

The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard

Anatole France

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pubOne.info thank you for your continued support and wish to present you this new edition. I had put on my slippers and my dressing-gown. I wiped away a tear with which the north wind blowing over the quay had obscured my vision. A bright fire was leaping in the chimney of my study. Ice-crystals, shaped like fern-leaves, were sprouting over the windowpanes and concealed from me the Seine with its bridges and the Louvre of the Valois.

The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard Details


Date : Published September 15th 2010 by Pubone.Info (first published 1881)

ISBN : 9782819912613

Author : Anatole France

Format : ebook 270 pages

Genre : Cultural, France, European Literature, French Literature, Classics, Fiction, Nobel Prize

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From Reader Review The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard for online ebook

Aida Ghazar says

The Crime of Sylvester Bonnard is a humorous and satirical novel , written in 1881 by Anatole France. The protagonist is Sylvester Bonnard.He is kind-hearted old-man in his seventies and an honored member of the Institute. He keeps a diary and so we follow the story reading his diary.

M. Bonnard lives very humbly in a house ,whose occupants beside himself is an old cat who whenever has the chance wants to occupy his place in his study ,and whom he calls the “somnolent Prince of the City of Books.”

Then there is Therese,his old housekeeper, who” is deaf as a sack charcoal and slow as Justice” and “she exercises her domestic authority with such quiet pride that I do not feel the courage to attempt a coup d’etat against her government”

"My cravat! Therese!-do you hear?-my cravat!if you drive me wild like this with your slow ways,it will not be a cravat I shall need,but a rope to hang myself!"and :

"By the way Therese ,I am going to Sicily."

"Well,then go, Monsieur, only be back here by six o'clock! There is a dish for dinner to-day which will not wait for anybody."

Yet he “respects..her great age and her great heart”—is “gentle” with her...and ... puts up “with all her fits of impatience.”

Bonnard is a bibliophile and a philologist .He has an enormous library and he calls his study the City of Books ,he cherishes all his books and knows them his 'treasures' and they are his life's savings. He sometimes travels to Europe in the hunt of antiquities .Then we find him in Sicily ,in search of a rare manuscript :”The Golden Legend” where he meets and humbly befriends ,a Mme Trepoff, a matchbox collector! also there he encounters a peddler on the street who persuades him to buy a slice of watermelon: “Co tra calle vive,magna, e lave a fascia.” "that is —For three centimes he can eat, drink, and wash his face!” However all through his adventures and studies , his mind is occupied with the memory of the woman he once had loved desperately ,and who after death has left a daughter ,Jeanne, behind penniless . Jeanne lives in a convent ,and being poor and an orphan ,she is not treated well ,moreover there had been attempts of sexual abuse toward her. Bonnard is tormented by the thought and he decides that he “cannot possibly permit them to make Jeanne a boarding-school servant!” He is determined to protect the girl.

So he plans and manages to steal her away by night. He loves the girl becomes his guardian and takes care of her as his own daughter.

But the unpredictable happens and ,Jeanne falls in love with a student who is working on his graduation thesis and who comes to Bonnard for some advise. Finally the young man asks for Jeanne's hand.The old man does not expect that to happen so soon. As he consults his diary:..” Why should I not confess it?.....I thought I was going to keep her all to myself,as my own child ,as my own daughter—not always,..not even perhaps for very long,but just for a few more years.I am so old!Could she not wait?”

But he accepts his condition as it is though both ,he and Jeanne are sad!

"All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy: for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves: we must die to one life before we can enter into another! “

Bonnard is determined to sell the only treasure he has , that is his library, to provide Jeanne with a fair dowery.

While he proceeds with cataloging his books to sell at auction, he is tormented with the idea that he is going to lose all his books and manuscripts . So one night “I got out of bed and stole softly from my room....stealing about on tiptoe in the City of the Books....”

Thus he tries to save some volumes : “ the jewel, the treasure,which I had been dreaming about all night, I

seized it and slipped it away into the very bottom of the closet which I had reserved for those books I intended to retain....It is horrible to relate: I was stealing the dowry of Jeanne! And when the crime had been consummated I set myself again sturdily to the task of cataloguing....”

Finally his beloved Jeanne is gone , and so are his dear books, he returns lonely and sad to his empty study where the cat has retired already!

The kind-hearted old Bonnard twice has a guilty conscience , that he has committed a crime ; once when he steals and saves the girl from the convent who was in danger of abuse and torture,and for whom he wanted to promise a bright future ,and the second time he steals , a very few of his own books from his own library ,before putting them for auction to provide the dowry!

