

# **PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)**

Translated and adapted by Frank J. Morlock



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# **PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)**

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PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)  
Dramatized from Balzac's novel by M. Theaulon (Marie-Emmanuel  
Guillaume-Marguerite 1787-1841) with Jaime and A. Decomberousse  
Translated and adapted by Frank J. Morlock

Etext by Dagny

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<http://www.cadytech.com/dumas/personnage.asp?key=130>

CHARACTERS:

PERE GORIOT  
RICHARD  
COUNT DE RESTAUD  
BARON DE NUCINGEN  
EUGENE DE RASTIGNAC  
VAUTRIN  
COUNTESS ANASTASIA  
BARONESS DELPHINE  
MADAME VAUQUER  
MISS MICHONNEAU  
VICTORINE  
SYLVIE  
BOARDERS, FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS

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ACT I

The stage represents the back of a shop.

**VICTORINE:** Yes, sir, I informed Mr. Goriot of your arrival and I think he'll be here soon.

**RICHARD:** Very well, child, I'll wait.

**VICTORINE:** You know it's for a marriage!

**RICHARD:** Oh, when the celebrated pasta manufacturer of the Rue La Jussienne, a man as rich as Mr. Jean-Joachim-Victor Goriot marries his children, it's not a secret from anyone. All his neighbors are informed, and in my capacity as notary, I knew it first.

**VICTORINE:** Ah, you're a notary, and you have everything needed to make a contract?

**RICHARD:** Enough to make two. For I believe, he's marrying, at the same time, Miss Delphine and Miss Anastasia.

**VICTORINE:** (excitedly) Yes, yes, both of them.

**RICHARD:** And you would like, I am sure, to be able to say all three.

**VICTORINE:** Oh, I am not their sister.

**RICHARD:** I would have wished it, child, for it must be a happiness to belong to a man whose reputation is so honorably established in the wheat market.

**VICTORINE:** Ah, indeed I think so, sir, and elsewhere as well. His goodness is inexhaustible and goes for a proverb in the quarter. Since I've been here, I've been able to judge it. But silence! Here he is! He doesn't like the good he does to be talked of.

**GORIOT:** (entering) Ah! Ah! Hello, Mr. Richard, hello. What, they didn't make you sit? Victorine, what's this? You don't understand your interests. A young girl must always be polite with those who make marriages. (To Richard) With this one, had she wanted it, we would have been able to sign three contracts instead of two.

**VICTORINE:** Oh, as for me, I never want to leave you, Mr. Goriot.

**GORIOT:** Poor child, imagine, Mr. Richard, that she was brought to me here five years ago. She'd been found on a highway. I received her with pleasure. It's been five years without seeing the one we owe her to. The Chevalier Vautrin, a good lad, a lovable comic who amuses me. It's been three months since he returned from a trip to America. Since then, he's often frequented my house, and by dint of seeing his handiwork he's ended by falling in love with her, and by asking me for her in marriage. But she refused and I don't wish to force her. Perhaps it will happen later—for it's not your last word. Come, go find my daughters, they are in need of you.

**VICTORINE:** I'm going to them. (aside) From friendship for him, for they are as proud as their father is kind and lovable. (exits)

(Richard and Goriot sit by the table.)

**RICHARD:** We were saying then, Mr. Goriot, that it's a question of contracts.

**GORIOT:** Yes, Mr. Richard, well written, very clear, and no fly specs. I prefer to put a price on it. You know the names. Why, it's already done.

**RICHARD:** The names of the prospective fiancés remain blank.

**GORIOT:** You will soon be told the names of the prospectives. Ah, Mr. Richard, today you see, the king won't go with naked feet. It's on a day like this, you must come to see the heart of a father. The sun shines full on it.

**RICHARD:** I've been through that, Mr. Goriot.

**GORIOT:** Well, so much the better; you've been happy, too. Let's see, let's settle the different articles. I give to each of my daughters one million in silver.

**RICHARD:** (astonished) Huh?

**GORIOT:** You didn't understand? A million in silver. That sounds nicely to the ear.

**RICHARD:** That's true. But, you will pardon my astonishment. The simplicity of your tastes, your situation as pasta-maker?

**GORIOT:** Ah! Damn! Yes! It's not brilliant, but it's solid. Besides, if I, myself, am enriched, thank God, anyone can learn to do it. And you, more than anyone else. In the times of the Republic, I already had some credit,

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and as President of my section, I was sent to Italy on a diplomatic mission.

**RICHARD:** And it was as a diplomat that you got rich?

**GORIOT:** As a diplomat, if you like, because, yes, on one side I acted as an envoy, on the other, I behaved like a pasta merchant. And amongst other state secrets, I discovered the secret of Italian pasta. That wasn't so dumb.

**RICHARD:** Very well, and now I understand.

**GORIOT:** Well, that's what is making my daughters rich. (singing)

I followed Napoleon

To the summit of Mount Saint Bernard.

I followed our standards

From Paris to Rome.

Where through an opportune victory,

He came back triumphant and crowned.

As for me, I brought back my fortune

In a platter of macaroni. (speaking) And, I've fed so many of my competitors, that their indigestion is really on my conscience. All the same, you can put each down for a million. Now, let's pass to the names of the bridegrooms.

**RICHARD:** I am ready.

**GORIOT:** I, Jean-Joachim-Victor Goriot, manufacturer of Italian pasta, give the hand of my daughter, Anastasia, to the Count de Restaud.

**RICHARD:** (surprised) The Count de Restaud?

**GORIOT:** And I marry my daughter, Delphine, to Baron de Nucingen.

**RICHARD:** What, that rich banker?

**GORIOT:** Himself. Huh! I hope he's a beau. A Count! A Baron! Ah, if I'd thought of this at the time I was working day and night—for I was an egoist. If I'd worked the whole night through, perhaps, I would have made them Duchesses. Look, let's continue. My actual fortune consists of two millions and some little knick-knacks. The two millions are destined for my two daughters.

**RICHARD:** They are inscribed here.

**GORIOT:** I possess yet another sum, but I've placed it—at the moment you alone know what I did with it. Let's pass to the knick-knacks. These constitute a moderate income which I reserve to myself alone.

**RICHARD:** Are you thinking of that?

**GORIOT:** I will know how to satisfy myself. Moreover, I'm keeping my silverware and some jewels.

**RICHARD:** (rising) That's it, Mr. Goriot, but I cannot approve of it—

**GORIOT:** (rising) Why not?

**RICHARD:** Because a father, who despoils himself for his children, risks making them ingrates and may compromise his future.

**GORIOT:** Mr. Richard, you are a brave and honest man! But you don't know that, before having established myself, I didn't have one sou. It was my wife who brought me the first necessities for my business, so it's really the wealth of their mother that I am returning to my children. Since I've had the misfortune to lose my wife, I've worked without let up. As my daughters have grown, so has my courage. I've enriched myself. I've taken care of their education. My oldest knows three languages deeply. My youngest plays the piano so as to make you and me dance. All that I possess is theirs, really theirs. Besides my daughters are all for me. I want them to swim in gold. So arrange all that as I told you and let's not speak of it any more. Wait, wait, I hear them. You are going to see if I am wrong to love them.

**GORIOT:** Hello, my beautiful darlings, hello. (to Mr. Richard) Huh! How do you like them? (to his daughters) You don't know this gentleman. He's the one who's going to marry you. He's my notary. Give him a pretty curtsy.

**DELPHINE:** With great pleasure.

**RICHARD:** I give you my compliment, sir, your daughters are charming.

**GORIOT:** Wait. This one, she's exactly the portrait of her mother. Even better, because she's cared for, gussied up, and her mother was always covered in flour.

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**DELPHINE:** Father, don't say things like that.

