

THE ROBBER

By Guy de Maupassant

The artist placed himself astride his chair and said:

Well, we had dined that evening with Sorieul. Poor fellow! He is now dead. There were only three of us—Sorieul, Le Poittevin and myself. Sorieul was the wildest of us all, and to say we had dined at his house signifies we were all drunk.

Le Poittevin alone retained his senses—a little cloudy, it is true; still he knew what he was doing. Ah, we were young in those days!

Lying on the carpet in a little room adjoining the atelier, we discussed in the most extravagant manner all kinds of improbable things.

Sorieul, flat on his back, his feet perched on the back of a chair, talked about battles and the uniforms worn during the empire. Suddenly getting up, he went to a large wardrobe and took down a complete suit of hussar uniform, dressed himself in it, then tried to persuade Le Poittevin to costume himself as a grenadier.

When he resisted, we seized him, undressed him and forced him into an immense uniform which completely swallowed him up.

I disguised myself as a cuirassier, and Sorieul made us execute some very complicated maneuvers.

Then he exclaimed, "As we are now soldiers, we must drink like soldiers!"

A punch was lighted, swallowed. Again and again the flames rose up from the bowl of rum. We sang the old songs which the troopers of the Grand Army sang in ancient times.

Suddenly Le Poittevin, who in spite of all this was still master of himself, made us a sign to be silent. After listening a moment he said in a low voice, "I am sure I hear some one walking in the atelier!"

Sorieul got up as well as he could and cried out: "A robber! What luck!" and began to trol the "Marschallaise," "To arms! To arms, ye brave!"

We dashed to a panoply of arms and equipped ourselves according to our uniforms. I had a kind of musket, with a saber, Le Poittevin a gigantic gun with a bayonet; Sorieul, not finding what he wanted, seized a horse pistol, which he stuck in his belt, and a boarding ax, which he wildly brandished. Then, cautiously opening the door of the atelier, the army entered the suspected territory.

When we were in the midst of this vast room, incumbered with easels, pictures and strange, unexpected objects of furniture, Sorieul called a halt and said: "I constitute myself general. Let us hold a council of war. You cuirassiers go and cut off the retreat of the enemy—that is, lock the door. You grenadiers will be my escort."

I executed the commanded movement, then joined the troop that formed the reconnoitering party.

I was searching behind a great screen, a lighted candle in my hand, when a furious noise burst forth. I darted out to find Le Poittevin had stuck his bayonet into the breast of a lay figure, and Sorieul was trying to cut off the head with his ax.

The mistake being recognized, the general commanded, "Be more prudent!" And again we commenced operations.

For twenty minutes at least we ransacked every corner and crevice of the atelier without success. At last Le Poittevin thought of opening a large closet. It was dark and deep. I thrust in my arm, holding the light, but quickly recoiled. A man—a living, breathing man—was there, looking at me!

I immediately shut the door and secured it by two turns of the key. Then we held a new council of war.

Opinions were very much divided. Sorieul wanted to smoke out the robber, Le Poittevin to take him by famine. I proposed to blow him up with powder.

The advice of Le Poittevin prevailed. While he mounted guard with his gigantic gun we ran off for the remainder of the punch and our pipes, when we installed ourselves before the locked door and drank to the health of the prisoner.

At the end of half an hour Sorieul said: "All the same, I would like to see him nearer. Suppose we take him by force?"

I cried, "Bravo!" Each one dashed to his arms. The closet door was opened. Sorieul, cocking his pistol, which was not loaded, was the first to rush in. We followed, howling and yelling. It was an awful scrimmage in the dark, and after five minutes of frightful struggling we brought out an old, dirty, ragged looking beggar with long white hair.

We bound him hand and foot and proceeded to question him. He would not answer a word. Then Sorieul, full of dignified trunkness, said, "We must try this man and pass sentence upon him." I was so drunk the proposition seemed perfectly natural to me. Le Poittevin was charged with the defense and I to sustain the accusation. He was condemned to death; only one dissenting voice, that of his defender. We were going to execute the sentence when a serious

scruple came to Sorieul. He said: "This man ought not to die without the consolation of religion. Some one must go for a priest."

