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导 读

奥诺雷·德·巴尔扎克是十九世纪法国和欧洲最重要的批判现实主义作家之一。他于一七九九年五月生于法国巴黎以南的都尔小城。他不满五岁便被送到郊外的圣西尔上学,后又在旺多姆教会学校寄宿,六年中间只同家人见面两次。由于童年没有欢乐,巴尔扎克便把读书作为精神上的最大安慰。一八一九年至一八二九年为巴尔扎克生活探索与艺术探索阶段。从一八二九年至一八三五年巴尔扎克的创作逐渐走上成熟时期,这是他创作其作品全集《人间喜剧》的第一阶段。这个时期的创作多为中短篇小说,共创作了四十多部作品,其中最重要的有《欧也妮·葛朗台》、《高布赛克》、《高老头》等。这时他的现实主义创作原则越来越明确了。他说“我在成功的作品中发现,任何东西都是材料”,“我不希望描绘幻想的插曲,我的题材应该是到处可见的事实。”难怪马克思称他为“现实主义”大师。

《高老头》这部闻名遐迩、常盛不衰的小说,一般被视为《人间喜剧》的开场篇或序幕,因为从这部小说开始,巴尔扎克才有意识地使用“人物再现”的方法。从此以后,他写的每一部小说,本身既是一部完整的作品,同时又是“那部描写社会的长篇中的一个章节”。这部小说包含着“杀人、通奸、诈骗和侵占遗产”的内容,按照马克思的说法,《高老头》是一部“真正巴尔扎克式的小说”。《高老头》在《人间喜剧》中占有十分重要的地位。《人间喜剧》中的许多重要人物,都在本书中初次登场。小说以大学生拉斯蒂涅入世之初的经历为线索,展示了一个令人眼花缭乱而又骇人听闻的巴黎社会。

故事发生在一八一九年十一月底。一个名叫拉斯蒂涅的年轻人只身来到巴黎攻读法律,住在一家简陋的膳宿公寓里,在那里,他结识了神秘人物沃特汉、被父亲逐出家门的年轻孤女维多利娜、退休面条商高利尤老头等人。他借助表姐德·鲍赛昂夫人的关系,混入巴黎上

流社会，并结识了两位贵夫人，也就是高利尤的两个女儿——德·雷斯多夫人和德·纽沁根夫人。高利尤将全部希望寄托在两个女儿身上，心甘情愿让她们榨干了毕生的心血。玩世不恭的沃特汉开导拉斯蒂涅说，社会就是一个巨大的泥潭，金钱能主宰一切，因此，他建议拉斯蒂涅设法杀死维多利娜的哥哥，使她成为唯一的财产继承人，然后再娶她为妻。年轻人不接受他的建议，只想依靠贵妇人发家致富。经过努力，他终于成了德·纽沁根夫人的情人。沃特汉的真实身份是越狱苦役犯，因被人告发而重新入狱。高利尤两个女儿的婚外恋先后被其丈夫发现，她们被迫向父亲索取最后一个子儿，两个女儿在父亲面前争吵的丑态使高利尤又气又急，得了中风，卧床不起，几天后便悲惨地死去。临终时只有拉斯蒂涅和医科大学生皮安训陪在身边，两个女儿都未出现。这时是一八二零年三月。正是在埋葬高利尤的时候，拉斯蒂涅才彻底完成了巴黎社会的启蒙教育，也埋葬了自己的最后一滴眼泪和最后一点神圣的感情，从此以野心家的姿态向污浊邪恶的社会发起了进攻。

巴尔扎克是举世公认的塑造人物的大师，其最大艺术特长就是刻画形象，他笔下的人物，无论主次，个个栩栩如生，音容笑貌跃然纸上。他善于选择富有特征性的细节和语言，表现人物的身份和个性。有人认为巴尔扎克过分醉心于冗繁琐屑的细节描写，殊不知他匠心独运之处首先在于概括和集中。塑造“典型环境中的典型性格”，正是他概括和提炼生活的主要手段。