**GORIOT:** She was just like this one; and you yourself, at that time, didn't you spend the day sliding up and down my sacks of flour like two little crazies?

**ANASTASIA:** Father.

**GORIOT:** You sense, Mr. Richard, that since then they've had a little change in amusement. Yes, yes, and if we were upstairs, my youngest would play you a dance. But I am going to make you see how the elder is educated. Nasie, speak English to the gentleman.

**RICHARD:** Excuse me, I don't know English.

**GORIOT:** Well then, speak to him in German. (to Richard) She's going to speak to you in German.

**ANASTASIA:** Why no, father, that might bore the gentleman.

**GORIOT:** In fact, it really might. When they recite their lessons to me, I don't understand anything at all. But I'm amused by it, all the same. And when I speak, they correct me. That's funny. See them as tall as that, and then they correct you. But, you are not dressed up for the engagement, my darlings, and the gentlemen are going to come here to sign the contracts.

**RICHARD:** As for me, I cannot wait.

**DELPHINE:** What, father! You're going to receive these gentlemen here?

**GORIOT:** And where else?

**ANASTASIA:** In this back room? So ill-furnished?

**GORIOT:** My child, it was here the women I am giving to them came into the world, and it's here that I earned the money that I'm counting out to them. (to Richard) You see the ambition. They are not wrong. My shop isn't elegant.

**DELPHINE:** Ah, really, you are not thinking of it.

**ANASTASIA:** (singing)

I shall be a Count's wife.

We must behave

The way the nobility does.

**GORIOT:** But I'm no titled man.

**DELPHINE:** Your fortune is big enough.

**GORIOT:** (singing)

My word you're right.

I'll fix in my escutcheon

A painting of simmering macaroni. (speaking) While waiting, I want the marriage performed here. And that won't prevent them from saying throughout the neighborhood that Papa Goriot is marrying his daughters to a baron and a count. Come, Mr. Richard, I am going to give you my final instructions. (they leave)

**ANASTASIA:** After all, sis, we're rich, and if we want to, you know quite well, we can shine—

**DELPHINE:** Say sister, do you love your suitor?

**ANASTASIA:** Certainly, a count—

**DELPHINE:** As for me, in the beginning, I really wanted to refuse him. For Mr. de Nucingen didn't please me at all. (singing)

When dad came to tell me

That he'd made this great match

You'd think I'd dreamed about it.

But when he told me

I couldn't see any happiness

And it's only for the pretty wedding gown

My heart is beating piti-pat.

**ANASTASIA:** And that's what makes me feel happy, too. Think, sis, cashmeres, diamonds, carriages and a box at the Opera.

**DELPHINE:** And soirees and balls. All the pleasures at once. My God! How these gentlemen are making us wait.

**RASTIGNAC:** (entering) Mr. Goriot, young ladies.



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**DELPHINE:** He's here, sir, but he's not here at the moment.

**RASTIGNAC:** I will wait. If you will permit me to. (aside) What charming persons.

**ANASTASIA:** (to Delphine) He's very nice, that young man.

**DELPHINE:** Come, sis, let's finish dressing. Sir, would you sit? We are going to send someone. (calling)  
Victorine! Victorine! Come down! (they leave)

**RASTIGNAC:** I can't get over my surprise. So elegant, manners so charming. Impossible for them to be the daughters of a pasta-maker.

**VICTORINE:** (entering) Don't be impatient, sir. Mr. Goriot won't delay coming.

**RASTIGNAC:** (aside) Eh, why truly, this is fantastic. Another one, prettier than the other two. (aloud) Would you be a Miss Goriot?

**VICTORINE:** Me? No, sir. I don't have that happiness. I am only an orphan that he raised from pity.

**RASTIGNAC:** Could that be?

**VICTORINE:** And, I am proud to say it to everybody. (singing)

Without support as a child

I wept over my future.

I expected only misery.

Someone came with a tender hand

I didn't wait in vain.

Here, in this dwelling

He deigned to raise me

And I love my memory of it

When I weep, it's only for pleasure.

**RASTIGNAC:** By luck you are here, Miss. And the reputation of Mr. Goriot answers to me for your future.

**GORIOT:** (off) That's it. Flowers, bouquets. I am inviting everybody. I want everybody to be there.

**VICTORINE:** Here's Mr. Goriot.

**GORIOT:** (to Rastignac) Can I help you, sir?

**RASTIGNAC:** Sir, I've just received a note, it's small sum, and I grasped the opportunity of having the pleasure of presenting myself to you.

**GORIOT:** You are indeed good, sir. (looking at the note) Indeed, "Please pay to Mr. Rastignac—" Why I know about this. Would you be related to Mr. Rastignac who lives in Montauban?

**RASTIGNAC:** He's my father. He recommended me to frequent honest folks in Paris, and I came to see you, sir.

**GORIOT:** You've done well, young man. But you surprise me in an important business.

**RASTIGNAC:** Then I shall withdraw.

**GORIOT:** On the contrary, I am marrying my daughters. Eh, by Jove, now I think of it. You will do me the pleasure of signing the contracts.

**RASTIGNAC:** I will be very happy to do so. (aside) I've long entertained hopes of seeing that young girl who greatly interests me!

**GORIOT:** (to Rastignac) First of all, your money. (to Victorine) This works out marvelously. His father is Baron de Rastignac, whom I knew in days gone by with the Army of Italy. During the wedding I will be able to count a noble on the side of my friends. I won't seem a complete tramp. (meanwhile, Rastignac approaches Victorine, who listens and lowers her eyes; a great uproar can be heard in the street) Ah, there's our company.

(Enter Richard, neighbors and friends.)

**CHORUS:** (entering)

Today, heaven rewards

Work and honesty.

The noble shine of birth

Comes to shine near beauty.

(Servants of the Count and Baron, announcing:)

FIRST SERVANT: The Count de Restaud.

SECOND SERVANT: Baron de Nucingen

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**GORIOT:** Ah, gentlemen, accept my thanks.

**COUNT:** Not at all, my dear Mr. Goriot. It's we who are fortunate.

**BARON DE NUCINGEN:** Certainly, it is we who are flattered. Besides, it's generally known. If finance has become one of the most important classes of the state, financiers have all kept this amenity, this sweetness and this modesty which distinguishes them.

**RASTIGNAC:** (aside) Now, here's one who seems to me to really have the appearance of marrying Pere Goriot's shillings.

**GORIOT:** I ask your pardons, Count and Baron, for receiving you in this obscure dwelling.

**COUNT:** What do you mean, dear father-in-law? I swear to you, it's not bad. It has color. One is comfortable here. In business, he's an honorable man, gentleman, a businessman.

**RASTIGNAC:** (aside) A business man who gives dowries.

**GORIOT:** Allow me to present to you my neighbors, my friends—with whom I've thrived.

**BARON DE NUCINGEN:** Gentlemen, believe in my gratitude. I wouldn't know how to thank you too much for having contributed to the fortune of Mr. Goriot.

**GORIOT:** (transported) My daughters will be happy with these two men.

**BARON DE NUCINGEN:** You may be sure of it, it's as happy a day for us as for him. This prosperity, this richness due to industry. I allow myself to say that under the Empire, I believe, several bankers had begun like you, Mr. Goriot, with a knapsack on their back.

**GORIOT:** Damn, yes. I knew some. But you've changed all that.

**BARON DE NUCINGEN:** Ah, by Jove, I think so. (singing)

In hotels, in palaces

If we have to go to the Stock Market

We ride an English horse

That leads us step by step.

We must succeed at all price

When Fortune invites us

If we want to ride a coach first class.

**RASTIGNAC:** (singing to the Baron, laughing)

So, as to more quickly

Make a deposit

Or come a cropper.