I objected; said it was too late. Then Sorieul proposed that I should fill that office, and I exhorted the criminal to unburden his sins into my bosom.

The poor old wretch had been rolling his frightened eyes for about five minutes, no doubt wondering what kind of madmen he had fallen into the hands of. He will laugh when I tell you Sorieul forced him down upon his knees, saying, "Confess to this gentleman, for thy last hour has come."

Horribly frightened, the old scoundrel began to cry, "Help! Help!" with such strength and vigor we were forced to gag him for fear he would arouse the neighbors. Then he rolled over the floor, turning, twisting, upsetting the easels, pictures, canvases, until Sorieul got out of patience and angrily exclaimed, "Come, let us finish him!" With that he put his pistol to the head of the miserable wretch and pulled the trigger.

Carried away by his example, I fired in my turn. My musket was an old flintlock and sent forth a tiny spark, to my great surprise.

Then Le Poittevin said in grave tones, "Have we the right to kill this man?"

Sorieul in great astonishment cried out, "Certainly, when we have condemned him to death!"

"But," continued Le Poittevin, "they don't shoot civilians. They are always hanged. We must take this one to the police station."

This argument appeared conclusive.

We picked up the old fellow—he would not walk a step—bound him securely to a plank taken from the model table and carried him, Le Poittevin at the head, I at the foot, while Sorieul, armed to the teeth, closed the line of march.

When we reached the station house, the sentinel arrested us. The chief of police was sent for. He knew us well, nearly every day witnessing some of our jokes, pranks and unheard-of capers. He refused to receive our prisoner.

Sorieul insisted. Then the officer severely invited us to return home and make no more noise.

The troop again took up the line of march and returned to the atelier.

"What are we going to do with this old robber?" I asked.

Le Poittevin, touched with tender pity, declared he looked terribly exhausted. Truly the old fellow had an agonizing appearance, gagged, tied hand and foot and securely bound to his plank.

I was taken in my turn with violent pity. I took off his gag and said, "Well, my poor old man, how do you feel now?" He groaned, "In the name of God, I've had enough!"

Then Sorieul became affectionately paternal. He untied him, placed him in an armchair, fondled him, called him "thee" and "thou," and to comfort him we all three ran off to make him a fresh punch. The old scamp, tranquilly seated in his armchair, coolly regarded us.

When the punch was ready, we touched glasses with him, wishing him long life and prosperity.

Our prisoner cranked as much as a regiment, and when daylight appeared he got up and said, "I am sorry to leave you, gentlemen, but I must go."

We were desolate, heartbroken, begged him to stay, but he would remain no longer. Then we followed him to the door and shook hands with him. Sorieul lighted him through the vestibule and called out: "Take care, my old friend; there's a bad step there! Don't fall!"

A hearty laugh followed this ridiculous story of the old artist, who got up, lighted his pipe and, standing in front of us, added:

"The drollest part of my story, gentlemen, is this: Every word of it is true!"

An Army Almanac. Some years ago during one of its Egyptian campaigns the British army was suddenly startled by a total eclipse of the sun, for which the troops were not prepared. To prevent the possibility of another such surprise, which might have had grave consequences, the British war office decided to have an almanac regularly produced for the army's guidance. Such an almanac has been published regularly since that time.

The Twelfth Juror. An anecdote of the legal fraternity is to the effect that when trying a case at York Mr. Justice Gould noticed after two hours had gone by there were only eleven jurors in the box.

"Where is the twelfth?" he asked. "Please your lord," said one of the eleven, "he is gone home on some business, but he has left his verdict with me."—London Tit-Bits.

WHAT A MAN LIKES.

Some Suggestions That Wives May or May Not Adopt.