著名的丹麦文学批评家勃兰兑斯曾说：“巴尔扎克虽是个拙劣的文体家，却是一个最上流的作家。”雨果在巴尔扎克的葬礼上说：“在最伟大的人物中间，巴尔扎克属于头等的，在最优秀的人物中间，巴尔扎克是出类拔萃的一个，他的才智是惊人的，不同凡响的，成就不是眼下说得尽的。”一个在文体上有明显缺陷的作家，竟然博得法国一流艺术家如此高的评价，至少说明他必定具有某种独到的功力，不仅能弥补自己某些修养上的不足，还能使他的作品产生不寻常的艺术效果。

译者

二〇〇一年六月

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Mme. Vauquer (nee de Conflans) is an elderly person, who for the past forty years has kept a lodging-house in the Rue NueveSainte-Genevieve, in the district that lies between the Latin Quarter and the Faubourg Saint-Marcel. Her house (known in the neighborhood as the Maison Vauquer) receives men and women, old and young, and no word has ever been breathed against her respectable establishment; but, at the same time, it must be said that as a matter of fact no young woman has been under her roof for thirty years, and that if a young man stays there for any length of time it is a sure sign that his allowance must be of the slenderest. In 1819, however, the time when this drama opens, there was an almost penniless young girl among Mme. Vauquer's boarders.

That word drama has been somewhat discredited of late; it has been overworked and twisted to strange uses in these days of dolorous literature; but it must do service again here, not because this story is dramatic in the restricted sense of the word, but because some tears may perhaps be shed intra et extra muros before it is over.

Will any one without the walls of Paris understand it? It is open to doubt. The only audience who could appreciate the results of close observation, the careful reproduction of minute detail and local color, are dwellers between the heights of Montrouge and Montmartre, in a vale of crumbling stucco watered by streams of black mud, a vale of sorrows which are real and joys too often hollow; but this audience is so accustomed to terrible sensations, that only some unimaginable and well-nigh impossible woe could produce any

伏盖太太本姓龚弗朗,年事已高,近四十年来她一直经营着位于拉丁区和圣玛索郊区之间的圣·日内维新街的一家公寓。大家都称这家寄宿宿舍为伏盖公寓,无论男女,不分老幼,它一律接纳,这座受人尊敬的建筑物从来没受到人们飞短流长的攻击;但是另一方面;事实上,已有三十年没有年轻女人在这里住过,假如哪个年轻人在这儿呆得时间稍长一些,那一定是他的家庭每月供给他的生活费少得可怜。但是在一八一九年这幕悲剧开场的时候,伏盖太太的房客中倒是有一个可怜的姑娘。

虽然惨剧这个字眼被近來多愁善感,颂赞痛苦的文学用得那么滥,那么歪曲,以致无人相信;这儿可是不得不用。并非在真正的字义上说,这个故事有什么戏剧意味;但我这部书完成之后,京城内外也许有人会掉几滴眼泪。

出了巴黎城,该书还会被人理解吗?恐怕大成问题。这场戏里对当地的考证和地方色彩比比皆是,其特色也只有住在蒙马尔特高地和蒙脱鲁日小丘之间的人才能赏识;在这个著名的盆地里,墙壁上的石灰随时都会落下,黑色的泥浆纵横阡陌,充满人间真正的痛苦、虚假的欢乐,老是动荡不安,令人生畏;因此,不发生非同寻常的事件,人们是不会对其稍加留意的。可是,邪恶与美德的混杂使那

lasting impression there. Now and again there are tragedies so awful and so grand by reason of the complication of virtues and vices that bring them about, that egotism and selfishness are forced to pause and are moved to pity; but the impression that they receive is like a luscious fruit, soon consumed. Civilization, like the car of Juggernaut, is scarcely stayed perceptibly in its progress by a heart less easy to break than the others that lie in its course; this also is broken, and Civilization continues on her course triumphant. And you, too, will do the like; you who with this book in your white hand will sink back among the cushions of your armchair, and say to yourself, "Perhaps this may amuse me." You will read the story of Father Goriot's secret woes, and, dining thereafter with an unspoiled appetite, will lay the blame of your insensibility upon the writer, and accuse him of exaggeration, of writing romances. Ah! once for all, this drama is neither a fiction nor a romance! ALL IS TRUE,—so true, that every one can discern the elements of the tragedy in his own house, perhaps in his own heart.

