

FRENCH IIB & IIIB

Marcel PROUST: *Du côté de chez Swann*

(All page references are to the Folio edition)

I. COMBRAY

- 13: Find the first appearance of the *mémoire involontaire* theme.
- 16: Why does Marcel refer to bed-time as *le supplice*?
- 18: What does the grandmother find to worry about in Marcel?
(cf. pp. 20, 44, 49)
- 20: What is this little room to which Marcel goes to weep?
- 23: Notice the habitual gesture of Swann *père*.
- 25: *Quai d'Orléans*: this is one of the embankments on the Ile Saint-Louis, in the heart of Paris. It is old, quiet, quaint and beautiful. The great-aunt's scorn shows her bad bourgeois taste.
- 26: *Boulevard Haussmann*; *avenue de l'Opéra*: newer 19th-century avenues, wide, rich and ostentatious.
- 27: What would a *princesse du demi-monde* be?
- 32: Why did Swann marry?
- 40: "C'est-il pas..." — N.B. here and elsewhere, Françoise's demotic turns of speech.
- 41: Notice the preparation for *Un amour de Swann* (cf. pp. 222-223).
- 45: (last 3 lines) Notice the misleading information about Charlus.
- 89: *font* (last line) = *fonts* (?)
- 91-92: How does Marcel form his impression of the theatre and of the various plays?
- 93: What is a *cocotte*?
- 93: Notice the two adjectives with which Marcel describes his attempt to imagine the actress's life (cf. pp. 172, 276, 466, etc.).
- 95: Notice Marcel's first reaction to the woman he thinks is an actress.
- 111: Who is *le Père Leconte*?
- 161-198: *le côté de chez Swann*: what discoveries does Marcel make here?
- 167: Why is Marcel fascinated by the hawthorn? (cf. pp. 186-187, 214-218)
- 170-171: You have met Gilberte Swann of Tansonville before (see pp. 13-14).
- 170-172: Has Marcel's love for Gilberte been prepared in him by his reading that summer? (cf. p. 106)
- 180-181: What is the *renseignement* that Swann keeps forgetting to ask Vinteuil?
- 187: What is the *devoir* that Marcel speaks of? (cf. pp. 214-215)
- 190: *le petit cabinet sentant l'iris* (cf. p. 20).
- 190: *Hélas... jusqu'à moi*: what is the meaning of this sentence?
- 198-222: *le côté de Guermantes*: what discoveries does Marcel make here?

- 205-206: What is Marcel's impression of the *duchesse de Guermantes*? How does he come to have it?
- 209-210: What is Marcel's reaction to his first sight of the *duchesse de Guermantes*?
- 214-215: cf. pp. 187, 167.

II. UN AMOUR DE SWANN

- 227-229: What is the social standing of the Verdurins' *salon*? What seems to be the greatest fear of the Verdurins?
- 230, 236 (etc.): Do you remember having already met a *cocotte* who uses English words?
- 233-234: Why is Marcel interested in Swann?
- 235-236: What was the thing that Swann noticed about Odette de Crécy that made her different from his other women?
- 236-239: What sort of act is Odette putting on at this stage of the affair?
- 245: What has Saniette lost and why?
- 250-254: What significance has the *petite phrase* for Swann at this stage?
- 259: "... le jour de l'enterrement de Gambetta" = January 1883.
- 261: Why does Swann not tell Odette why he can only see her *after* dinner?
- 267-270: What significance has the portrait of Zipporah in Swann's feeling for Odette?
- 270: "... le jour de la fête de Paris-Murcie" = 18 December 1879.
- 271-277: What comes to an end on the night when Swann doesn't find Odette at the Verdurins' and looks for her in the boulevard cafés?
- 276: What is the *mal sacré*? What is absurd and impossible about it?
- 282: What does Swann's happiness amount to?
- 300: Why is Cottard interested in Forcheville?
- 319: Swann's periodic wiping of his glasses: where have you seen it before?
- 321: Who is the *princesse des Laumes*? (cf. p. 29, pp. 209-213)
- 333: Who is the *peintre de la Primavera*?
- 341: What is the meaning, here, of the *faubourg Saint-Germain*? (cf. p. 24)
- 349: What is *la carte du Tendre*?
- 355-356: Why does Swann wish to be married to Odette?
- 370: What is the *Septennat*?
- 373: Notice the small clue to Charlus.
- 388: *Mme de Cambremer* (cf. p. 152).
- 399: *Cette noblesse d'Empire*: to whom is the general referring, and what is the meaning of his conversation with the *princesse des Laumes*?
- 403: What is the meaning of this banter about the name: *Cambremer*?
- 406-409: The episode of the *petite phrase*: an example of what?

III. NOMS DE PAYS: LE NOM

Where does this section take place? Where is Balbec? What impression does Marcel have of Balbec? How does he come to have such an impression?

- 459-460: Can you explain why Marcel imagines these places (Bayeux, Vitré, Quimperlé, etc.) as he does?
- 463: What is *le laboratoire charbonneux*?
- 464-465: Why does Marcel not go to Venice or to Balbec?
- 466-467: Compare the effect of the name Gilberte on Marcel with p. 171.
- 467-474: What similarities do you notice between Swann's love for Odette and Marcel's for Gilberte?
- 474: What similarity is there between Marcel's idea of Balbec and his idea of love?
- 478: How does this column of dust stand upright by itself above the piano?
- 488: cf. p. 172, on Gilberte.
- 492-493: What is the meaning of the sentence beginning: "Comme, de loin, la culmination du rocher...?"
- 496: Does anything on this page strike you as clumsy?
- 497: "Cette complexité du Bois de Boulogne...": notice the change of tense.