



Vendetta

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When the painter and Ginevra thought themselves alone, Servin rapped in a peculiar manner on the door of the dark garret, which turned at once on its rusty and creaking hinges. Ginevra then saw a tall and well-made young man, whose Imperial uniform set her heart to beating. The officer had one arm in a sling.

Vendetta Details

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From Reader Review Vendetta for online ebook

Bethan says

A gently lyrical novella. At first it seemed melodramatic and as if it could be unbelievable but as the introduction to this edition illustrates, there were events in Balzac's family that it could have been based on, so it does not actually seem unbelievable then and makes for good food for thought, for it seems to be a cautionary story about parental pride and obstinacy in rejecting their daughter's choice of spouse. Most people know of people who do not like their offspring's choice of partner, whether due to a personal dislike, they are not of a good enough family background, are of the same sex, a different race, etc., so it seems relevant to me.

Since the young lovers were still in their honeymoon period, it is conceivable that they were as angelic as Balzac seems to portray them as, the simplicity of which, along with the portrayal of the parents that felt a little stock at times, means that I cannot give it more than three stars. Nevertheless, I found myself carried by a sense of quiet horror at the way that the young couple drifted along an unravelling train to the end.

James F says

Another early story of Balzac, this is a tragic love story about two Corsicans in Paris in 1819; if *Le Père Goriot* was somewhat based on *King Lear*, the story here is based on *Romeo and Juliet*. The background is the miseries of ex-Bonapartists under the Restoration; it's strange, considering that Balzac described himself as a Royalist, that the Royalist characters in the novels I have read so far are all superficial or corrupt, and the heroes and heroines are all either Republicans or Bonapartists.

Laura says

Opening lines:

En 1800, vers la fin du mois d'octobre, un étranger, suivi d'une femme et d'une petite fille, arriva devant les Tuileries à Paris, et se tint assez longtemps auprès des décombres d'une maison récemment démolie, à l'endroit où s'élève aujourd'hui l'aile commencée qui devait unir le château de Catherine de Médicis au Louvre des Valois.

Location 2967:

— Faites savoir à Bonaparte que Bartholoméo di Piombo voudrait lui parler, dit l'Italien au capitaine de service.

Location 3125:

Le second retour des Bourbons venait de troubler bien des amitiés qui avaient résisté au mouvement de la première restauration. En ce moment les familles étaient presque toutes divisées d'opinion, et le fanatisme politique renouvelait plusieurs de ces déplorables scènes qui, aux époques de guerre civile ou religieuse, souillent l'histoire de tous les pays. Les enfants, les jeunes filles, les vieillards partageaient la fièvre monarchique à laquelle le gouvernement était en proie. La discorde se glissait sous tous les toits, et la défiance teignait de ses sombres couleurs les actions et les discours les plus intimes.

From Wikipedia

La Vendetta (The Vendetta) is a novel by the French writer Honoré de Balzac. It is the eighth of the Scènes de la vie privée (Scenes of Private Life) in La Comédie humaine. The novel was first published in 1830 by Mame et Delaunay-Vallée. In 1842 it appeared in the first Furne edition of La Comédie humaine. La Vendetta was the fourth work in Volume 1, making it the fourth of the Scènes de la vie privée.[1] Balzac may have been inspired to write La Vendetta by Prosper Mérimée, whose novel Mateo Falcone, which was serialized by the Revue de Paris in 1829, also deals with the subject of Corsican vengeance and family honour.

The English version can be found at Gutenberg Project

The original French text at La Bibliothèque électronique du Québec.

3* La maison du Chat-qui-pelote (1830)

3* Le bal de Sceaux (1830)

3* La Bourse (1830)

4* La Vendetta (1830)

Liedzeit says

Das fängt mal vielversprechend an. Ein Korse verschafft sich Zutritt beim 1. Konsul und bittet um Schutz. Er habe gerade im Zuge des guten alten korsischen Brauchtums der Vendetta eine Familie nahezu ausgerottet, die zuvor alle seine Söhne gemeuchelt hatte.