The lodging-house is Mme. Vauquer's own property. It is still standing in the lower end of the Rue Nueve-Sainte-Genevieve, just where the road slopes so sharply down to the Rue de l'Arbalète, that wheeled traffic seldom passes that way, because it is so stony and steep. This position is sufficient to account for the silence prevalent in the streets shut in between the dome of the Pantheon and the dome of the Val-de-Grace, two conspicuous public buildings which give a yellowish tone to the landscape and darken the whole district that lies beneath the shadow of their leaden-hued

里随处可见的痛苦变得伟大与庄严了;一见到它们,崇尚私利者也会止步不前,产生同情心。但他们对此的印象却犹如一只匆匆吞食的美果。形似印度偶像车的文明之车被一颗不易碾碎的心稍事耽搁,卡住车轮,又随即将其压碎,继续豪迈地前进了。读者诸君也会同样用雪白的手捧着这本书,躺在软软的扶手椅里思忖:“或许它会让我消遣一番。”待到读完高利尤老头不幸的秘事,你们照样胃口大开,山吃海喝,却怪作者写得不好,过分夸张,太富诗意,使你们毫无所动。可是,你们应该知道,这惨剧既非虚构,亦非小说。一切都是真的,真实到每个人或许都能从自己身上,自己心里认出剧中的材料。

这座公寓是伏盖太太的产业,它位于圣·日内维新街下段一个斜坡向弩箭街低下去的地方。斜坡的坡度很大,就连马匹也很少上下,因此在瓦-德-葛拉斯军医院和先贤祠之间的那些狭小的街道格外清静。两座大建筑罩下一片黄黄的色调,穹顶双双投射出肃穆的阴影,因而改变了周围的气氛。街面上石板干燥,阴沟内没有污泥,没有水,沿着墙根生满了草。

cupolas.

In that district the pavements are clean and dry, there is neither mud nor water in the gutters, grass grows in the chinks of the walls. The most heedless passer-by feels the depressing influences of a place where the sound of wheels creates a sensation; there is a grim look about the houses, a suggestion of a jail about those high garden walls. A Parisian straying into a suburb apparently composed of lodging-houses and public institutions would see poverty and dullness, old age lying down to die, and joyous youth condemned to drudgery. It is the ugliest quarter of Paris, and, it may be added, the least known. But, before all things, the Rue Nueve-Sainte-Genevieve is like a bronze frame for a picture for which the mind cannot be too well prepared by the contemplation of sad hues and sober images. Even so, step by step the daylight decreases, and the cicerone's droning voice grows hollower as the traveler descends into the Catacombs. The comparison holds good! Who shall say which is more ghastly, the sight of the bleached skulls or of dried-up human hearts?

The front of the lodging-house is at right angles to the road, and looks out upon a little garden, so that you see the side of the house in section, as it were, from the Rue Nueve-Sainte Genevieve. Beneath the wall of the house front there lies a channel, a fathom wide, paved with cobble-stones, and beside it runs a graveled walk bordered by geraniums and oleanders and pomegranates set in great blue and white glazed earthenware pots. Access into the graveled walk is afforded by a door, above which the words MAISON

一到这个地方,连最没心事的
人也会像所有的过路人一样无端
地不快活。一辆车子的声音在此
简直是件大事;屋子死沉沉的,墙
垣全带几分牢狱气息。一个迷路的
巴黎人在这一带只看见些公寓
或者私塾,苦难或者烦恼,垂死的
老人或是想作乐而不得不用功的
青年。巴黎城中没有一个区域更
丑恶,更没有人知道的了。特别是
圣·日内维新街,仿佛一个古镜框
子,是这个故事再合适不过的发生
地。而为使人们了解它,无须准备
过多灰暗的色调和正经八百的构
思。正如游客一级级走下台阶进
入地下墓穴时,光线逐渐暗淡,向
导的声音也变得空空洞洞了。这
样的比较再恰当不过了!谁将决
定看上去更可怕的东西,是冷酷无
情的心灵还是空洞无物的头颅?

公寓侧面当街,正面有个小花
园,与圣·日内维新街成直角。小
花园与正面屋墙之间,有一条两米
宽的卵石带。前面,是一条沙径,
两旁摆着蓝白二色的大陶盆,种着
天竺葵、夹竹桃和石榴树。甬道口
有一道中门,门上横着一块牌子,
写着:伏盖公寓;下面还有一行小
字,写着:膳宿公寓,不论男女,敬
请惠顾。

VAUQUER may be read, and beneath, in rather smaller letters, "Lodgings for both sexes, etc."