**BARON DE NUCINGEN:** (pointing to Rastignac) Who's this gentleman?

**GORIOT:** He's my first witness. (with emphasis) The Chevalier de Rastignac. I ought to have, as my second witness, the Chevalier Vautrin, but he's unable to come. Here are my daughters.

**CHORUS:** (singing)

How graceful! How beautiful they are!

How happy their two fiancés are.

To their duties, always faithful

They will fulfill their vows.

**GORIOT:** (drunk with joy) See how they shine!

**COUNT AND BARON:** On my honor, they are charming!

**GORIOT:** (singing)

Beautiful girls here

And think, they are mine alone

I made angels there.

**RASTIGNAC:** (singing, aside)

Despite their grace divine

Make mine Victorine.

**VICTORINE:** (singing, aside)

This young man pleases me more

Than these two proud husbands.

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**GORIOT:** (singing, forcefully)

But come, come, Mr. Notary  
Prepare, prepare your ministry.  
His Honor the Mayor awaits us.  
Come on sign. It's a propitious moment.  
(Each couple approaches the table and signs.)

**CHORUS:**

Today heaven rewards work and honesty  
Nobility shines in birth  
Now it comes to shine near beauty.

**BARON DE NUCINGEN:** (singing) Well, everything is signed. Let's depart right now.

**GORIOT:** (singing) Already I'm separating From the daughters I love.

**CHORUS:** Their happiness is extreme.

**GORIOT:** (placing himself between the two couples, singing)

You are leaving me, my adored daughters,  
Another love imposes on you its laws.  
With happiness you are intoxicated,  
Pain and regret, that's all for me.  
But I am going to flee these parts  
Where I knew unmixed  
The complete price of happiness. (to the Count and the Baron)  
Now that you are stealing my daughters from me  
This house is no longer paradise. (embracing his daughters)

**CHORUS:**

When you come steal his two angels  
This house is no longer his paradise.  
How graceful, how beautiful they are!  
How happy their two fiancés are.  
To their duties, always faithful  
They will fulfill their vows.

(Delphine and Anastasia take their husbands' hands. Goriot, in the foreground, wipes away a tear. His two daughters come back to kiss him, and Victorine, remaining isolated in a corner of the stage, receives a bow and glance from Rastignac. Characters freeze as the curtain falls.)

CURTAIN

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**ACT II**

The stage represents a room in a bourgeois boarding house.

AT RISE, Madame Vauquer, Miss Michonneau, Mr. Poiret, Sylvie and Boarders are present.

**CHORUS:**

Ah, what a charming lunch.

And 'cause this table

Is so amiable

From now till dinner tolls

We've got to go for a stroll.

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** Well, where is Mr. Vautrin? Has the life of the party, at this bourgeois boardinghouse, left us already?

**POIRET:** Satanic joker that that lad is. Is he amusing us with his scandals of the other world and his Champagne wine that he forces us to drink?

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** Where's he get the money for all that, I ask you?

**MADAME VAUQUER:** I don't know where he gets it, but I do know that he pays me very promptly. Unfortunately, he's the one who brought me Papa Goriot, who already owes me three months' rent.

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** If I were you, I wouldn't give him any more credit, nor any more to his little prude of a Victorine. For in the end, you don't know these people. By bringing them to you, Mr. Vautrin didn't tell you where they came from.

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Oh! My God, no. He, who is such a gossip—impossible to get him to talk about that! Where does he know this Papa Goriot from? A man who keeps nothing. For almost a year that he's been here he hasn't received a single visit. And yet he must have been something, for I discovered he had some silver plate in his cupboard.

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** Oh, I know quite well why Mr. Vautrin took Papa Goriot under his protection. It's on account of the little Victorine.

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Why then, you haven't noticed that my young boarder, Mr. Rastignac—

**POIRET:** Now, there's one who doesn't have the appearance of an "agent de change." Would you like me to give you some good advice? Don't give him credit.

**MADAME VAUQUER:** That's indeed my intention. I am tired of waiting. If Mr. Goriot doesn't pay me completely today, he will leave my establishment.

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** Let's be quiet. There's Mr. Vautrin who protects him.

(Vautrin enters, cigar in mouth and a large cane in hand.)

**VAUTRIN:** Enter ladies, gentlemen, enter! This is the time! This is the moment the inmates come to take their nourishment.

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** Well! You are still very polite; you are treating us like animals. It's of himself the gentleman is speaking apparently.

**VAUTRIN:** Uniquely of himself, sweet Colombe, of the street of Old Colombe. After that, I don't class you in the animal kingdom in a disadvantageous manner. You are the Colombe of Noah's Ark. You date from the Deluge, that's all.

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** If Mr. Poiret was a man, he would make me respected.

**VAUTRIN:** Who, Poiret? Here. Poiret. (taking him by the hand) A character half-petrified, stomaching every sort of ragout, and particularly, the house stew! Delicious under the cotton bonnet, and as a hood, pushing in the chin of Munito.

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** Come, leave him alone, this poor man.

**VAUTRIN:** As for the other carnivores of the house—

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Enough, enough, Mr. Vautrin. You needn't annoy everybody.

(Vautrin smokes near Miss Michonneau.)

**MISS MICHONNEAU:** Yuck! There's Mr. Vautrin with his cigar. Suppose we were to go into the garden,

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under the linden tree?

**VAUTRIN:** That's the thing, sweet Colombe, go. Go, look for an olive branch under the linden. As for me, I am staying here, because I need a moment of tranquility. Madame Vauquer's stew chokes me.

(All laugh.)

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Bad joke.

**CHORUS:**

Ah, what a charming lunch.

And 'cause this table

Is so amiable

From now till dinner tolls

We've got to go for a stroll.

(They leave.)

**VAUTRIN:** They conceive nothing of the stupidity of Father Goriot, who's gone to divest himself of all his wealth for his children. He pushed paternal tenderness to absurdity. But as for me, am I not more stupid than he? And all my experience comes to wreck near this little Victorine? When I think, I hold that child's destiny in my hands. Ah, if Papa Goriot knew what I know, and the little one, yesterday, refused to marry me. She confessed to me she loves Rastignac, who came to lodge himself in this bourgeois boarding house for her. And he conscientiously eats Madame Vauquer's fricassees. An outrageous rival. I could indeed find a way to be free of him, by means of a regular duel, for at pistols and swords, I kill my man in a refined manner. But I don't want to get in a fuss with the company. Far from making me angry, I will reposition my batteries and I will begin on a new plan. Here he is, careful.

**RASTIGNAC:** (entering) Come. It's impossible to obtain anything for Mr. Goriot. (noticing Vautrin) Ah! ah! Mr. Vautrin.

**VAUTRIN:** You haven't lunched with us this morning, my young man.

**RASTIGNAC:** No, sir, and doubtless you have bewailed my absence.

**VAUTRIN:** That's banter. It seems we are going to make a plaything of papa.

**RASTIGNAC:** That's possible, Chevalier. And since we are alone, I am very happy to find the opportunity to tell you, that your attentions to Miss Victorine displease me.

**VAUTRIN:** My! My! Well, that's not bad at all from a little chap like you.

**RASTIGNAC:** (advancing) Sir!

**VAUTRIN:** (pushing Rastignac's arms in front of his chest, as if he were going to trip him up) Take care. You are going to do yourself harm, my little spitfire. This has the air of an improvised duel to me. I know that. I love you too much to accept.

**RASTIGNAC:** You recoil?

**VAUTRIN:** (looking at him with an air of pity) Hum! Poor sweetheart. Look, don't be naughty, and listen to me. I don't intend you any harm. I love you a lot, and I'm going to prove it to you.

