

this seething whirlpool of Paris, churned by the strife of innumerable interests. His thoughts went back to the banks of his Charente: a craving for happiness and home awoke in him; and with the craving, came one of the sudden febrile bursts of energy which half-feminine natures like his mistake for strength. He would not give up until he had poured out his heart to David Séchard, and taken counsel of the three good angels still left to him on earth.

As he lounged along, he caught sight of Bérénice—Bérénice in her Sunday clothes, speaking to a stranger at the corner of the Rue de la Lune and the filthy Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, where she had taken her stand.

“What are you doing?” asked Lucien, dismayed by a sudden suspicion.

“Here are your twenty francs,” said the girl, slipping four five-franc pieces into the poet’s hand. “They may cost dear yet; but you can go.” and she had fled before Lucien could see the way she went; for, in justice to him, it must be said that the money burned his hand, he wanted to return it, but he was forced to keep it as the final brand set upon him by life in Paris.