During the day a glimpse into the garden is easily obtained through a wicket to which a bell is attached. On the opposite wall, at the further end of the graveled walk, a green marble arch was painted once upon a time by a local artist, and in this semblance of a shrine a statue representing Cupid is installed; a Parisian Cupid, so blistered and disfigured that he looks like a candidate for one of the adjacent hospitals, and might suggest an allegory to lovers of symbolism. The half-obliterated inscription on the pedestal beneath determines the date of this work of art, for it bears witness to the widespread enthusiasm felt for Voltaire on his return to Paris in 1777:

"Whoe'er thou art, thy master see;

He is, or was, or ought to be."

At night the wicket gate is replaced by a solid door. The little garden is no wider than the front of the house; it is shut in between the wall of the street and the partition wall of the neighboring house. A mantle of ivy conceals the bricks and attracts the eyes of passers-by to an effect which is picturesque in Paris, for each of the walls is covered with trellised vines that yield a scanty dusty crop of fruit, and furnish besides a subject of conversation for Mme. Vauquer and her lodgers; every year the widow trembles for her vintage.

A straight path beneath the walls on either side of the garden leads to a clump of lime-trees at the further end of it; LIME-trees, as Mme. Vauquer persists in calling them, in

白天,从一道带响铃的栅栏门上望去,在小石板路的尽头,临街的那堵墙上画着一个淡青色的神龛,出自街区一个画家的手笔。在这幅画的凹处,竖着一尊爱神像。对象征画入迷的爱好者只需看一眼画像上面剥落的釉彩,也许便可联想到荒唐的巴黎式的爱情。在不远处,正有一所医治此病的场所。神像座子上模糊的铭文,令人想起雕像的年代,伏尔泰在一七七七年,回到巴黎大受欢迎的年代。那两句铭文是:

无论你是谁,此人都是你的导师,

过去是,现在是,或许将来还是。

到晚上的时候,栅栏门换上木门。小花园的宽度正好等于房子正面的长度。花园两旁,一边是临街的墙,一边是和邻居分界的墙;大片的长春藤把那界墙密密遮盖了,在巴黎城中显得格外引人注目。各处墙上都钉着果树和葡萄藤,瘦小而灰土密布的果实成为伏盖太太年年发愁的对象,也是和房客谈天的资料。

沿着侧面的两堵墙各有一条狭小的走道,走道尽处是一片菩提树荫。伏盖太太虽是龚弗朗出身,菩提树三字老是念别音的,房客们

spite of the fact that she was a de Conflans, and regardless of repeated corrections from her lodgers.

The central space between the walls is filled with artichokes and rows of pyramid fruit-trees, and surrounded by a border of lettuce, pot-herbs, and parsley. Under the lime-trees there are a few green-painted garden seats and a wooden table, and hither, during the dog-days, such of the lodgers as are rich enough to indulge in a cup of coffee come to take their pleasure, though it is hot enough to roast eggs even in the shade.

The house itself is three stories high, without counting the attics under the roof. It is built of rough stone, and covered with the yellowish stucco that gives a mean appearance to almost every house in Paris. There are five windows in each story in the front of the house; all the blinds visible through the small square panes are drawn up awry, so that the lines are all at cross purposes. At the side of the house there are but two windows on each floor, and the lowest of all are adorned with a heavy iron grating.

Behind the house a yard extends for some twenty feet, a space inhabited by a happy family of pigs, poultry, and rabbits; the wood-shed is situated on the further side, and on the wall between the wood-shed and the kitchen window hangs the meat-safe, just above the place where the sink discharges its greasy streams. The cook sweeps all the refuse out through a little door into the Rue Nueve-Sainte-Genieve, and frequently cleanses the yard with copious supplies of water, under pain of pestilence.