**RASTIGNAC:** (aside) There's something about this man which forces me to listen, in spite of myself.

**VAUTRIN:** What I am going to tell you, or rather propose to you, will astonish you, seeing my present situation and my exterior appearance. What I am—that doesn't concern you. And what I do? I do what I please. . . . My life, that's my secret. I've had misfortunes, that's all there is to my story. But, I am going to demonstrate to you that I am a good sort. You've come to Paris to make your fortune. You are young and that's why—

**RASTIGNAC:** Still—

**VAUTRIN:** Society, my dear fellow, is a drop of water—in appearance pure and limpid; take a microscope, and there you will see monsters and all sorts of fantastic or unbelievable things. Like the daughters of Mr. Goriot, who, after six months of living together, ran their father out of their mansions, and no longer concern themselves with him any more than with last year's fashions.

**RASTIGNAC:** That's only too true.

**VAUTRIN:** That tells you that you don't have two ways to begin. For to be a lawyer, (that, I think, is your plan) we have first of all to master the Code. That's not good, still it's exciting. I passed through that regime, and I wasn't able to make myself do it. So, I left my studies with a notary, where I was vegetating in the country, to hurl myself on the great highway of fortune and intrigue. I stumbled at first, but it was the fault of inexperience, and

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not that of principle. As to the principle, here it is: "To make one's way, you must march over the bodies of all other men, raise yourself by merit or by scandal—doesn't matter—make yourself large." Men will be forced to raise their eyes. Then, you will be admired. Remain small, they will crush you! You want a fortune, you must seize it without scruple. It's the ancient spelling. I will show you women who promenade in the Tuilleries, covered with feathers and jewels, while their husbands earn small appointments in the office of a Minister. Employees of fifteen francs who, at night, hurl gold on the green rung of a salon; honor, reputation, all that's only a hellish traffic; the honest man in Paris is simply a fool. From the crowd of poor devils, who for forty years of their lives, turn like squirrels around the social machine and find themselves always at the same point: Misery. To avoid it, you must put yourself above it. So goes the world. The world that means to live! The world that makes life! Offer to this world, your qualities, your frankness, your talents, it will reply to you "Gold, sir, gold. Do you have gold?" That's exactly what you lack and what I've come to offer you.

**RASTIGNAC:** You!

**VAUTRIN:** Me! I have 500,000 francs at your service. They are yours, if you wish to give me 100,000.

**RASTIGNAC:** Mr. Vautrin, this joke—

**VAUTRIN:** Nothing is more serious! Listen to me. If I were younger, more lovable, perhaps I wouldn't need you. Here, it's a question of women, of feelings. I don't meddle with them any more. To you the die, to you the game.

**RASTIGNAC:** But, would you explain to me?

**VAUTRIN:** In two words, here's the situation. As former clerk of a notary, I am initiated into the secrets of family wealth, and at this moment, I know of a young person who has a dowry of 600,000 francs. I'll arrange for you to marry her, and you'll give me 100,000 francs, in hand. Twenty percent commission is not expensive.

**RASTIGNAC:** Mr. Vautrin, for my fortune, no one would ever make me do such a cowardly thing.

**VAUTRIN:** How young you are! It's a chancy wife, but it's a splendid opportunity.

**RASTIGNAC:** Never. Up to now, I've walked with my head held high, you hear? This would make a blemish on it.

**VAUTRIN:** (aside) Poor innocent! If all blemishes appeared on one's face, I know some brave lads whose faces would be entirely disfigured. (aloud) Finally, you refuse my offer?

**RASTIGNAC:** Positively!

**VAUTRIN:** I give you a week to think it over. After that delay, I will look for another. Meanwhile, I am going to play billiards at the Pantheon to earn my month's rent, which is due tomorrow morning.

**RASTIGNAC:** (laughing) And you are offering me a dowry of 500,000 francs?

**VAUTRIN:** Oh, not a penny less. (singing)

Consider and choose.

A single delay

It will be too late.

Yes, I love you

From the bottom of my heart.

I am thinking of your honor.

Prudently profit

From this opportunity.

When I think about you

I think I'm a nice guy.

**RASTIGNAC:** (singing)

I think he's joking

For if he had

This treasure he's boasting of

He'd keep it for himself.

**VAUTRIN:** (singing)

Consider and choose.

A single delay

It will be too late.

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

Yes, I love you  
From the bottom of my heart.  
I am thinking of your honor.  
Prudently profit  
From this opportunity.  
When I think about you  
I think I'm a nice guy.

**RASTIGNAC:** (singing)  
I considered and I chose.  
I think he's joking  
For if he had  
This treasure he's boasting of  
He'd keep it for himself.

(Vautrin leaves, twirling his cane.)

**RASTIGNAC:** (alone) Certainly, I will not accept an offer like that. I have a future, I will make my fortune, much later. But at least, I will love Victorine. All this man just told me remained there, as he was painting the world, and every time, I wanted to give him the lie. I felt that the conduct of Papa Goriot's daughters proved him right. Just now, I went to ask them for the money that their father needs so much. To beg them to come to see him, and I wasn't able to reach them. Here he is. What shall I tell him?

**VICTORINE:** (entering) How fast you are walking, my good friend!

**GORIOT:** That's because I am impatient to see this good Mr. Rastignac. You know, he must give me news of my daughters. Eh! Heavens, there he is right now.— Well? You've seen them?

**RASTIGNAC:** I am sorry to have sad news to tell you, but I didn't meet them.

**GORIOT:** You didn't see them at all? Give me an armchair. My walk tired me.

**RASTIGNAC:** It pains me to give you an account of such negligence.

**GORIOT:** Of negligence? Haven't they written me regularly every month— the most tender letters? It's true, I gave them two millions for that.

**RASTIGNAC:** For the last six months you haven't seen them, and their husbands forced you to leave their hotels.

**GORIOT:** It was I who wanted to go; damn! In their society, I didn't shine. I'm ignorant of good manners. Beautiful apartments don't suit me. I slip on parquets, I get twisted up in the tapestry, and then, I speak, as my daughters say, in a way that makes them tremble, a man who you—anyway, if my daughters don't come to see me it's not astonishing. They are wanted everywhere, and they know I'm not in need of anything.

**VICTORINE:** Still, we owe three months' rent to Madame Vauquer.

**GORIOT:** Yes, it's true. We owe three months' rent to Madame Vauquer, and then, we've drawn a bit, in anticipation, on our income, but— (singing)

Having nothing in my pocket  
To pay for three months' rent  
In having the resources  
Which served me sometimes  
It's crazy to deprive it  
For an urgent need.  
I have some silverware  
It's still like money.

**RASTIGNAC:** What, you wish—?

**GORIOT:** I still have a dozen plates. I cling to them because they were embossed with the initials of my poor wife. The mother of my two angels. You, who render me so many services, Mr. Rastignac—would you, indeed, undertake to go sell this silverware?

**RASTIGNAC:** I am annoyed that you should be forced to come to this.

**GORIOT:** Bah! Bah! A soup's just as good with a pewter spoon or Algerian metal. Wait for me, I will be back in a minute.

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**RASTIGNAC:** I am completely at your disposal, Mr. Goriot. As for me, I am only thinking of you.

**GORIOT:** You are really nice. (humming)

I have silverware.

There's still some money. (goes into his room)

**VICTORINE:** The excellent man! He takes everything gaily. How can his daughters neglect him? Oh, as for me, whatever my destiny may be, I'll never separate from him.

**RASTIGNAC:** You know quite well, dear Victorine, that my fate will be yours; soon, I hope, it's going to change. Up to now my father, whose fortune is modest, was obliged to support his title of Baron in a small provincial town, and was only able to furnish me a scanty allowance. But, thinking of you, I will work, I will become rich. We will take this good Mr. Goriot, and we will make him forget the ingratitude of his daughters.

**BOTH:** (singing)

O sweet hope

Happy future

All my heart's future

Breaks out with pleasure.

