

УДК 811.111(075)
ББК 81.2 Англ-9
Г99

Дизайн обложки А.И. Орловой

Гюго, Виктор.

Г99 Собор Парижской богородицы = Notre-Dame de Paris / В. Гюго; адаптация текста и словарь И.Г. Дубиковской. — Москва: Издательство АСТ, 2020. — 192 с. — (Легко читаем по-английски).
ISBN 978-5-17-117792-8

«Собор Парижской Богородицы» — величайший исторический роман, действие которого происходит в средневековом Париже. Это невероятная драма о цыганской танцовщице Эсмеральде, горбуне Квазимодо и священнике Клоде Фролло.

Книга содержит грамматический комментарий и словарь, облегчающие чтение. Предназначается для продолжающих изучать английский язык высшей ступени (уровень 4 – Upper-Intermediate).

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ISBN 978-5-17-117792-8

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NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS
by Victor Hugo

VOLUME I

BOOK FIRST

Chapter I

THE GRAND HALL

On the sixth of January, 1482, the Parisians awoke to the sound of the bells.

What put the whole population of Paris in commotion, were the two events happening at once: the Epiphany and the Feast of Fools.

On that day, there was to be a bonfire on the Place de Grève, a maypole at the Chapelle de Braque, and a mystery at the Palais de Justice. So the citizens, male and female, having closed their houses and shops, walked from every direction, towards one of the three spots designated.

The people knew that the Flemish ambassadors, who had arrived two days previously, intended to be present at the representation of the mystery, and at the election of the Pope of the Fools, which was also to take place in the grand hall. So it was no easy matter on that day, to force one's way into that grand hall. Thousands of faces were at the windows, the doors, the dormer windows, the roofs, gazing at the palace, gazing at the populace, and asking nothing more; for many Parisians that was enough.

The piece was only to begin at midday. It was very late, no doubt, for a theatrical representation, but it was necessary to suit the convenience of the ambassadors.

Now, the crowd had been waiting since morning. People had been shivering since daybreak before the grand staircase of the palace; some even spent the night across the threshold of the great door, in order to make sure that

they were the first to go in. The crowd grew more dense every moment. People were impatient and weary.

Midday sounded.

Each person arranged himself and assumed his post. Then came a great silence; all necks remained outstretched, all mouths remained open, all glances were directed towards the marble table in the middle. Nothing made its appearance there. All eyes turned to the places reserved for the Flemish envoys. The door remained closed, the platform empty. No one had arrived on time.

On this occasion, it was too much.

They waited one, two, three, five minutes, a quarter of an hour; nothing came. The impatience turned to wrath. "The mystery! The mystery!" they murmured, in hollow voices. Just when the crowd's impatience was about to turn violent, the tapestry of the dressing-room was raised, and a person stepped in. The mere sight of him suddenly stopped the crowd, and changed its wrath into curiosity.

"Silence! silence!"

The person advanced to the edge of the marble table with a vast amount of bows.

Tranquillity had gradually been restored.

"Messieurs and Mesdemoiselles, we shall have the honor of declaiming and representing, before his eminence, the cardinal, a very beautiful morality which has for its title, 'The Good Judgment of Madame the Virgin Mary.' I am to play Jupiter. His eminence is, at this moment, escorting the very honorable embassy of the Duke of Austria; which is detained, at present, listening to the rector of the university, at the gate Baudets. As soon as the cardinal arrives, we will begin."

Chapter II

PIERRE GRINGOIRE

The satisfaction and admiration unanimously excited by his appearance were dissipated by his words.

"Begin instantly! The mystery! The mystery immediately!" shrieked the people.

Poor Jupiter, frightened, bowed and trembled and stammered: "His eminence—the ambassadors—Madame Marguerite of Flanders—" He did not know what to say.

Luckily, some one came to rescue him from his embarrassment, and assume the responsibility.

An individual who was standing beyond the railing, in the free space around the marble table, tall, gaunt, blond, still young, with brilliant eyes and a smiling mouth, clad in garments of black serge, made a sign to the poor sufferer.

"Jupiter," said he, "my dear Jupiter!"

"Who calls me?" said Jupiter, as though awakened with a start.

"I," replied the person clad in black. "Begin at once. Satisfy the populace; I will take care of the cardinal."

Jupiter breathed once more.

"Messeigneurs the *bourgeois*," he cried, at the top of his lungs, "we are going to begin at once."

"Good, good," shouted the people.

The hand clapping was deafening, and Jupiter had withdrawn.