The house might have been built on purpose

用文法来纠正她也没用。

两条走道之间,是一方朝鲜蓟,两边种着修成纺锤形的果树,围了一圈酸模、生菜和香芹。在菩提树荫下,有一张漆成绿色的圆桌,桌边放了一圈椅子。在气温高得能解小鸡的三伏天,兜里有几文够喝咖啡的顾客在这儿饮咖啡。

楼房有四层,上面又架了一排阁楼,用碎石砌成,涂成了黄色,巴黎几乎所有的房屋都涂上这种颜色,令人恶心。每一层楼开了五扇百叶窗,窗子上都镶嵌着小块玻璃,并配有遮光帘,这些帘子高高低低杂乱无章。房屋纵深处有两扇窗户,底层装有铁栅栏。

房后是一个二十英尺宽的院子:猪、鸡、兔子在院内和睦相处,院子尽头有一个堆放柴禾的棚子。棚子和厨房窗户之间悬挂着一个食品柜,下面滴着洗碗池里油腻的污水。朝圣·日内维新街有一扇门,为避免瘟疫,厨娘用大量的水冲洗这臭不可闻的地方时,便顺势把屋里的垃圾也一起从这扇门里扫到街上。

房子建起来就是用来开廉价

for its present uses. Access is given by a French window to the first room on the ground floor, a sitting-room which looks out upon the street through the two barred windows already mentioned. Another door opens out of it into the dining-room, which is separated from the kitchen by the well of the staircase, the steps being constructed partly of wood, partly of tiles, which are colored and beeswaxed. Nothing can be more depressing than the sight of that sitting-room. The furniture is covered with horse hair woven in alternate dull and glossy stripes. There is a round table in the middle, with a purplish-red marble top, on which there stands, by way of ornament, the inevitable white china tea-service, covered with a half-effaced gilt network. The floor is sufficiently uneven, the wainscot rises to elbow height, and the rest of the wall space is decorated with a varnished paper, on which the principal scenes from *Telemachus* are depicted, the various classical personages being colored. The subject between the two windows is the banquet given by Calypso to the son of Ulysses, displayed thereon for the admiration of the boarders, and has furnished jokes these forty years to the young men who show themselves superior to their position by making fun of the dinners to which poverty condemns them. The hearth is always so clean and neat that it is evident that a fire is only kindled there on great occasions; the stone chimney-piece is adorned by a couple of vases filled with faded artificial flowers imprisoned under glass shades, on either side of a bluish marble clock in the very worst taste.

The first room exhales an odor for which there is no name in the language, and which

公寓的。底层头一间是客厅,从道落地窗进去,通过两扇临街的窗子采光。与客厅相通的,是餐厅,餐厅与厨房之间隔着楼梯间。楼梯踏板是用木头与石板拼成的,打磨得锃亮,刷上了颜色。一眼望去,客厅的景象再凄凉没有:几张沙发和椅子,上面包的马鬃布满是一条条忽而暗淡忽而发光的纹缕。正中放一张黑地白纹的云石面圆桌,桌上摆一套白磁小酒杯,金线已经剥落一大半,这种酒杯现在到处看得到。房地地板很坏,四周的护壁板只有半人高,其余的地方糊着上油的花纸,画着《忒勒玛科斯》主要的几幕,一些有名的人物都着着彩色。在装栏杆的百叶窗之间的墙板上为房客们呈现出一幅加里普索宴请乌里斯的儿子的画面。四十年来,这幅画常常引起年轻房客的嘲讽,这样,在他们调侃自己因穷而来凑合的饭菜时,就以为可以把自己拔高了。壁炉是石砌的,炉膛干干净净,说明只有在重大节日时才升火。壁炉上沿的两边摆设着两只花瓶,插满了纸花,罩在罩子里显得很陈旧;当中摆着一只灰蓝色大理石摆钟,外形丑陋。

这间客厅散发出一种语言难以形容的怪味,或许叫“公寓味”

should be called the odeur de pension. The damp atmosphere sends a chill through you as you breathe it; it has a stuffy, musty, and rancid quality; it permeates your clothing; after-dinner scents seem to be mingled in it with smells from the kitchen and scullery and the reek of a hospital. It might be possible to describe it if some one should discover a process by which to distil from the atmosphere all the nauseating elements with which it is charged by the catarrhal exhalations of every individual lodger, young or old. Yet, in spite of these stale horrors, the sitting-room is as charming and as delicately perfumed as a boudoir, when compared with the adjoining diningroom.