**RASTIGNAC:** (Singing)

To give this good father

A prosperous future

Is my first rule.

**VICTORINE:** (singing)

That's the prime happiness for me.

**BOTH:**

O sweet hope

Happy future

All my heart's future

Breaks out with pleasure.

**VICTORINE:** Silence. Here he is.

(Rastignac kisses Victorine's hand.)

**GORIOT:** (entering with a package, aside) This good young man who thinks only of me! (to Rastignac) Here. Here's this silverware. It's a heart-breaker for me, it seems to me I am separating one more time from my deceased wife, but, since it is necessary—

**RASTIGNAC:** I will soon return, for it is urgent to rid you of your hostess, her avarice.

**GORIOT:** Damn! Everyone has a need of his money. Still, a thousand pardons, my good Mr. Rastignac. You know it's very fine, at your age to want to be the friend of an old geezer. Oh, why aren't you my son-in-law?

**RASTIGNAC:** (aside) Thanks for the preference; they are adorable, those daughters of his!

(Rastignac makes a gracious gesture to Victorine, and, after shaking Goriot's hand, he leaves. Soft music suggesting sleep.)

**GORIOT:** Victorine, it seems to me I was dozing there, in the big armchair.

**VICTORINE:** You can do it without fear. The boarders are all in their rooms, and Madame Vauquer is out. Besides, you know, she's always in the kitchen. She makes it her salon. (moving the armchair to Goriot)

**GORIOT:** Thanks. A little hour of sleep, before dinner, will do me good. I will dream of my children. (placing himself in the armchair) Ah, I am fine here. (the music stops; Sylvie enters)

**SYLVIE:** Mr. Goriot! Mr. Goriot!

**GORIOT:** What do they want with me?

**SYLVIE:** A great lady, who calls you father, asks to speak to you.

**GORIOT:** My daughter! My Daughter! Is it Delphine? Is it Anastasia? Ah, no matter which, I am the happiest of men. Leave us, I beg you, Victorine.

**SYLVIE:** (aside) Papa Goriot has a daughter who rides in a carriage. What news for the house and the whole neighborhood!! (calling behind her) This way, this way!

(Victorine leaves, followed by Sylvie.)

**GORIOT:** It's Delphine. I was sure that she loved me more than her sister.



PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**DELPHINE:** (entering) Father! My good father.

**GORIOT:** My daughter, my Delphine. I knew that you would come.

**DELPHINE:** Oh, father, if you haven't seen me sooner, you must accuse my husband for it. That man is horrible.

**GORIOT:** You aren't happy?

**DELPHINE:** Happy! Me? I am the most unhappy of women.

**GORIOT:** Ah! My God! And as for me, I thought you were so satisfied with the Baron.

**DELPHINE:** He's the most avaricious of men. He lets me lack everything —under the pretext that his business is very bad, and that all my fortune is engaged in his speculations.

**GORIOT:** What? Did I really understand? Your fortune compromised! Ah, Delphine, you, my pride, my daughter, my beauty. At the moment of experiencing the most frightful of privations, after having known opulence, pleasures. That rogue of a banker. Did I give him my crowns for that?

**DELPHINE:** Calm yourself, my good father. Things haven't reached that extremity. And perhaps, everything will work itself out. But, for the moment, I am the wife most to be pitied, and I came to you to confide my deep chagrin.

**GORIOT:** Come! Sit down. And tell me your troubles. (pulling the armchair up for her) What's he done to you?

**DELPHINE:** Would you believe it, father? Me, your daughter, me, rich to millions—

**GORIOT:** That I paid in cash. In good crowns and pounds.

**DELPHINE:** Well, he refused me a brocaded dress to go to the Austrian Ambassador's ball.

**GORIOT:** He refused you a brocaded dress?

**DELPHINE:** Costing a hundred crowns at most.

**GORIOT:** A hundred crowns? Villain of a banker.

**DELPHINE:** And, if I don't have this dress, I am dishonored, reputation ruined. For my sister will be at this ball, in stunning finery.

**GORIOT:** She is indeed capable. (rising)

**DELPHINE:** She will eclipse me and I will die of chagrin.

**GORIOT:** That seems natural to me. It's not that my Delphine can be eclipsed by my Nasie, but, can you imagine, this animal of a Baron who is refusing a 100 crown dress to my daughter?

**DELPHINE:** I have hope only in you, my good father. And I came to beg you to save my life, by giving me what my husband refuses me.

**GORIOT:** You did well to count on me. All that I have belongs to you. (aside) This makes me think that I don't have any more.

**DELPHINE:** My sister is really happy. Her husband grants her everything she wants, and she isn't forced to come beg her father.

**GORIOT:** You beg me! Oh, don't repeat that villainous word. If I have a regret, it's that your husband isn't like your sister's. She is so happy.

**SYLVIE:** (running in) Papa Goriot! Papa Goriot!

**GORIOT:** No, no, I am with my daughter.

**SYLVIE:** Ah, indeed! Then, you have a regiment of daughters. Here comes another one, getting out of a carriage twice as beautiful as the other one. Everybody is gathering in the street. They've never seen anything so beautiful.

**GORIOT:** Ah, my God! It's Anastasia!

**SYLVIE:** Yes, the name she gave. The Countess Anastasia de Restaud.

**DELPHINE:** My sister!

**GORIOT:** Show her in! (aside) So long as she isn't coming to ask me for a spangled dress.

**DELPHINE:** My sister. I don't want to see her at this moment. We are fighting.

**GORIOT:** Really! How annoying! My two darlings! Go into my room. But I warn you, you won't get out of here without being reconciled in my arms.

(Exit Delphine.)

**SYLVIE:** (off) This way, Madame Countess. There's Milord Goriot, your father.

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**GORIOT:** (as Anastasia enters) Anastasia!

**ANASTASIA:** Father.

**GORIOT:** How you've changed.

**ANASTASIA:** I am the most unhappy of women.

**GORIOT:** Huh! What! You, too?

**ANASTASIA:** Ah, father, if you don't come to my assistance, I am ruined.

**GORIOT:** Ruined! My God? Then it's my last day. Ah, indeed! Let's see, ruined, ruined. Has your husband refused you a ball dress?

**ANASTASIA:** My husband! He's the best of men. And as for me, I am the most guilty of women. (she falls to her knees)

**GORIOT:** Will you stop that? It's I who ought to listen to you on my knees. My daughter, a countess, at the feet of a pasta maker. What an anachronism. Speak. What's he done to you?

**ANASTASIA:** As I was telling you. My husband is the best of men.

**GORIOT:** It's he who is making you unhappy.

**ANASTASIA:** Yes. For I'm on the verge of losing his love, his esteem. I've deceived him.

**GORIOT:** Deceived! Deceived! How?

**ANASTASIA:** By contracting debts without his knowledge.

**GORIOT:** (quickly taking a pinch of tobacco) If it's paid for by money, I've furnished the means of repairing that. Explain your self more unequivocally.

**ANASTASIA:** Listen to me, my good father. You know, my husband has made many brilliant deals on the Exchange. As for me, I wanted to follow his example, and double the little allowance he gave me for my clothing. I gambled, too.