A writer gives the following idea of the qualities a man likes in a wife, presumably his own wife.

However, do not make an attempt to follow the rules too closely. There seems to be an undercurrent of satire in the words.

"A man likes his wife to be cheerful. He does not always concern himself very particularly about the means to make and keep her so, but he disapproves utterly of a sad or pensive face.

"He may have cut her to the quick with some bitter word before he leaves home in the morning, but he is extremely annoyed if he perceives on returning any signs of the wound he has inflicted.

"A man hits hard, but he never expects to see a bruise. He has forgotten himself for administering the blow. Why should not the recipient be equally quick about forgetting it?"

"A man likes his wife to be intelligent, quite sufficiently so to be able to conduct the concerns of life and to appreciate his own intellectual parts and enjoy stray ebullitions of his wit and humor.

"She must applaud these with discrimination and in that delicate manner which infers no surprise at his possessing brilliancy.

"But he is exasperated should she be too intelligent. His depths are to be inviolate, but he likes to sound her shallows, and so well does she know this that she often assumes a shallowness when she has it not."—Pittsburg Press.

Did Not Seem Reasonable. A woman from some rural district of New England was taken to visit an art museum. In one of the rooms the attendant pointed out a collection of beautiful old vases dug up at Herculaneum.

"What?" exclaimed the woman. "Dug up?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"What? Out of the ground?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Just as they are now?"

"Oh, they've been cleaned up a bit, but they were found about as you see them."

With an incredulous shake of the head, the woman turned to her companion and said in a whisper that was loud enough for the bystanders to hear:

"He may say what he likes. I don't believe they ever dug up ready made pots out of the ground."

Silly Creatures. They were neither of them brilliant scholars, but they liked to move with the times as regards their knowledge of current events, so the daily newspaper was regularly delivered at their humble domicile, and it was Jennie's duty to read out during breakfast time all the most interesting items of the day.

One morning after wading through the latest intelligence from the front she turned to another page of the paper and said:

"Herbie, it says here that another octogenarian's dead. What's an octogenarian?"

"Well, I don't quite know what they are, but they must be very sickly creatures. You never hear of them but they're dying."—London Answers.

A Story of Cecil Rhodes. Once at a big dinner which Cecil Rhodes gave at Groote Schuur, where all the servants were men, a charming woman came down in a tea gown which was a "dream," but which was cut high up to the wearer's diamond clasped throat. Cecil Rhodes, who was orthodox in his notions of dress, looked at the tea gown, but said nothing. Next morning, however, he sent his secretary to the woman of the high necked gown with this message: "I like my guests to dine in evening dress and not in compromise, however charming."

Wanted Music. "As I hear your piano very frequently, Mrs. Fortissimo, I suppose that you are up on musical matters."

"Certainly, Mr. Crusty."

"Then, do you know who was playing when the poet wrote, 'Music hath charms'?"

"I do not. But why?"

HAIR TRANSPLANTING.

The Way the Operation is Performed by Chinese Operators.

Chinese physiognomists say the eyebrows and whiskers of a man are just as essential in their relations to his success in life as his other qualifications. If the eyebrows are feeble or the whiskers are sickly, his luck will be thin and his health poor. Therefore, to stop the train of bad luck which nature unfortunately has ordained for such a man, he orders his eyebrows changed or replanted by a hair planting professor.

This is done by first carefully pulling out the rebellious or unlucky hairs in the eyebrows. The next operation is to select a spot of hair on the neck of the patient or behind his ears that would suit for a fine eyebrow and reduce these hairs to the right length.

A pair of sharp pinchers is picked up with the left hand, and, selecting a suitably sized hair, the operator jorks it out by the root, and with a needlelike instrument in the right hand he pierces a minute hole in the skin of the bald eyebrow in a slanting direction, and while the point of the instrument is still on the edge of the hole the root of the pulled up hair is carefully inserted.

