region of practical possibility, and even

advantage, for the young bookseller. Two things he was set on. If he went he was determined to go under such conditions as would enable him to see French life—especially French artistic and student life—from the inside. And he saw with some clearness that he would have to take his sister with him.

Against the latter notion Barbier protested vehemently.

'What do you want to tie yourself to a petticoat for? If you take the girl you will have to look after her. Paris, my boy, let me inform you, is not the best place in the world for *la jeune personne*; and the Paris *rapin* may be an amusing scoundrel, but don't trust him with young women if you can help it. Leave Mademoiselle Louie at home, and let her mind the shop. Get Mademoiselle Dora or some one to stay with her, or send her to Mademoiselle Dora.'

So said the Frenchman with sharp dictatorial emphasis. What a preposterous suggestion!

'I can't stop her coming,' said David, quietly—'if she wants to come—and she'll be sure to want. Besides, I'll not leave her alone at home, and she'll not let me send her anywhere—you may be sure of that.'

The Frenchman stared and stormed. David fell silent. Louie was what she was, and it was no use discussing her. At last Barbier, being after all tolerably well acquainted with the lad's relations to his sister, came to a sudden end of his rhetoric, and began to think out something practicable.

That evening he wrote to a nephew of his living as an artist in the Quartier Montmartre. Some months before Barbier's vanity had been flattered by an adroit letter from this young gentleman, written, if the truth were known, at a moment when a pecuniary situation, pinched almost beyond endurance, had made it seem worth while to get his uncle's address out of his widowed mother. Barbier, a bachelor, and a man of some small savings, perfectly understood why he had been approached, and had been none the less extraordinarily glad to hear from the youth. He was a *rapin*? well and good; all the great men had been *rapins* before him. Very likely he had the *rapin's* characteristic vices and distractions. All the world knew what the life meant for nine men out of ten. What was the use of preaching? Youth was youth. Clearly the old man—himself irreproachable—would have been disappointed not to find his nephew a sad dog on personal acquaintance.

'Tell me, Xavier,' his letter ran, 'how to put a young friend of mine in the way of seeing something of Paris and Paris life, more than your fool of a tourist generally sees. He is a bookseller, and will, of course, mind his trade; but he is a young man of taste and intelligence besides, and moreover half French. It would be a pity that he should visit Paris as any *sacré* British Philistine does. Advise me where to place him. He would like to see something of your artist's life. But mind this, young man, he brings a sister with him as handsome as the devil, and not

much easier to manage: so if you do advise—no tricks—tell me of something *convenable*.'

A few days later Barbier appeared in Potter Street just after David had put up the shutters, announcing that he had a proposal to make.

David unlocked the shop-door and let him in. Barbier looked round with some amazement on the small stuffy place, piled to bursting by now with books of every kind, which only John's herculean efforts could keep in passable order.

'Why don't you house yourself better—*hein*?' said the Frenchman. 'A business growing like this, and nothing but a den to handle it in!'

'I shall be all right when I get my other room,' said David composedly. 'Couldn't turn out the lodger before. The woman was only confined last week.'

And as he spoke the wailing of an infant and a skurrying of feet were heard upstairs.

'So it seems,' said Barbier, adjusting his spectacles in bewilderment. '*Jésus!* What an affair! What did you permit it for? Why didn't you turn her out in time?'

'I would have turned myself out first,' said David. He was lounging, with his hands in his pockets, against the books; but though his attitude was nonchalant, his tone had a vibrating energy.

'Barbier!'

'Yes.'

'What do women suffer for like that?'

The young man's eyes glowed, and his lips twitched a little, as though some poignant remembrance were at his heart.

Barbier looked at him with some curiosity.

'Ask *le bon Dieu* and Mother Eve, my friend. It lies between them,' said the old scoffer, with a shrug.

David looked away in silence. On his quick mind, greedy of all human experience, the night of Mrs. Mason's confinement, with its sounds of anguish penetrating through all the upper rooms of the thin, ill-built house, had left an ineffaceable impression of awe and terror. In the morning, when all was safely over, he came down to the kitchen to find the husband—a man some two or three years older than himself, and the smart foreman of an ironmongery shop in Deansgate—crouching over a bit of fire. The man was too much excited to apologise for his presence in the Grieves' room. David shyly asked him a question about his wife.

'Oh, it's all right, the doctor says. There's the nurse with her, and your sister's got the baby. She'll do; but, oh, my God! it's awful—*it's awful!* My poor Liz! Give me a corner here, will you! I'm all upset like.'

David had got some food out of the cupboard, made him eat it, and chatted to him till the man was more himself again. But

the crying of the new-born child overhead, together with the shaken condition of this clever, self-reliant young fellow, so near his own age, seemed for the moment to introduce the lad to new and unknown regions of human feeling.