In the meanwhile, the person who had so magically turned the tempest into calm, had retreated into the crowd. His name was Pierre Gringoire, and he was the author of the mystery that was about to take place.

Suddenly, the music of high and low instruments became audible from the interior of the stage and the tapestry was raised. Four personages emerged from it and climbed upon the upper platform. The symphony ceased.

The mystery was about to begin.

The four personages began. All four were dressed in robes of yellow and white. The first was of gold and silver brocade; the second, of silk; the third, of wool; the fourth, of linen. The first of these personages carried a sword in his right hand; the second, two golden keys; the third, a pair of scales; the fourth, a spade. They were Nobility, Clergy, Merchandise and Labor. Labor was wedded to Merchandise, and Clergy to Nobility, and the two happy couples possessed

in common a magnificent golden dolphin, which they desired to adjudge to the fairest only. So they were roaming about the world seeking and searching for this beauty.

There was no ear more attentive, no heart that palpitated more, no neck more outstretched, than the ear, the neck, and the heart of the author, that brave Pierre Gringoire. He listened, looked, enjoyed. The amiable applause which had greeted the beginning of his prologue was still echoing in his chest.

Sadly, this first ecstasy was speedily disturbed.

A tattered mendicant, who could not collect any coins, decided to perch himself higher up, in order to attract looks and alms. He had hoisted himself to the cornice which ran round the balustrade at its lower edge; and there he had seated himself, soliciting the attention and the pity of the multitude.

Eventually, that caught the attention of the scholar Joanne, who started laughing and, without caring that he was interrupting the spectacle, shouted—

“Look! **He’s asking alms!**”

Any one who has thrown a stone into a frog pond can form an idea of the effect produced by these words. The prologue stopped short, and all heads turned tumultuously towards the beggar, who saw this a good opportunity and began to whine—“Charity, please!”

Gringoire was highly displeased. He shouted to the four personages on the stage, “Go on! What the devil!—go on!”

The actors had obeyed, and the public, seeing that they were beginning to speak again, began once more to listen.

The mystery was, in fact, a very fine work. The exposition was simple. The four allegorical personages were somewhat weary with having traversed the three sections of the world, without having found suitable opportunity for getting rid of their golden dolphin. The crowd listened patiently. In the very middle of a quarrel between Merchandise and Nobility, at the moment when Monsieur Labor was saying this wonderful line,—

¹ **He’s asking alms!** — Он просит милостыню!

In forest ne'er was seen a more triumphant beast; the door of the reserved gallery opened; and the voice of the usher announced abruptly, "His eminence, Monseigneur the Cardinal de Bourbon."

Chapter III MONSIEUR THE CARDINAL

The entrance of his eminence upset the audience. All heads turned towards the gallery. "The cardinal! The cardinal!" repeated all mouths. The unhappy prologue stopped short for the second time.

The cardinal halted for a moment. Each person wished to get a better view of him.

He was, in fact, an exalted personage. Charles, Cardinal de Bourbon, Archbishop and Comte of Lyon, Primate of the Gauls, was allied both to Louis XI, through his brother, and to Charles the Bold through his mother. He was a fine man; he led a joyous cardinal's life, and was very agreeable to the populace of Paris.

It was this popularity, no doubt, which preserved him from any bad reception at the hands of the mob.

He entered, and bowed with a smile, and then slowly made his way towards his scarlet velvet arm-chair. His cortege—what we should nowadays call his staff—of bishops and abbés went in after him.

Then arrived, with gravity, the eight and forty ambassadors of Maximilian of Austria, with the reverend Father in God, Jehan, Abbot of Saint-Bertin, at the head, and Jacques de Goy, Sieur Dauby, Grand Bailiff of Ghent. A deep silence settled over the assembly, accompanied by stifled laughter at the preposterous names. There were bailiffs, aldermen, burgomasters;—all stiff, formal, dressed out in velvet and damask.

There was one exception, however. It was a subtle, intelligent man, before whom the cardinal made three steps and a profound bow. His name was only "Guillaume Rym, counsellor and pensioner of the City of Ghent."

Few persons were then aware who Guillaume Rym was. A rare genius who in a time of revolution would have made a brilliant appearance on the surface of events, but who in the fifteenth century was reduced to cavernous intrigues, and to "living in mines," as the Duc de Saint-Simon expresses it.

Chapter IV MASTER JACQUES COPPENOLE

A man of lofty stature, with a large face and broad shoulders, entered along with Guillaume Rym. The usher stopped him.