The paneled walls of that apartment were once painted some color, now a matter of conjecture, for the surface is incrustated with accumulated layers of grimy deposit, which cover it with fantastic outlines. A collection of dim-ribbed glass decanters, metal discs with a satin sheen on them, and piles of blue-edged earthenware plates of Touraine ware cover the sticky surfaces of the sideboards that line the room. In a corner stands a box containing a set of numbered pigeon-holes, in which the lodgers' table napkins, more or less soiled and stained with wine, are kept. Here you see that indestructible furniture never met with elsewhere, which finds its way into lodging-houses much as the wrecks of our civilization drift into hospitals for incurables. You expect in such places as these to find the weather-house whence a Capuchin issues on wet days; you look to find the execrable engravings which spoil your appetite, framed every one in a black varnished frame, with a gilt beading round it; you know the sort of tortoise-shell

吧。那是一种闭塞的、霉烂的、酸腐的气味，叫人发冷，吸在鼻子里潮腻腻的，直往衣服里钻；那是刚吃过饭的餐厅的气味，酒菜和碗盏的气味，救济院的气味，老老少少的房客特有的气味，跟他们难闻的气味合凑成令人作呕的成分，倘能加以分析，也许这味道还能形容。话说得回来，这间客厅虽然教你恶心，但同隔壁的餐厅相比，你还觉得客厅很体面，很芬芳，简直像太太们的上房呢。

餐厅全部装有护壁板，以前漆过的颜色已模糊难辨，上面是一些油迹斑斑、光怪陆离的画。粘糊糊的餐具橱上摆着暗淡无光、缺口破裂的长颈大肚玻璃瓶，闪闪发光的金属圆形饰物以及杜尔奈产的几叠蓝边厚瓷碟子。一只角上，摆着一只柜子，里面一格一格标着号码，存放房客满是油渍和酒痕的餐巾。那些牢不可破的家具，到处都扔得有，可是摆在这间餐厅里，却跟痼疾诊疗所里那些文明的残骸一样。你在这里看得到一只晴雨表，每逢下雨便出现一个嘉布遣会的修士。一些粗劣的版画，配着镶金的黑木柜，叫人大倒胃口；一具镶铜的玳瑁质座钟，一只绿色的火炉，几盏落满灰尘浸透油渍的挂灯，一张铺着漆布的长桌，油垢特厚，足够那些无聊的房客用手指在上面刻划姓名；几张断腿折臂的椅子；几块可怜的小脚毯，草蓆老是松松散散而始终没有支离破碎；还

clock-case, inlaid with brass; the green stove, the Argand lamps, covered with oil and dust, have met your eyes before. The oilcloth which covers the long table is so greasy that a waggish externe will write his name on the surface, using his thumb-nail as a style. The chairs are broken-down invalids; the wretched little hempen mats slip away from under your feet without slipping away for good; and finally, the foot-warmers are miserable wrecks, hingeless, charred, broken away about the holes. It would be impossible to give an idea of the old, rotten, shaky, cranky, worm-eaten, halt, maimed, one-eyed, rickety, and ramshackle condition of the furniture without an exhaustive description, which would delay the progress of the story to an extent that impatient people would not pardon. The red tiles of the floor are full of depressions brought about by scouring and periodical renewings of color. In short, there is no illusory grace left to the poverty that reigns here; it is dire, parsimonious, concentrated, threadbare poverty; as yet it has not sunk into the mire, it is only splashed by it, and though not in rags as yet, its clothing is ready to drop to pieces.

This apartment is in all its glory at seven o'clock in the morning, when Mme. Vauquer's cat appears, announcing the near approach of his mistress, and jumps upon the sideboards to sniff at the milk in the bowls, each protected by a plate, while he purrs his morning greeting to the world. A moment later the widow shows her face; she is tricked out in a net cap attached to a false front set on awry, and shuffles into the room in her slipshod fashion. She is an oldish woman, with a bloated countenance, and a nose like a parrot's

有些破烂的脚炉,洞眼碎裂,铰链零落,木座子已被火烤得像炭一样焦黑。这些家具的古旧,龟裂、腐烂、摇动、虫蛀、残缺、奄奄一息,如果详细描写,势必长篇累牍,妨碍读者诸君对本书的兴趣,恐非性急的人所能原谅。红色的地砖,因为擦洗或上色之故,画满了高高低低的沟槽。总之,这儿是一派毫无诗意的贫穷,那种锱铢必较的、浓缩的、千疮百孔的贫穷;即使还没有泥浆,却已有了污迹;即使还没有破洞,还不会褴褛,却快要崩溃腐朽,变成垃圾。