While these images were pursuing each other through David's mind, Barbier was poking among his foreign books, which lay, backs upwards, on the floor to one side of the counter.

'Do you sell them—*hein?*' he said, looking up and pointing to them with his stick.

'Yes. Especially the scientific books. These are an order. So is that batch. Napoleon III.'s "*Cæsar*," isn't it? And those over there are "on spec." Oh, I could do something if I knew more! There's a man over at Oldham. One of the biggest weaving-sheds—cotton velvets—that kind of thing. He's awfully rich, and he's got a French library; a big one, I believe. He came in here yesterday. I think I could make something out of him; but he wants all sorts of rum things—last-century memoirs, out-of-the-way ones—everything about Montaigne—first editions—Lord knows what! I say, Barbier, I dare say he'd buy your books. What 'll you let me have them for?'

'*Diantre!* Not for your heart's blood, my young man. It's like your impudence to ask. You could sell more if you knew more, you think? Well now listen to me.'

The Frenchman sat down, adjusted his spectacles, and, taking a letter from his pocket, read it with deliberation.

It was from the nephew, Xavier Dubois, in answer to his uncle's inquiries. Nothing, the writer declared, could have been more opportune. He himself was just off to Belgium, where a friend had procured him a piece of work on a new Government building. Why should not his uncle's friends inhabit his rooms during his absence? He must keep them on, and would find it very convenient, that being so, that some one should pay the rent. There was his studio, which was bare, no doubt, but quite habitable, and a little *cabinet de toilette*, adjoining, and shut off, containing a bed and all necessaries. Why should not the sister take the bedroom, and let the brother camp somehow in the studio? He could no doubt borrow a bed from some friend before they came, and with a large screen, which was one of the 'studio properties,' a very tolerable sleeping room could be improvised, and still leave a good deal of the studio free. He understood that his uncle's friends were not looking for luxury. But *le stricte nécessaire* he could provide.

Meanwhile the Englishman and his sister would find themselves at once in the artists' circle, and might see as much or as little as they liked of artistic life. He (Dubois) could of course give them introductions. There was a sculptor, for instance, on the ground floor, a man of phenomenal genius, *joli garçon* besides, who would certainly show himself *aimable* for anybody introduced by Dubois; and on the floor above there was a landscape painter, *ancien prix de Rome*, and his wife, who would also, no doubt,

make themselves agreeable, and to whom the brother and sister might go for all necessary information—Dubois would see to that. Sixty francs a month paid the *appartement*; a trifle for service if you desired it—there was, however, no compulsion—to the *concierge* would make you comfortable; and as for your food, the Quartier Montmartre abounded in cheap restaurants, and you might live as you pleased for one franc a day or twenty. He suggested that on the whole no better opening was likely to be found by two young persons of spirit, anxious to see Paris from the inside.

'Now then,' said Barbier, taking off his spectacles with an authoritative click, as he shut up the letter, '*décide-toi*. Go!—and look about you for a fortnight. Improve your French; get to know some of the Paris bookmen; take some commissions out with you—buy there to the best advantage, and come back twenty per cent. better informed than when you set out.'

He smote his hands upon his knees with energy. He had a love of management and contrivance; and the payment of Eugène's rent for him during his absence weighed with his frugal mind.

David stood twisting his mouth in silence a moment, his head thrown back against the books.

'Well, I don't see why not,' he said at last, his eyes sparkling.

'And take notice, my friend,' said Barbier, tapping the open letter, 'the *ancien prix de Rome* has a wife. Where wives are young women can go. Xavier can prepare the way, and, if you play your cards well, you can get Mademoiselle Louie taken off your hands while you go about.'

David nodded. He was sitting astride on the counter, his face shining with the excitement he was now too much of a man to show with the old freedom.

Suddenly there was a sound of wild voices from the inside room.

'Miss Grieve! Miss Grieve! don't you take that child away. Bring it back, I say; I'll go to your brother, I will!'

'That's Mrs. Mason's nurse,' said David, springing off the counter. 'What's up now?'

He threw open the door into the kitchen, just as Louie swept into the room from the other side. She had a white bundle in her arms, and her face was flushed with a sly triumph. After her ran the stout woman who was looking after Mrs. Mason, purple with indignation.

'Now look yo here, Mr. Grieve,' she cried at sight of David, 'I can't stand it, and I won't. Am I in charge of Mrs. Mason or am I not? Here 's Miss Grieve, as soon as my back 's turned, as soon as I've laid that blessed baby in its cot as quiet as a lamb—and it 's been howling since three o'clock this morning, as *yo* know—in she whips, claws it out of its cradle, and is off wi' it, Lord knows where. Thank the Lord, Mrs. Mason's asleep! If she weren't, she'd have a fit. She's feart to death o' Miss Grieve,