It is in contrast with what was going on around him in Paris; with the corrupt public servants and aristocracy,the unjust justice system and all who were indifferent and cruel towards the lower class,and the weak.

Anatole France with a sharp critical eye and humor has portrayed a very beautiful and gentle story. Cleverly written ,humorous and a really good read.

Enjoyed reading it.It was one of the stories in the Six Greatest Novels of Anatole France ,with an excellent translation by Lafcadio Hearn.

Anne says

Très jolie histoire pleine d'humour et de bon sentiments,sans jamais tomber dans la mièvrerie .l'écriture est incroyablement moderne

Wanda says

19 AUG 2014 -- I will be reading this from Project Gutenberg; however, I like this cover better.

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4 JAN 2016 - Therese to Monsieur upon his announcement he will be travelling to Sicily:

"By the way, Theresa, I am going to Sicily."

"Well, then go, Monsieur," she answered at last, "only be back here by six o'clock! There is a dish for dinner today which will not wait for anybody."

9 JAN 2016 - Gosh; I enjoyed this story a lit! It was sweet and sentimental without being overly so. Mr Bonnard is a gem. And, the "crime" in the title is left for the reader to decide.

Cheryl says

Great writing! I loved the title character, Sylvestre Bonnard.

Helga says

Thanks Aida, for recommending this book to me. It was an enjoyable read!

Vu K says

Một câu chuyện cảm động và kết thúc đẹp như mong đợi, một cái kết gần gũi như kết của 'Nhưng người khốn khổ' (Les Misérables), với một đôi trẻ hạnh phúc, nhưng không kém phần hài hước khi ta phải lo âu theo dõi.

Sylvestre Bonnard, người kể chuyện, một ông lão tuối ngoài 60 sống tại Paris, nước Pháp nửa sau thế kỷ XIX, sống cuộc sống rất thân thiện như nhưng không quá tưng tửu với Thérèse người quen gia đình già đã phải về ông qua mấy chục năm. Một con người khá cô độc nhưng không ghét loài người, sống bình lặng với người quen gia, con mèo, cùng công việc yêu thích là nghiên cứu các vấn đề văn học, và dẫu dằng, nhân ái với mọi người.

Phần 1 - 'Khúc còi' với di sản bị bỏ rơi sau khá bất ngờ, khi ông theo đuổi một bản thảo cũ kỹ Ý tưởng tại Paris, trong quá trình gặp một người phụ nữ bí ẩn, và cuối cùng bản thảo bị người phụ nữ bí ẩn trả giá cao trong cuộc bán đấu giá. Người phụ nữ, hóa ra tưởng là vợ của một người nghèo khổ sống cùng tòa nhà với ông, nay đã là một nhà văn, sẵn lòng mua bản thảo với giá cao để đáp lại ân tình của Bonnard khi trẻ. Một kết thúc theo kiểu gieo nhân nào gặp quả nấy.

Phần 2 - 'Tiểu thư Jeanne Alexandre' là sự quyên luyến của ông lão Bonnard với Jeanne, cô bé là cháu gái của Clementine, người con gái mà ngày còn trẻ ông mến mộ. Do phá sản, bản thân cô khi một lần gặp Jeanne bị vợ giết người phải sống trong một trại trẻ mồ côi trú ẩn với những người kiêu hãnh khi nghĩ và người giám hộ không tốt. Nhờ danh vị thành viên Hội văn mà Bonnard được cô Prèfère nữ trưởng đoàn tiếp đãi và cuối cùng của Jeanne thế kỷ hai mươi. Nhưng khúc quanh của câu chuyện khá bất ngờ khi cô cảm ông Bonnard không nên thẹn Jeanne tiểu thư trẻ và cô bé lại tiếp tục chịu cuộc sống hà khắc dưới quyên cô. Người cô hai người theo dõi liệu ông lão Bonnard có thể phạm tội ác gì (theo hướng chửi lới cô Prèfère) nhằm giành giật lại cô bé mà ông yêu quý và muốn bù đắp cho.

Kết thúc, như ta đã biết là thật đẹp, và cô bé Jeanne cũng đã có hạnh phúc lứa đôi với chàng công nhân cùng nghề với Bonnard, khi còn là sinh viên đã tìm thấy ông để trao trả với học thu.