Tatsächlich lebt er fortan im schönen Frankreich, und fünfzehn Jahre später verguckt sich seine verbliebene Tochter in einen verfeimten Napoleonverehrer. Vater sind dagegen. Er möchte im Alter von seiner Tochter gepflegt werden und empfindet es als persönliche Kränkung, dass Tochter neben ihm einen anderen zu lieben glaubt. Tochter ist aber wild entschlossen. Wie man sich denken kann ist der Auserwählte zufällig ein Spross der nahezu ausgerotteten Blutsrachefamilie. Das erleichtert die Sache der Tochter nicht gerade. Sie lässt sich verstoßen und heiratet. Die beiden sind schön glücklich und gelangen beinahe zu bescheidenem Wohlstand, als dann mit Geburt des Sohnes und einer allgemeinen Verschlechterung der wirtschaftlichen Lage das Unglück beginnt. Erst geht der Sohn dann stirbt unsere Heldin Hungers (oder Kummers). Der Mann trägt die Gattin zum Schwiegervater, der gerade drauf und dran war der Tochter zu vergeben und bricht dann auch tot zusammen. Und was jetzt lustig klingt, ist leider ganz und gar ernst gemeint, und ziemlicher Unfug.

Einzig eine komisch gemeinte Notarszene ist ganz nett, und immerhin übt die Tochter ausnahmsweise sogar einen Beruf aus. Sie malt. Kopien, aber immerhin. Nur darum gerade noch 5/10.

Michael Cayley says

A melodramatic novella in which a vendetta between Corsicans blights the love and lives of two young people who were ignorant of it. The work is very readable, but the characterisation is very two-dimensional and this is not Balzac at his best.

Elizabeth (Alaska) says

This is among Balzac's earliest works, making its first appearance in 1830. It's always an adjustment reading him after a steadier diet of relatively recent works. In this case, the beginning was a bit clunkier than usual and I don't know if that is because he had not yet hit his stride as an author, if the translation might have been better, or if I just needed to adjust. I did become accustomed to the style - and in short order, fortunately.

The main characters are Corsicans. The story has a Prologue which explains how they left Corsica after a Vendetta and came to Paris 15 years earlier. The story takes place in 1815 just after the Hundred Days when Napoleon came back from Elba. The introduction in my Complete Works edition says

It is believed by many that Balzac was inspired to write *La Vendetta* by Prosper Mérimée's novel *Mateo Falcone*, which was serialised by the *Revue de Paris* in 1829 and also deals with the subject of Corsican vengeance and family honor.

Balzac is better known for his novels. I'm moving to the position that his stories are just as good and don't require the same time investment. I can expect Balzac's endings to be filled with irony and/or pathos. While I tend to cry easily, Balzac doesn't often touch me so, and I did not expect it with this one. I was unexpectedly touched.

Although it took this slow reader a bit longer, most could finish this in an hour or two at most. It does not reach the quality of my favorite Eugénie Grandet, or even the popular Père Goriot which I did not like as much. Still, it is very good. I may be putting my thumb on the scale when I give it 4 stars, but today I think it falls easily in the mid-point of my 4-star ratings.

Lisa says

This isn't a review; it's from my reading journal notes and it contains spoilers throughout.

I read this short story by Balzac straight after reading a very challenging post-modern book called *The Plains* by Gerald Murnane, (<http://anzlitlovers.wordpress.com/200...>) and it came as a stark contrast which was much easier to read! *Vendetta* is a kind of *Romeo and Juliet* story set in the aftermath of the French Revolution...

The Piombos of Corsica killed a bunch of their rivals in revenge for the Portas killing their son, and then came to live in Paris under Napoleon's protection. All went well till the defeat at Waterloo and then they were in trouble. Ginevra, a beautiful and talented artist, is ostracised by the aristocratic girls in her painting class, but she doesn't notice the insult they paid her by moving her easel to a less favoured part of the studio - because from her new spot she notices a man hidden in a crevice. He turns out to be a supporter of Napoleon, and of course he's handsome and she falls in love with him. Tres romantic, n'est-ce pas?