If blood oozes out of it before the hair is planted the hole will not be used on that day for fear of inflammation and not sufficient nutriment for the hair to take proper root. The operation is repeated till every hair in the eyebrows is replaced.

The patient is said to experience pain in the eyebrows for about twenty-four hours, after which he is all right. The professor charges more for planting eyebrows than whiskers because of the many varied degrees of slanting each hair to make the eyebrows look natural to the man or to suit the ideas of the physiognomist.—New York Mail and Express.

A Noble Ambition. A graduate of West Point who is now an attaché of the American embassy at Paris was formerly instructor in the Military academy. On one occasion, says the Detroit Free Press, he was assigned to show the visiting parents of a cadet around the school.

After a tour of the post they joined the crowd assembled to witness evening parade, always an imposing spectacle. The march past aroused the mother of the cadet to a high pitch of enthusiasm and ambition for her son.

"Ah, sir," she exclaimed, turning to their escort—"ah, sir, I shall not be happy until my boy gets that proud position and leads 'em all!" And she pointed in admiration to the drum major.

More Important. A certain peer of days gone by was called out for some offense by another noble lord and promptly responded to the challenge. On arriving home again after the duel his lordship gave a guinea to the coachman who had driven him to and from the ground.

The driver appears to have been an exceptionally honest, simple man. He was surprised by the largeness of the sum presented and said:

"My lord, I only took you to"—

"Yes, yes, I know that," was the reply, "but the guinea is for bringing me back."

A Marshal's Retort. The Marshal de Bassompierre was employed by Henry IV. on several embassies. He once told the king that when he went as ambassador to Spain he rode into Madrid on the most beautiful mule he had ever seen, which had been sent by the Spanish monarch for his special use.

"Ha, ha! What a comical sight!" laughed out the boisterous king. "An ass upon a mule!"

"Yes, sire," said Bassompierre coolly, "I represented your majesty."

Music and Animals. An eminent violinist, Herr Baker, tested the sensitiveness to music of each of the animals in the zoological gardens of Germany. The influence of the violin was the greatest on the puma, whose moods changed rapidly as the nature of the music changed, becoming very much excited and nervous when quicksteps were played. Wolves showed an appreciative interest; lions and hyenas were terrified; leopards were unconcerned and monkeys curious.

The Surface of Gold. The surface of any given quantity of gold, according to the best authorities, may be extended by the hammer 310,814 times. The thickness of the metal thus extended appears to be no more than the five hundred and sixty-six thousand and twentieth part of an inch. Eight ounces of this wonderful metal would gild a silver wire of sufficient length to extend entirely around the globe.

Mean Man. The Messenger Boy—Well, how d'yer like mercantile life?

The Office Boy—Aw, de boss don't give me any encouragement.

The Messenger Boy—How's dat?

The Office Boy—Why, he never gives me a look when I'm workin', but just as soon as I start ter loaf a bit he's Johnny on de spot wit' his eagle eye.—Puck.

Do you want a sound liver, vigorous digestion, strong healthy kidneys, regularity in the bowels? Take Prickly Ash Bitters. It has the medical properties that will produce this result.—Evans Pharmacy.

A sailor isn't necessarily a pugilist because he boxes the compass.

Going into politics means going out of everything else.

FORCE OF VIBRATION.

Buildings of Stone Have Been Damaged by Violin Playing.

"What force least expected does the greatest damage to buildings?" is a question which a representative of the Indianapolis News asked a well known architect. The architect's answer may be a surprise to those who do not understand that it is the regularity of vibration that makes it powerful.

"It is difficult to tell," replied the architect, "but I will venture to say that you would never expect violin playing to injure the walls of a building. Yet it certainly does. There have been instances when the walls of stone and brick structures have been seriously damaged by the vibrations from a violin. Of course these cases are unusual, but the facts are established.

"The vibrations of a violin are really serious in their unseen, unbounded force, and when they come with regularity they exercise an influence upon structures of brick, stone or iron. Of course it takes continuous playing for many years to loosen masonry or to make iron brittle, but it will do it in time.