Trong Phần 2 này nhưng trao trả giữa ông lão Bonnard và chàng sinh viên Gélis về lịch sử (trang 224 - 225 - 226, Bản dịch của Nguyễn Xuân Phụng, NXB Văn học TP Hồ Chí Minh, tháng 4.2001) là khá thú vị, hay trao trả giữa Bonnard và cô Thérèse về giáo dục (trang 156) nên bây giờ về hoàn toàn đúng nên. Cũng vậy Phần 2 này theo tôi kết của Bonnard ta cũng thấy nước Pháp nhưng năm 1800 về còn chia rẽ khá sâu sắc giữa nhưng người ủng hộ Napoleon (nhưng kết hợp vùng Loire) và nhưng người bảo hoàng Bourbons.

- Con người (mức giáp sát thế Trung cổ) được bộc lộ như con bọ hung. Sự yếu đuối của họ là bên trong. (trang 18)

- hãy ??i x? r?ng l?ng v?i ??ng lo?i ?? h? r?ng l?ng v?i chúng ta (trang 21)
- Ng?i nghèo không tham v?ng là có món tài s?n v? ??i nh?t, h?n t? ki?m ch? ???c mình, còn ng?i giàu mà thêm mu?n thì ch? là m?t tên nô l? kh?n kh? (trang 22).
- cái thú chuy?n trò v?i m?t trí tu? ?u vi?t và ôn hòa, cái thú ?n t?i v?i m?t anh b?n thân (trang 22)
- nh?ng thềm mu?n thu? hoa niên là ghê g?m bi?t bao nhiêu (trang 22)
- chúng cháu (tuy là ng?i l?n) mãi mãi là tr? con, chúng cháu không ng?ng ?u?i theo nh?ng ?? ch?i m?i l? (trang 28)
- ng?i thi?u ph? ?y không tr? nên x?u c?ng không tr? nên t?t. Hãy ??i ch? ta k?t thúc cu?c ??i m?i nên phán xét (trang 29)
- ?i?u b? b?o d?n ? nh?ng k? nhất gan (trang 37)
- v?i ba xu, tôi có th? ?n, u?ng và r?a m?t t?t t?n t?t v?i m?t lát d?a h?u bày trên chi?c bàn con (trang 38)
- Ph?i th??ng xót h?: c?a c?i vây quanh l?y h? mà không th?m th?u vào h?; h? ?áng th??ng, n?i tâm cùng qu?n. S? kh?n kh? c?a ng?i giàu th?t thê th?m. (trang 43)
- Nh?ng ng?i yêu tha thi?t không vi?t v? h?nh phúc c?a mình (trang 45)
- ng?i ta có h?c ???c ?ôi ?i?u qua sách v?, nh?ng ng?i ta càng h?c t?p ???c nhi?u h?n khi ?i ?ây ?i ?ó. (trang 47)
- nh?ng n?i bu?n, ?ó là m?t cách tiêu khi?n quan tr?ng. (trang 51)
- ng?i mà ta yêu th??ng mãi mãi ch? là m?t hình bóng, nh?ng k? ni?m v? nàng mãi mãi là ni?m mê say c?a ??i ta. (trang 76)
- con ng?i ch? làm ch? th?i gian khi chia no ra thành gi?, thành phút, thành giây, ngh?a là thành nh?ng kho?ng cách cân ??i v?i ??i ng?i ng?n ng?i, b?i vì th?i gian chính là cu?c ??i. (trang 81)
- ??i v?i phái y?u, m?i vi?c ??u ???cphép, m?i hành ??ng c?a h? là ??c ân, là s?ng ái. (trang 90)
- Có trí th?c ch?ng là gì h?t, t??ng t??ng sáng t?o m?i quan tr?ng. Ch? cái gì ng?i ta suy ngh? sáng t?o ra m?i t?n t?i. (trang 91)
- Nhân lo?i h?u nh? toàn là ng?i ch?t. So v?i s? ng?i ?ã ch?t thì ng?i còn s?ng ch?ng là bao nhiêu. Cu?c ??i này là gì, ng?n ng?i h?n trí nh?, ng?n ng?i h?n con ng?i. (trang 100)
- cu?c ??i là v?nh h?ng, ta ph?i yêu quý nó trong nh?ng hình thái không ng?ng ??i m?i (trang 100-101)
- ?i?c nh? bao than, ch?m ch?p nh? t? ch?c t? pháp. (trang 108)
- Hãy trừ li?u cho nh?ng vi?c l?n, nên bi?t r?ng ý ??nh là th?c t? duy nh?t trên ??i. (trang 109)
- Hãy coi tr?ng v? bánh mì khô trong chi?c ?ây hai túi c?a anh h?n nh?ng chim s? v??n ???c quay trong b?p c?a lãnh chúa. (trang 110)