**GORIOT:** Well, what's wrong with that? You wanted to enrich yourself. You are indeed your father's daughter.

**ANASTASIA:** Yes, but see, the bad luck, a bit. While my husband was winning on one side, I was losing on the other.

**GORIOT:** How did it happen?

**ANASTASIA:** Because I was betting on a rise.

**GORIOT:** And he was betting on a decline. It's like that in many households. So in the end, you lost.

**ANASTASIA:** Twenty thousand francs, father!

**GORIOT:** Twenty thousand francs!

**ANASTASIA:** You realize, I couldn't address myself to my husband. And I had recourse to my diamonds.

**GORIOT:** (aside) As I to my silverware.

**ANASTASIA:** That got me out of one scrape.

**GORIOT:** Well?

**ANASTASIA:** Yes, but only to hurl me into another. The Austrian Ambassador is giving a magnificent ball tonight, to which I am invited. And my husband, who has great, ambitious plans, intends that I appear, with all the diamonds that he gave me; judge my despair. I no longer have those diamonds, and if the Count doesn't see them on me, he will want to know what's become of them. He'll never believe that I lost the money on the Exchange. And, as he is very jealous, especially of his cousin, Maxime, perhaps he will think that it's to his cousin that I sacrificed my diamonds. And in his rage, he's capable of killing me.

**GORIOT:** (violently) Kill you, you, my daughter, my Nasie! If he touches a single hair on your head, he will die by my hand.

**ANASTASIA:** Save me, father, save me.

**GORIOT:** Where do you expect me to find 20,000 francs?

**ANASTASIA:** I was telling myself as I came, "If my father could loan me 20,000 francs, I could appear at the ball with my diamonds. And the day after tomorrow, put them back in pawn. And I would faithfully return that sum to him."

**GORIOT:** And to say that I don't have them. To say that I cannot oblige my adored daughter for want of twenty thousand wretched francs.

**ANASTASIA:** Can you believe, father, that my sister has refused to loan me this modest sum?

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**GORIOT:** Your sister! By Jove, it doesn't astonish me. Her husband is a miser, who lets her lack everything.

**ANASTASIA:** Him! Mr. de Nucingen a miser! The most complaisant husband in Paris, where he has so much. They are deceiving you, father. You want proof of it? Listen to the adventure I am going to tell you.

**DELPHINE:** (appearing suddenly) It's obvious that my sister imagines she's the only woman with adventures to recount.

**ANASTASIA:** (aside) She was here. (aloud) Sister. It's possible, I am mistaken, but I thought I'd noticed.

**DELPHINE:** You are in error. Just as I would still have sworn you had your diamonds tonight at the ball.

**ANASTASIA:** (aside) She's heard everything.

**GORIOT:** Well, what's this prove? That you are both mistaken. Who isn't mistaken in this world? As for me, from the first, I thought my daughters were no longer thinking of me! But I know you were sulking with each other, my angels, and I don't want that. Kiss each other, quickly.

**BOTH:** Father.

**GORIOT:** Oh, I insist. I demand it.

(They embrace.)

**RASTIGNAC:** (entering) Mr. Goriot. (aside) What do I see?

**GORIOT:** My daughters, my dear friend, my daughters. And I am the happiest of fathers. (to his daughters) Go into my room. I will get you out of your scrape. (they leave, to Rastignac) Well, you said they'd never come.

**RASTIGNAC:** Here's the sum in gold.

**GORIOT:** Thanks, my dear friend. (he leaves)

(Enter Madame Vauquer, Mr. Poiret, Victorine, Boarders.)

**CHORUS:** (in a deep voice)

There they are

His daughters are there.

What beautiful outfits

What noble shapes

With those carriages!

He's truly

An astounding man.

**MADAME VAUQUER:** (To Vautrin, who enters) Eh! Come on, Mr. Vautrin, come on. You didn't tell me that Mr. Goriot had titled daughters.

**VAUTRIN:** If I had, indeed, you'd have doubled his rent. Hang on, here's my month's payment, interesting and inquisitive hostess; it suffices me for a chicken. From a turkey that I plucked.

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Silence. Here's Mr. Goriot.

**POIRET:** He's leaving with his daughters.

(Goriot, Anastasia and Delphine leave his room and start to leave at the back.)

**POIRET:** Hush! He's coming back.

**GORIOT:** Ah! I am happy! I am happy! (Madame Vauquer, Miss Michonneau, and Poiret bow, scrape and cringe before him) Hello, hello, my friends! Ah, Mr. Vautrin, they came. I saw them.

**VAUTRIN:** Because they needed something.

**GORIOT:** Yes, they needed an embroidered dress.

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Needed an embroidered dress! Ah, indeed, sir. And your rent?

**GORIOT:** That's fair. We will speak of it today. I am too happy to deal with you. I am with my daughters. They were here just now. After six months.

**VAUTRIN:** (aside) What an idea! (low to Madame Vauquer) Make him pay you right away or I won't answer for anything.

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Certainly. (to Goriot) Sir, I can no longer wait. Sell your silverware and pay me.

**GORIOT:** My silverware—indeed it's far off, if it still runs.

**VAUTRIN:** Oh, I see what it is. The silverware went to the ball in a spangled dress. It's going to dance the Gallope. (to Madame Vauquer) And his rent?

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Then, sir, you have rent money. Pay it.

**GORIOT:** My rent money? I loaned it to my eldest daughter, my other angel.

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**RASTIGNAC AND VICTORINE:** My God!

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Since you cannot pay me, you and Miss will leave my place today.

**GORIOT:** Today. Right away. I've seen my daughters. The rest is all the same to me. Come, Victorine.

**VICTORINE:** But—where will we go?

**GORIOT:** What's it matter! Wherever I go, my children will come to see me.

**VAUTRIN:** Don't let him take anything.

**MADAME VAUQUER:** Not at all, sir. I am keeping your effects.

**GORIOT:** Well! In that case, Victorine, go get my cane and my hat; for I presume Madame Vauquer doesn't want to keep my cane and my hat.

**VAUTRIN:** (low to Rastignac) Mr. Rastignac, see the state of abandonment, of misery to which he finds himself reduced, this poor, respectable old geezer. Say one word, a single word, and in an hour you are rich to 500,000 francs.

**RASTIGNAC:** No, no, never. I will watch over him, I will work for him.

**VAUTRIN:** You are nothing but an egoist.

**RASTIGNAC:** I am keeping my honor, sir.

**VAUTRIN:** And as for me, I am keeping my secret.

**FINALE:**

**RASTIGNAC AND VICTORINE:** (singing)

Come. When fate overwhelms you  
We're the ones who will sustain you.

**CHORUS:**

Go. A fate more favorable  
One day awaits you in our arms.

**GORIOT:** (singing)

I've seen my darling daughters  
There's no more unhappiness for me.

**VAUTRIN:** (singing)

Ah, let's profit from his folly.

**GORIOT:** (singing)

I am happier than a king.

**CHORUS:**

Let's leave. When fate overwhelms you/us  
It's we/you who support you/us.  
Go/Come they will support you  
A fate more favorable  
Awaits you one day in our/their arms.

FREEZE FRAME

CURTAIN

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**ACT III**

The stage represents the garden of a sanitarium. To the audience's left a pavillion whose window faces the public.

AT RISE, Victorine is alone, seated, and working. Soon she rises and goes to listen at the door of the pavillion.

**VICTORINE:** Mr. Goriot is still sleeping. Let's profit by the opportunity to finish my work. It's a pleasure for me. This good Mr. Goriot. With what satisfaction I work for him. (singing)

When he was in opulence  
I never lacked a thing.  
To ease his indigence  
It's not up to me to restore his wealth.  
Yes, I cannot restore his wealth.  
As before with tenderness  
As for me, I'm pleased to serve him.  
His daughters have taken his riches  
And I've kept the pleasure  
Yes, I've kept the pleasure.

(speaking) Alas! Why must his reason give us so much alarm? For the last several days, he seems of a gaiety that seems ill, or in a sadness so profound. Poor father! I think he's awake. (going to listen) No, he's still dreaming of his daughters. Doubtless, they will not forget that today is their father's birthday. As for me, I thought of it. And our bouquets are there awaiting his awakening. Ah, here's Mr. Rastignac.