早晨将近七点钟,伏盖太太的猫先于它的女主人,跳上餐橱,嗅了嗅橱里盖上盘子、盛着牛奶的碗,发出报晨似的呼噜声。这是这间屋子一天中的黄金时代。不多久,这位寡妇出现了;她古里古怪地戴着一顶罗纱无檐网眼帽,帽下挂着一圈凌乱的假发,脚上套了一双歪歪扭扭的拖鞋,蹒跚地走进来。她的脸皱巴巴、胖乎乎的,正中隆起一只鹰钩鼻,一双小手肉墩墩的,身体又肥又厚,就像一个瘦

beak set in the middle of it; her fat little hands (she is as sleek as a church rat) and her shapeless, slouching figure are in keeping with the room that reeks of misfortune, where hope is reduced to speculate for the meanest stakes. Mme. Vauquer alone can breathe that tainted air without being disheartened by it. Her face is as fresh as a frosty morning in autumn; there are wrinkles about the eyes that vary in their expression from the set smile of a ballet-dancer to the dark, suspicious scowl of a discounter of bills; in short, she is at once the embodiment and interpretation of her lodging-house, as surely as her lodging-house implies the existence of its mistress. You can no more imagine the one without the other, than you can think of a jail without a turnkey. The unwholesome corpulence of the little woman is produced by the life she leads, just as typhus fever is bred in the tainted air of a hospital. The very knitted woolen petticoat that she wears beneath a skirt made of an old gown, with the wadding protruding through the rents in the material, is a sort of epitome of the sitting-room, the dining-room, and the little garden; it discovers the cook, it foreshadows the lodgers—the picture of the house is completed by the portrait of its mistress.

Mme. Vauquer at the age of fifty is like all women who “have seen a deal of trouble.” She has the glassy eyes and innocent air of a trafficker in flesh and blood, who will wax virtuously indignant to obtain a higher price for her services, but who is quite ready to betray a Georges or a Pichegru, if a Georges or a Pichegru were in hiding and still to be betrayed, or for any other expedient that may alleviate her lot. Still, “she is a good woman

诚的教徒;她的胸脯鼓鼓的,晃晃荡荡,与这间透出阵阵阴气、隐伏着不法交易的餐厅倒很相宜,伏盖太太呼吸着里面热烘烘、臭熏熏的空气,从不恶心。她的面容如秋季的初霜般清新,眼睛四周布满皱纹,那表情可以从舞女的满面笑容转为贴现者的横眉冷对。总之,她的外表说明了公寓的内涵,公寓包含着她的外表一样。监狱不能没有狱卒,你不能想像有此无彼。这小妇人苍白的肥胖是这种生活的产物,犹如伤寒病是医院里散发出的气味的产物一样。她的罩裙底下露出毛线编成的衬裙,罩裙也是用旧衣衫改的,棉絮从开裂的布缝中飘出来;这些衣衫简直就是客厅、餐厅和小花园的缩影,同时也揭露了厨房的内容与房客的品味——女主人一出场,台面就完全了。

五十岁左右的伏盖太太跟一切饱经忧患的女人一样,睁着一双无神的眼睛,显出几分拉皮条女人佯装怒容,抬高身价的清白神气,为卖个高价可以争得面红耳赤。此外,为了改善命运,她可以不择手段。如果还有什么乔治或皮舍格卢可以出卖,她会毫不犹豫地为之。不过,房客们却说“她其实是个好人”。他们听见她和他们一样

at bottom," said the lodgers who believed that the widow was wholly dependent upon the money that they paid her, and sympathized when they heard her cough and groan like one of themselves.

What had M. Vauquer been? The lady was never very explicit on this head. How had she lost her money? "Through trouble," was her answer. He had treated her badly, had left her nothing but her eyes to cry over his cruelty, the house she lived in, and the privilege of pitying nobody, because, so she was wont to say, she herself had been through every possible misfortune.

Sylvie, the stout cook, hearing her mistress' shuffling footsteps, hastened to serve the lodgers' breakfasts. Beside those who lived in the house, Mme. Vauquer took boarders who came for their meals; but these externes usually only came to dinner, for which they paid thirty francs a month.