Even before Ginevra's father meets Luiga, he's opposed to the marriage. He and his wife live a simple life, wholly bound up in each other and he doesn't want Ginevra to leave him. (Quite why he was willing for her to marry suitors sent by Napoleon in the days when he had patronage and power isn't clear). When Papa and Ginevra do meet and he discovers that Luiga is the last-remaining Portas who'd somehow escaped the massacre in Corsica, he is resolute that they will never marry. So Ginevra, as proud and stubborn as her father is, has to marry without his blessing.

At first all goes well. They live comfortably though in debt, by selling Ginevra's copies of pictures and Luiga's handwriting. However fashions change, and their income dried up. Their baby starved to death, and so did Ginevra. As fate (or Balzac) would have it, the old couple have a change of heart and decide to receive Luiga at last. He brings them a lock of Ginevra's hair, and then dies too.

It seems pretty clear that Balzac thought that this type of intergenerational vendetta was stupid and self-defeating!

Jeffrey Green says

I'm a HUGE fan of Balzac, but this book is pretty trivial. The good thing about Balzac is that he doesn't offer a happy end, where all the right couples get married, and the villains get their due. On the positive side, if you can read French, he'll never completely disappoint you. His writing is phenomenal. I plan to continue working my way through La Comedie Humaine, though I doubt that I'll live long enough to read the whole thing.

Britt says

Thank you, Balzac. That was incredibly depressing.

Mariam Universe says

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Το ?σχημο Ρ?ζι Καρολ?να says

Παρ' ?λο που η Satiat χαρακτηρ?ζει τη νουβ?λα με τ?τλο "Η Βεντ?τα" (La Vendetta) ως μελοδραματικ? και ανο?σιο κε?μενο (Μπαλζ?κ ? μαν?α της γραφ?ς σελ. 168) η ιστορ?α παρουσι?ζει ενδιαφ?ρον. Είναι μια ιστορ?α αγ?πης στον απ?ηχο μιας κορσικ?νικης βεντ?τας, στο Παρ?σι των αρχ?ν του 19ου αι?να την εποχ? μετ? την πτ?ση του Ναπολ?οντα Βοναπ?ρτη. Π?ρα απ? το προφαν?ς δραματικ? στοιχε?ο στα χν?ρια του Σαιξπηρικο? Ρωμ?ου και Ιουλι?τας, υπ?ρχει το ?χθος της επιβ?ωσης που γ?νεται αβ?σταχτο, η κατ?βαση ως την απ?λυτη ?νδεια, εκε?νο το ε?δος της φτ?χειας και της εξ?θλ?ωσης που ε?ναι ικαν? να εξοντ?σει τους ανθρ?πους.

Στα 1930, την εποχ? ?που πρωτοδημοσιε?εται το ?ργο αυτ?, ο Balzac καταπι?νεται ολ?να και περισσ?τερο με τη δημοσιογραφ?α προκειμ?νου να επιβι?σει, και γρ?φει κ?ποια ενδιαφ?ροντα ?ρθρα σχετικ? με την ?θλια κατ?σταση που επικρατε? στον εκδοτικ? κ?σμο της εποχ?ς του και την αστ?θεια των καλλιτεχνικ?ν επαγγελμ?των. ?τσι και η ηρω?δα, μια νεαρ? ζωγρ?φος, μπορε? να εργ?ζεται σκληρ?, αλλ? αυτ? δεν της εξασφαλ?ζει το καθημεριν? της ψωμ?. Η Ginevra παρουσι?ζεται μ?σα απ? ?να σαφ?ς ωραιοποιημ?νο πρ?σμα, εξιδανικευμ?νη και ευγενικ?, αλλ? υπ?ρχουν μ?σα της, ωστ?σο, στοιχε?α ρεαλιστικ? που προσδ?νουν στον χαρακτ?ρα της μια

γοητε?α βουτηγμ?νη στην αμε?λικτη πραγματικ?τητα.