**RASTIGNAC:** Hello, my dear Victorine, hello, my friend.

**VICTORINE:** What a triumphant air you have this morning.

**RASTIGNAC:** That's because I am bringing you excellent news! Your troubles are over. No more night work, no more worrying for the good Mr. Goriot. The Count de Restaud, his son-in-law is listening to reason.

**VICTORINE:** You've seen him?

**RASTIGNAC:** This morning.

**VICTORINE:** He received you?

**RASTIGNAC:** I waited at the gates of his mansion at the moment his carriage was leaving. I made a signal to the coachman to stop and presented myself at the carriage door. He recognized me, turned pale. "It's you again, sir," he said to me, haughtily. "It's me again, sir," I replied with assurance, "and it will always be me, so long as you have not repaired the most atrocious injustice. You can close the gates of your mansion to me, but the streets belong to everyone, and even were you to order your coachman to ride over my body, I will force you to listen to me." "But finally, what do you want?" "Bread for your father," I screamed out. "Lower," he said, "and get in my carriage." I didn't make him say it twice; I placed myself beside him and then I was speaking with an eloquence that one has only once in one's lifetime. "Count, you can no longer permit a poor girl to work night and day, to support your father-in-law. I call on your heart, on your soul! Think, that if Victorine, who is already weak and ill, should fail him, this wretched old man, who gave you two millions will have only public charity." "Stop, sir," he screamed, "I was unaware that Mr. Goriot was reduced to such horrible extremity. I am going to work on his behalf. I was going to the minister, but I will go in all haste to my brother-in-law to concert with him. Run. Run bring this news to Mr. Goriot, and renew to him my profound respect, I beg you." Then, I got out of the carriage, and got on the tricycle, and here I am. I am so happy.

**VICTORINE:** But, why did you speak to him of me? We had made Mr. Goriot think that the daughters he hasn't seen, since they carried off the last debris of his fortune, were furnishing him with all that was necessary. This secret was between the two of us. Judge what new pain for this poor father, if by some indiscretion, he came to know—

**RASTIGNAC:** Don't worry. They won't be boasting of what you have done for him. So, you see, our future is going to change, and you will no longer refuse to become my wife.

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**VICTORINE:** We will think about that when our old friend passes from us.

**RASTIGNAC:** I understand you. You are afraid of placing yourself in a false position because, once married, you may find yourself between folks who are ending and folks who are beginning.

**VICTORINE:** I don't understand you.

**RASTIGNAC:** Carefully follow my thought. (singing)

You must share your pleasure  
But understand the difference.  
An old geezer, he's memory,  
A young child, he's hope.  
So, if hymen should unite us  
To the object of our fidelity  
Begin to occupy its leisure  
With cares one must recall  
When you must cradle hope.

(There is a ringing.)

**RASTIGNAC:** Who's coming there? It's Vautrin. He's discovered our refuge.

**VAUTRIN:** (entering and stopping in the middle of the stage) Well, excuse me. You are nice; you left without leaving your address, and here it is, three months I've been searching for you. I went to Goriot's daughters; impossible to see them. As I went to speak to them about their father, they wouldn't receive me. If I hadn't recalled Mr. Richard, the notary, I would still be beating the pavement.

**RASTIGNAC:** What do you want with us, sir?

**VAUTRIN:** What do I want? I came to see if I may obtain your last word on the matter in question. Because, my cherub, if you haven't changed your opinion in that regard, I've found a replacement for you.

**VICTORINE:** A replacement?

**VAUTRIN:** A pretty little man of twenty, all blond and rosy. An ideal being, possessing all the qualities. First rate at billiards, and who will carry off the heart of a woman for you as I am making a bank shot. With him, business is certain. I am aware of this, but despite your ingratitude, I wanted to give you the preference. Decide, or I will unleash the blond.

**RASTIGNAC:** Eh! Sir are you going to pursue me endlessly with this folly?

**VAUTRIN:** Folly? Thanks! To search for you for three months, for you to utter such civilities. But, I make Victorine our judge. I say ours, because she belongs to me since I brought her here. I won't tell you from where, and placed her in the home of Papa Goriot, after I'd raised her to be the delight of my gray hair.

**VICTORINE:** Sir, my heart will retain an eternal gratitude for what you did for me by placing me in the home of Mr. Goriot.

**VAUTRIN:** An eternal gratitude. I don't ask that much. Just help me prove to Mr. Rastignac that he is wrong to refuse the wife I am offering him. Young, pretty, five hundred thousand francs cash for a dowry, and virtues of the greatest worth.

**VICTORINE:** What, Mr. Rastignac, for me, you would have refused?

**RASTIGNAC:** Ah, for you, Victorine, I would refuse an empire, especially on the conditions. But, I don't have that merit here. I never believed Mr. Vautrin's talk was serious.

**VAUTRIN:** Now, that's what it is to have genius. One is not understood. As if folks of my stamp had need to lie. If I wanted to convince you, a word would suffice.

**RASTIGNAC:** What is it? Here's Mr. Goriot.

**VAUTRIN:** Poor cat. Pay attention to what I am telling you.

**VICTORINE:** Mr. Vautrin, let's stop this joking. (to Rastignac) Let's not forget that today is his birthday. Here are our bouquets.

(Victorine takes the bouquets she has on a bench. Meanwhile Papa Goriot emerges from the pavillion.)

**GORIOT:** Hello, my friends, hello. I slept late this morning. But I'm not annoyed, for I had dreams. Oh my, what dreams.

**RASTIGNAC:** (giving him his bouquet) Were you dreaming of this?

**GORIOT:** Oh.

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**VICTORINE:** And this?

**GORIOT:** Oh.

**VAUTRIN:** And this other one? (pulling an enormous bouquet from under his hat)

**GORIOT:** Who's this gentleman?

**VAUTRIN:** Eh! What! You don't recognize me, Papa Goriot. It's Vautrin.

**GORIOT:** Ah, it's the Chevalier Vautrin. Thanks, thanks. You haven't forgotten me. But why these bouquets?

**VICTORINE:** Isn't today Saint Victor's day?

**VAUTRIN:** Yes, it's Saint Victor's. With a bottle of cognac. Oh, old patriarch, I give you my blessing. Long live Papa Goriot. And on that, I reiterate, to all three, my friendly greeting, and I'm going to busy myself with your affairs. (low to Rastignac) You know what I mean. I will come back in an hour to get your reply. That's all I'm telling you. (leaves, twirling his cane)

**GORIOT:** Today's my birthday and my daughters are not here.

**VICTORINE:** They will come, my friend, they will come. I am sure of it.

**RASTIGNAC:** (aside) I don't believe it.

**GORIOT:** Yes, yes, they will come. My darlings won't be able to forget their father's birthday. They've never failed since their childhood, except last year. As for me, I won't think about it any more, because for the last several days I've had a great plan in mind.

**VICTORINE:** A great plan!

**RASTIGNAC:** What's that?

**GORIOT:** (distractedly) I'm going to rebuild my fortune, amass more millions—for them, for you, for me. (he stops, mouth wide open as if satisfied with what he said)

**RASTIGNAC:** (low to Victorine) He's fallen back into those wanderings which so often afflict us.

**GORIOT:** My friends, I don't have any secrets from you. I must tell you what I've done. I've written to the King.

**RASTIGNAC AND VICTORINE:** To the King!

**GORIOT:** (pulling a paper from his pocket.) To the King. Listen. (reading) "Milord, Victor Goriot, father-in-law to the Count de Restaud and the Baron de Nucingen, has the honor to ask of Your Majesty, the Cross of Honor, as former envoy to the Republic of Genoa, and moreover, he solicits your justice, being at the moment, resuming his commercial activity—as Pasta-Maker to the King."