At the time when this story begins, the lodging-house contained seven inmates. The best rooms in the house were on the first story, Mme. Vauquer herself occupying the least important, while the rest were let to a Mme. Couture, the widow of a commissary-general in the service of the Republic. With her lived Victorine Taillefer, a schoolgirl, to whom she filled the place of mother. These two ladies paid eighteen hundred francs a year. The two sets of rooms on the second floor were respectively occupied by an old man named Poirer and a man of forty or thereabouts, the wearer of a black wig and dyed whiskers, who gave out that he was a retired merchant, and was addressed as M. Vautrin. Two of the four rooms on the third floor were also let— one to

咳嗽,唉声叹气,便相信她是真穷。

伏盖先生生前是个什么样的人? 对此,这位妇人从无一字提及。他是怎样倾家荡产的? 她回答说是遭了厄运。他对她不好,只留给她一双眼睛好落泪,留给她这所房子好过活,还有给了她不必同情别人灾祸的权利,因为她说,她什么苦难都受尽了。

胖厨娘西勒维听见她的女主人在快步走动,便急急忙忙地为房客摆上午餐。一般情况下,包饭客人只订晚餐,每月花三十法郎。

在本小说开场的当儿,房客总共七位。二层楼上有整幢楼里最好的两个套间。伏盖太太占了稍小的一套,另一套让一个名叫古杜尔太太的住着,她是一个寡妇,丈夫是法兰西共和国的一个军需官。她带了一位名叫维多利娜·泰伊菲的小姑娘同住,像母亲一样爱护她。两位女客膳宿费每年一千八百法郎。三楼的两套房间分别住了人。一位叫普瓦莱,是个老头子,另一位四十上下,戴着假发,染了鬓髯,名叫沃特汉,自称从前做批发商。四楼有四个单间,租出去两间,老姑娘米索诺小姐住了一间,从前制作细面、意大利通心粉和淀粉的老板,大家叫高利尤老头

an elderly spinster, a Mlle. Michonneau, and the other to a retired manufacturer of vermicelli, Italian paste and starch, who allowed the others to address him as "Father Goriot." The remaining rooms were allotted to various birds of passage, to impecunious students, who like "Father Goriot" and Mlle. Michonneau, could only muster forty-five francs a month to pay for their board and lodging. Mme. Vauquer had little desire for lodgers of this sort; they ate too much bread, and she only took them in default of better.

At that time one of the rooms was tenanted by a law student, a young man from the neighborhood of Angoulême, one of a large family who pinched and starved themselves to spare twelve hundred francs a year for him. Misfortune had accustomed Eugène de Rastignac, for that was his name, to work. He belonged to the number of young men who know as children that their parents' hopes are centered on them, and deliberately prepare themselves for a great career, subordinating their studies from the first to this end, carefully watching the indications of the course of events, calculating the probable turn that affairs will take, that they may be the first to profit by them. But for his observant curiosity, and the skill with which he managed to introduce himself into the salons of Paris, this story would not have been colored by the tones of truth which it certainly owes to him, for they are entirely due to his penetrating sagacity and desire to fathom the mysteries of an appalling condition of things, which was concealed as carefully by the victim as by those who had brought it to pass.

Above the third story there was a garret

的,住了另一间。另外两间是留给“候鸟”的,比如像高老头和米索诺小姐一样每月仅能付四十五法郎膳宿费的穷学生。伏盖太太不大情愿他们光临,只是在无更好的办法时才接待这类人,因为他们面包吃得太多。

那时,其中的一间住着一位从昂古莱姆乡下到巴黎来读法律的青年,欧也纳·德·拉斯蒂涅。人口众多的老家,省吃俭用,熬出他每年一千二百法郎的生活费。他是那种因家境贫寒而不得不用功的青年,从小就懂得父母的期望,自己在那里打点美妙的前程,考虑学业的影响,把学科迎合社会未来的动向,以便捷足先登,榨取社会。假若没有他有趣的观察,没有他在巴黎的一个个沙龙里无孔不入的本领,我们这故事就平淡无奇了,这完全要归功于他敏锐的头脑,归功于他那种欲望,想刺探他人惨剧的秘密;而这惨剧其它的制造者和受害者一致讳莫如深的。

四楼顶上有一间晾衣服的阁