"Hold, my friend, you cannot pass!"

The man shouldered him aside.

"Don't you see that I am one of them?"

"Your name?" demanded the usher.

"Jacques Coppenole."

"Your titles?"

"Hosier at the sign of the 'Three Little Chains,' of Ghent."

The usher recoiled. One might bring one's self to announce aldermen and burgomasters, but a hosier was too much.

Guillaume Rym, with his polished smile, approached the usher.

"Announce Master Jacques Coppenole, clerk of the aldermen of the city of Ghent," he whispered, very low.

"Usher," interposed the cardinal, aloud, "announce Master Jacques Coppenole, clerk of the aldermen of the illustrious city of Ghent."

Coppenole proudly saluted his eminence, who returned the salute. Then each sought his place.

The reader has, probably, not forgotten the beggar who had been clinging to the fringes of the cardinal's gallery ever since the beginning of the prologue. The arrival of the guests had by no means caused him to relax his hold, even though he was remarkably close to them now. The Flemish ambassador, bestow a friendly tap on his ragged shoulder. The beggar turned round; there was surprise, recognition,

a lighting up of the two countenances, and so forth; then the two began to converse in a low tone, holding each other's hands.

Now, one thing was completely forgotten by the crowd. Pierre Gringoire and his prologue.

This was precisely what he feared.

From the moment of the cardinal's entrance, Gringoire was worried for the safety of his prologue. At first he had asked the actors to continue, and to raise their voices; then, seeing that no one was listening, he had stopped them; all in vain.

Nevertheless, our poet decided what to do next.

"Monsieur," he said, turning towards one of his neighbors, a fine, big man, with a patient face, "suppose we begin again."

"What?" said his neighbor.

"The Mystery," said Gringoire.

"As you like," returned his neighbor.

This sufficed for Gringoire, and he began to shout: "Begin the mystery again! Begin again!"

The bailiff approached the cardinal, and awkwardly explained to him that noonday had arrived before his eminence, and that the comedians had been forced to begin without waiting for his eminence.

The cardinal burst into a laugh.

"Monseigneur," said Guillaume Rym, "let us be content with having escaped half of the comedy. There is at least that much gained."

"Can these rascals continue their farce?" asked the bailiff.

"Continue, continue," said the cardinal, "it's all the same to me."

The personages on the stage took up their parts, and Gringoire hoped that the rest of his work, at least, would be listened to. This hope soon faded; silence had indeed, been restored; but Gringoire did not realise that at the moment, the gallery was far from full, and that the important personages were still being announced.

“Master Jacques Charmolue, procurator to the king in the Ecclesiastical Courts!”

“Messire Galiot de Genoilhac, chevalier, seigneur de Brussac, master of the king’s artillery!”

“Master Denis le Mercier, guardian of the house of the blind at Paris!” etc., etc., etc.

This was becoming unbearable.

And still, nothing could turn the audience from the cardinal; all eyes remained fixed there. No one listened, no one looked at the poor, deserted morality. Gringoire saw only profiles.

The usher’s brutal monologue came to an end; every one had arrived, and Gringoire breathed freely once more; the actors continued bravely. But Master Coppenole, all of a sudden rose and proclaimed:

“Messieurs and squires of Paris, I don’t know, what we are doing here. I don’t know whether that is what you call a “mystery,” but it is not amusing; they quarrel with their tongues and nothing more. That is not what I was told; I was promised a feast of fools, with the election of a pope. The way we manage it in Ghent is; we collect a crowd like this one here, then each person in turn puts his head through a hole, and makes a grimace; the one who makes the ugliest, is elected pope by general acclamation. What say you, Messieurs les *bourgeois*?”

Gringoire would have liked to retort; stupefaction, rage, indignation, deprived him of words. Moreover, the suggestion of the popular hosier was received with such enthusiasm, that all resistance was useless. There was nothing to be done but to allow one’s self to drift with the torrent.

Chapter V QUASIMODO

In the twinkling of an eye, all was ready to execute Coppenole’s idea. Everyone set to work. The little chapel situated opposite the marble table was selected for the scene of the grinning match. A pane broken in the pretty rose

window above the door, left free a circle of stone. That was agreed upon as the hole that the competitors should thrust their heads in. In order to reach it, it was only necessary to mount upon a couple of hogsheads. It was settled so that each candidate should cover his face and remain concealed in the chapel until the moment of his appearance. In less than an instant, the chapel was crowded with competitors.