**VICTORINE:** Ah, my God!—

**GORIOT:** (continuing to read) "By doing this, Sire, you will fulfill the wishes of an honest man and his sons-in-law, the Count de Restaud and the Baron de Nucingen, who will be very happy to see their father-in-law decorated. I have the honor to salute you, with consideration, Sire. Signed Goriot, former ambassador and Pasta-Maker to the French Republic, one and indivisible."

**RASTIGNAC:** (aside) Poor friend!

**GORIOT:** Huh! What do you say to that?

**RASTIGNAC:** (to Victorine) Happily, the petition won't reach its address.

**GORIOT:** It was sent, the petition—yesterday, when you weren't here. The attendant of the sanitarium copied it for me, in print like copy, and put it in the post.

**VICTORINE:** (aside) Oh, my heart's broken.

**GORIOT:** Ah, no more chagrin! The Count and the Baron will no longer blush for their father-in-law. I am going to be a Chevalier. And in five years, I am capable of giving yet another million to each of my daughters! Yes, yes, I intend to work. It's so hard for a father to be at the expense of his children. What my children send me, they deduct from their pleasures. I don't want any more of that. It's for me to give them dresses of silver, even of gold, if they desire them. I will work. I will work. (good-naturedly) I'm going to put my shoulder to the wheel right away. (ringing at the exterior door) Ah! Ah! I am sure that's my daughters.

**VICTORINE** (who's gone to the door) It's the Count de Restaud.

**RASTIGNAC:** Ah! He kept his word to me.

**GORIOT:** The Count de Restaud. I don't wish to see him. I am not yet decorated. (goes into the pavillion)

**COUNT:** (entering) Ah, sir, I am very glad to see you here. I salute you, Miss.

**VICTORINE:** (aside) What a disdainful look.

PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**RASTIGNAC:** (with nobility) This action, Count, entirely reconciles me with you.

**COUNT:** I fulfilled my promise. But, you didn't tell me that Mr. Goriot had entirely lost his reason.

**RASTIGNAC:** Who told you that?

**COUNT:** Eh! By Jove, he proved it by the greatest act of folly. Is it you, sir, who dictated this petition for him? (gives him a writing)

**RASTIGNAC:** Great God! This is the petition he just read to us.

**VICTORINE:** Then it's really true.

**RASTIGNAC:** Sir, the style of this request is enough to tell you, I was unaware of it.

**COUNT:** I believe you. But, judge my embarrassment and confusion when, this morning, the Minister delivered this strange petition to me. It could have compromised me, for ridicule is mortal in court and city. Happily, the lunacy of Mr. Goriot is established and the Minister laughed, as did I, at this curiosity. But you grasp, sir, that we must change our dispositions, because of the desperate condition of our father-in-law.

**RASTIGNAC:** Count, I think that you are exaggerating Mr. Goriot's condition. The tenderness of his daughters, the care of his friends, an honest competency, and country air will render him calm and reasonable.

**COUNT:** Perhaps, in but the mental condition he finds himself in, his daughters must fear to see him again. They accompanied us to give him birthday wishes. They are nearby, but as they are weak, ill, I am opposed to this interview. Possibly, he won't even recognize them.

**RASTIGNAC:** To the point, Count, to the point. What have you done for this old man?

**COUNT:** His family cannot suffer his being any longer at the expense of Miss Victorine.

**VICTORINE:** Much lower, sir. Oh, mercy, much lower.

**COUNT:** Mr. Goriot is going to leave this sanitarium. In an hour, they'll come to get him. At my solicitation, the Minister deigned to grant me a place for him.

**RASTIGNAC AND VICTORINE:** A place?

**COUNT:** In the Royal house of Bicetre.

**GORIOT:** (in the pavillion, with a terrible scream) Bicetre!

**VICTORINE:** He heard everything.

**GORIOT:** (coming out violently) Bicetre! By you! By you, Bicetre! Rogues! Murderers! Assassins! Bicetre! And my daughters are not there to defend me, to form a rampart around my body. Then, they also said, like these infamous ones, "Bicetre for our father!"

**COUNT:** Sir, you see. His madness is approaching fury.

**RASTIGNAC:** Sir, you make me pity you.

**GORIOT:** Bicetre! Bicetre! I won't go! I have laws on my side. All the fathers, too. And, I can do without anyone, without anyone, do you hear? For, I am rich, I am still rich. Five hundred thousand in Grenoble.

**COUNT:** What do I hear?

**GORIOT:** They weren't for me, but Bicetre!

**RASTIGNAC:** Withdraw, sir.

**GORIOT:** (distracted) Yes, withdraw, for you've put the blood of a tiger in my veins. Withdraw. I am capable of murdering you.

**VICTORINE:** Oh! I will die of sorrow.

**COUNT:** Reassure him, sir. We are going to fix everything. (he leaves)

**RASTIGNAC:** My friend, calm down.

**GORIOT:** Let's leave, let's leave. There's no longer anything keeping me here. And everything calls me down there. As you know, my daughters have abandoned me. That's fine. That must be. I loved them too much, but I still have one yet! A daughter I abandoned. And she will love me.

**VICTORINE:** A daughter! What's he saying?

**GORIOT:** Yes, a daughter that I had to hide from all the world. For here I was, married, married to a woman that I adored. But I was still young, and—

**RASTIGNAC:** Finish, my friend.

**GORIOT:** Let's leave! Oh! Let's leave for Grenoble. We are going to avenge this child for the rigors of the law that repulsed her. The money that I had there was for her! We will see if that one will refuse bread to her father. Oh! From pity, Let's leave for Grenoble.



PERE GORIOT (A Drama Vaudeville)

**VAUTRIN:** (entering, stopping at the back.) Grenoble! They are going to find out everything.

**GORIOT:** Let's go meet the only daughter remaining to me.

**VAUTRIN:** (coming forward) Stop, Papa Goriot! And you, my friends, you won't be going to Grenoble to seek this beloved child, because this beloved child—

**ALL:** Well?

**VAUTRIN:** Is Victorine!

**GORIOT:** Victorine?

**VICTORINE:** (throwing herself in his arms) My father!

(They embrace.)

**VAUTRIN:** I stole her and did a good deed. That's comical.

**GORIOT:** Ah, don't deceive me. Don't deceive me, for I would die of it.

**VAUTRIN:** And here is the proof. This act, deposited at the Notary where I was working, and that I kept for good reason.

**GORIOT:** (after having read it) Yes! Yes! I ought to have suspected it. You are my daughter, my soul, my life. (weeping) Oh! Oh! My God! You owe me this!

**VICTORINE:** Oh! How happy I am now.

**GORIOT:** My daughter. (to Rastignac) My son! My children! Oh! I'm afraid of dying now. (ringing outside) Great God! They're coming to get me, perhaps.

**RASTIGNAC:** Those are your sons—in law and your daughters. They've learned everything. They've been to the notary.

**GORIOT:** Protect me! Protect me!

(The Count, the Baron, Delphine, and Anastasia enter, carrying very large bouquets.)

**DELPHINE AND ANASTASIA:** Father!

**GORIOT:** Who are you?

**ANASTASIA:** You can't not know your children.

**GORIOT:** My children. (hugging Victorine and Rastignac) These are my children.

**COUNT:** Could he have regained his reason?

**GORIOT:** My reason, yes! I've regained everything; my reason, my fortune, even a daughter. (solemnly) Here she is. The only one who dedicated her days and her nights to mem while her sisters went dancing. Now I know only her.

**ANASTASIA AND DELPHINE:** Father—

**GORIOT:** Withdraw.

**VICTORINE:** Let yourself be appeased.

**ANASTASIA AND DELPHINE:** From pity.

**GORIOT:** Leave! The gates of Bicetre separate us forever.

(Delphine and Anastasia fall to their knees. Victorine and Rastignac fling themselves into Goriot's arms. General tumult.)

FREEZE FRAME

CURTAIN