Π?νω απ? ?λα ε?ναι μια ιστορ?α που χτ?ζεται γ?ρω απ? το δ?πολο "αγ?πης - μ?σους" και ως τ?τοια ?χει ?ναν χαρακτ?ρα διαχρονικ?. Θα την χαρακτ?ριζα ως ?να πρ?μο διαμαντ?κι. Μ?σα στο ?ργο επικρατε? η βαρι? σκι? εν?ς δυσο?ωνου προαισθ?ματος (ο αναγν?στης απ? τις πρ?τες σελ?δες μπορε? να μαντ?ψει την εξ?λιξη και το τ?λος) κι αυτ?, γιατ? ο συγγραφ?ας εκφρ?ζει την πεπο?θηση πως η κ?θε χαρ? που ?ρχεται στη ζω? εν?ς ανθρ?που πρ?πει μοιρα?α και αναπ?δραστα να εξισοροπηθε? με μια δυστυχ?α. Αυτ? το ε?δος του τρ?μου, σχεδ?ν μεταφυσικο?, απ?ναντι στις αντιξο?τητες της ζω?ς, απηχε? την απαισιοδοξ?α μιας εποχ?ς ?που οι λιγ?τερο προνομιο?χοι αστο?, ζ?ντας χωρ?ς καμ?α κοινωνικ? πρ?νοια, ?ταν υποχρεωμ?νοι να μοχθο?ν χωρ?ς την παραμικρ? δικλε?δα ασφαλε?ας.

Δυο ν?οι ?νθρωποι που ?χουν π?σω τους ?να σκοτειν? παρελθ?ν και ?να αβ?βαιο μ?λλον και μ?νο το παρ?ν της αγ?πης τους για να στηριχθο?ν μ?σα σε μια κοινων?α εχθρικ? ? αδι?φορη. Μια θλιβερ? ιστορ?α με καλοσηματισμ?νους χαρακτ?ρες μ?σα στην οπο?α, εκτ?ς των ?λλων, κ?νει ?να μικρ? π?ρασμα ο συμβολαιογρ?φος Roguin τον οπο?ο ο Balzac θα χρησιμοποιο?σει και σε ?λλα μεταγεν?στερα ?ργα του.

Δι?βασα πως, καθ?ς στα 1930, ο συγγραφ?ας, δεν ε?χε συλλ?βει ακ?μα το μεγαλεπ?βολο σχ?διο της ανθρ?πινης κωμωδ?ας του, ?λες αυτ?ς οι σ?ντομες ιστορ?ες του, ε?ναι κομμ?τια των σκην?ν της ιδιωτικ?ς ζω?ς (Scènes de la vie privée). Αν αυτ? ισχ?ει, πρ?κειται πρ?γματι, παρ? τις ?ποιες αδυναμ?ες του, για ?να αυθεντικ? δρ?μα με σκην?ς απ? την καθημεριν?τητα της εποχ?ς στην οπο?α γρ?φτηκε.

classic reverie says

Having heard the Old Time Radio show "The Weird Circle" portrayal of Balzac's story and being affected by it, I had to read the original. Balzac is supposedly written this with Prosper Merimee's Mateo Falcone in mind, on my to read list too. There is a pretty big difference in the radio shows story and the real but even though the director takes license, I still loved the radio portrayal, which had many difference. First the mother is dead and the father finds out about her daughter's marriage to a Porta and does what he plans. The story is more detailed and an inside to the characters. It is such a great read that it's effect on me as the radio shows version did when I heard it years ago as well as recently.

The weird circle September 12, 1943

<https://www.oldtimeradiodownloads.com...>

Justine says

A beautiful love story, one I really thought I would like this much! A rewriting of Romeo & Juliet with Balzac's powerful writing style. Genuine, passionate, but stereotyped. A great read!

Jonathan says

A little fable with no moral.

H. Will Bashor says

If you would like a glimpse of Balzac's world, this is a great place to start!