Coppenole directed all. During the uproar, the cardinal had retired to his suite, under the pretext of business.

The grimaces began. A second and third grimace followed, then another and another; and the laughter went on increasing.

“Just look at that face!”

“It’s not good for anything.”

“Another!”

“Good! Good!”

As for Gringoire, it was far worse than it had been a little while before. He no longer beheld anything but backs.

There was a thunder of applause. The Pope of the Fools had been elected.

“**Noël! Noël! Noël!**” shouted the people on all sides. A marvellous grimace was beaming at that moment through the aperture in the rose window. It had a tetrahedral nose, a horseshoe mouth; one little left eye obstructed with a red, bushy, bristling eyebrow, while the right eye disappearing entirely beneath an enormous wart. Teeth were in disarray, broken here and there. The whole expression was a mixture of malice, amazement, and sadness.

People rushed towards the chapel. They made the lucky Pope of the Fools come forth in triumph. But it was then that surprise and admiration attained their highest pitch; the grimace was his face.

Or rather, his whole person was a grimace. A huge head, bristling with red hair; between his shoulders was an enormous hump; crooked legs; large feet, monstrous hands;

¹ Французский эквивалент “Hurrah”.

and, with all this deformity, an indescribable air of agility and courage.

When he appeared on the threshold of the chapel, the people recognized him on the instant, and shouted with one voice,—

“’Tis Quasimodo, the bellringer! ’tis Quasimodo, the hunchback of Notre-Dame! Quasimodo, the one-eyed!”

“Oh! the horrible monkey!” said one of the women.

“As wicked as he is ugly,” retorted another.

“He’s the devil,” added a third.

The men, **on the contrary**¹, were delighted.

Master Copenole, in amazement, approached him.

“Cross of God! Holy Father! you possess the handsomest ugliness that I have ever beheld in my life. You would deserve to be pope at Rome, as well as at Paris.”

So saying, he placed his hand gayly on his shoulder. Quasimodo did not stir. Copenole went on,—

“You are a rogue with whom I have a fancy for carousing, were it to cost me a new dozen of twelve livres of Tours. What do you say?”

Quasimodo made no reply.

“Are you deaf?”

He was, in truth, deaf.

“Deaf!” said the hosier, with his great Flemish laugh. “Cross of God! He’s a perfect pope!”

“Ha! I recognize him,” exclaimed Jehan, “he’s the bellringer of my brother, the archdeacon. Good-day, Quasimodo!”

“He speaks when he chooses,” said the old woman; “he became deaf through ringing the bells. He is not dumb.”

Everyone koined together to seek the cardboard tiara and the derisive robe of the Pope of the Fools. Quasimodo allowed them to array him in them. Then they made him seat himself on a plank. Twelve people raised him on their shoulders; then the procession set out on its march around the inner galleries of the Courts, before making the circuit of the streets and squares.

¹ **on the contrary** — наоборот

Chapter VI ESMERALDA

Gringoire and his piece had stood firm. His actors, continued to spout his comedy, and he continued to listen to it.

To tell the truth, a few spectators still remained.

"Well," thought Gringoire, "here are still as many as are required to hear the end of my mystery. They are few in number, but it is a choice audience."

"Comrades," suddenly shouted one of the kids from the window, "La Esmeralda! La Esmeralda in the Place!"

This word produced a magical effect. Every one who was left in the hall flew to the windows, repeating, "La Esmeralda! La Esmeralda?"

"What's the meaning of this, of the Esmeralda?" said Gringoire. "Ah, good heavens! it seems to be the turn of the windows now."

He returned towards the marble table, and saw that the representation had been interrupted. Jupiter should have appeared with his thunder. But Jupiter was standing motionless at the foot of the stage.

"Michel Giborne!" cried the irritated poet, "what are you doing there? Is that your part? Come up!"

"Alas!" said Jupiter, "a scholar has just seized the ladder."

Gringoire looked. It was but too true.

"And why did he take that ladder?"

"In order to go and see the Esmeralda," replied Jupiter. "He said, 'Come, here's a ladder that's of no use!' and he took it."

This was the last blow.

"May the devil fly away with you!" he said to the comedian, "and if I get my pay, you shall receive yours."

As he descended the winding stairs of the courts. he muttered: "These Parisians! They come to hear a mystery and don't listen to it at all! And I! To come only to see faces and behold backs! May the devil flay me if I understand what they mean with their Esmeralda! What is that word, in the first place?"