"I have often thought of what the result might be if a man would stand at the bottom of a nineteenth story light well on the first floor of the great Masonic temple in Chicago and play there continuously. The result could be more easily seen there than almost anywhere else because the vibration gathers force as it sweeps upward.

"A man can feel the vibrations of a violin on an ironclad ocean vessel and at the same time be unable to hear the music. It is the regularity which means so much. Like the constant dripping of water which wears away a stone, the incessant vibration of the violin makes its way to the walls and attacks their solidity."

The Banana of Malayan Origin. The banana goes back to the earliest days. Alexander's soldiers, as Pliny says, joined the sages of India seated in its shade and partaking of its delicious fruits; hence the name sapientium, given the plant, which likewise bears the name of Jupiter's fair daughter, Musa. Now, it has been shown that the banana is of Malayan origin. How did it get to India and South America and Mexico? The feet of birds have borne seed a full 10,000 miles, while the coconut has floated well nigh the world around in the great ocean currents. But the cultivated banana has no seeds, nor has it a casing like the globular coconut to float it around over the waters. Then it must have been carried by man.

A Blinded Eye. A story is told of a Ceylon planter who wanted to go away for a day's shooting. Approaching his men, he said, "Although I myself will be absent, yet I shall leave one of my eyes to see that you do your work." And, to the surprise of the natives, he took out his glass eye, placed it on the stump of a tree and left. For some time the natives worked like elephants, but at last one of them, seizing his tin in which he carried his food, approached the tree and placed it over the eye. As soon as they saw that they were not being watched they all lay down and slept peacefully until sunset.

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Never doubt a girl's veracity when she says she can't sing. It's ten to one she can't.

Traits of a Soldier.

What label, for instance, shall we put on the esprit which permits a line of soldiers advancing under a devastating fire to yell with laughter and delight and throw their helmets at a hare springing up before them, as a row of beaters does in a covert? Forgotten the enemy and the terrible position ahead, forgotten friends falling along-side or lying in ones and twos over the course behind, remembered only the little furry fugitive bobbing like a brown ball amid the spits of dust of the bullets, pursued by a stentorian roar as kindly as the "Run, puss!" of the gentle old sportsman at Altair! I have seen that once, but several times, and hundreds will bear me witness. So, too, with a loose and a runaway horse on the battlefield, he would delay the finest attack ever conceived by genius, so completely would his exciting career absorb the attention of every soldier within sight; so, too, would a curious snake in the grass, or an apple-laden tree, or anything trivial and unconnected with the work in hand.—London Spectator.

Stops the Cough and Works on the Cold. Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets cure a cold in one day. No cure, No Pay. Price 25 cents.

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—Wise is the individual who is sensible as to his own follies.

—It is better to be slandered by some than to be praised by others.

Parties owing me either by Note or Account will call in and settle same without sending to see you or writing you again, as I must have same settled at once. I can't do business on as long time as you are taking; so avail yourself and come in at once and save expense.

Respectfully, JOHN T. BURRIS.

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FOLEY'S KIDNEY CURE is a Guaranteed Remedy or money refunded. Contains remedies recognized by eminent physicians as the best for Kidney and Bladder troubles. PRICE 50c. and \$1.00. SOLD BY EVANS' PHARMACY.

Foley's Honey and Tar cures colds, prevents pneumonia.

S. G. BRUCE, DENTIST. OVER D. C. Brown & Bro's. Store, on South Main Street. I have 25 years experience in my profession, and will be pleased to work for any who want Plates made, Filling done, and I make a specialty of Extracting Teeth without pain and with no after pain. Jan 23, 1901

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In your blood? Physicians call it malarial germ. It can be seen changing red blood yellow under a microscope. It works day and night. First, it turns your complexion yellow. Chills, aching sensations creep down your back bone. You feel weak and worthless.

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