- T?t c? chúng ta ??u có trong ng??i m?t Don Quixote và m?t Sancho mà chúng ta nghe theo, và c? ?ang khi Sancho thuy?t ph?c chúng ta thì chính là Don Quixote mà chúng ta ph?i khâm ph?c. (trang 110)
- Th?i gian ch? êm d?u ??i v?i nh?ng ai khoan thai th?n tr?ng ?ón nh?n nó. (trang 112)
- th?c t? v? tr? là ph?n ?nh c?a tâm h?n chúng ta. (trang 113)
- Goethe ví ??i có s?c s?ng l? th??ng, th?c s? tin r?ng ng??i ta ch? ch?t khi ng??i ta mu?n, ngh?a là khi t?t c? s?c m?nh ch?ng l?i s? phân h?y cu?i cùng, khi toàn b? khí l?c làm nên s? s?ng b? h?y di?t ??n t?n cùng. Nói cách khác, ông ngh? r?ng ng??i ta ch? ch?t khi khôn mu?n s?ng n?a. (trang 141-142)
- tôi v?n thích s? ?am mê ?iên r? h?n s? ??ng ??n d?ng d?ng. (trang 144)
- m?t th?ng ngu, không ph?i b?ng ba ch? mà ?úng là b?ng m??i hai t?p. (trang 147)
- Nh?ng k? không có nh??c ?i?m thì th?t ghê g?m; không ai tác ??ng ??n h? ???. (trang 150)
- ?i?u th?c s? x?u xa trong th?i ??i chúng ta là khôn ai b?ng lòng ??a v? c?a mình, trong xã h?i, trong m?i t?ng l?p, t? trên xu?ng d??i, bao trùm s? túng thi?u, n?i kh?c kho?i lo âu, s? khát khao h?nh phúc. (trang 153)
- Không có th?i ??i nào con ng??i l?i thêm mu?n s? túng thi?u. H? luôn luôn tìm cách c?i thi?n ??a v? xã h?i c?a mình. S? c? g?ng kiên trì này ?ã s?n sinh ra nh?ng cu?c cách m?ng tr??ng k?. Nó ti?p t?c, th? thôi. (trang 153)
- ngh? thu?t gi?ng d?y ch? là ngh? thu?t kích thích tính tò mò ham bi?t c?a nh?ng tâm h?n non tr?, ti?p ?ó là th?a mãn tính tò mò ham bi?t ?ó, và tính tò mò ham bi?t ch? mãnh li?t và lành m?nh trong nh?ng ??u óc sung s??ng. Dùn quy?n l?c nh?i nhét ki?n th?c vào nh?ng ??u óc thông minh là b?t chúng l?i, bóp ngh? chúng. Trí th?c ph?i ???.c nu?t vào m?t cách ngon lành thì m?i tiêu hóa ???. (trang 155-156)

Nino Frewat says

It is such a joy to read a work of the nineteenth century after a streak of current works. I admired the writing of Anatole France, his wit and his humour. I didn't care much about the story itself, yet I highlighted paragraphs which I am sure I will be revisiting to enjoy their humour and their brilliance

Laura says

Free download available at Project Gutenberg.

Al Capwned says

Simple, touching story but it still can sweep you away completely. Great writing and character development.

Jareed says

Monsieur Sylvestre Bonnard, a member of The Institute, a philologist who in the twilight of his years lives in a City of Books accompanied by his condescending cat, Hamilcar, and Therese, his adroit and remarkably annoying house help, finds himself committing a crime. And you wonder, what crime he did commit? He commits two actually, both of which stems from love. The former impelled by the haunting quest for redemption of a failed unrequited love, the latter, inevitably constrained by a passion unmatched. Of the two, he was not indicted for the former, and I am sure you will understand and forgive the latter, as I did.

The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard is divided into two stories, *The Log* and *Daughter of Clementine*, both presented as Bonnard's diary entries. The entries are intermittently recorded, sometimes years apart. In both stories, Bonnard is the central character, and the connection in the stories are subtly and beautifully formed.

Of all of France's works I've had the pleasure of reading so far, I've come to appreciate *The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard* the most. The differences were readily apparent. Bonnard is a warm and gentle kind man. He was not cynical, only true and honest. He wore his heart on his sleeves. "Then he said to her that *the troubles in which we often involve ourselves, by trying to act according to our conscience and to do the best we can, are never of the sort that totally dishearten and weary us, but are, on the contrary wholesome trials.*"(148) The profound human sympathy and grace France is known for defines this book. It was poignant and beautiful, down from the vivid imagery he employed up to the ruminations in life, but still remaining to be critical without any hint of naivety just as he did on his later works. France's development as an author and a person is evident in this work too. Written earlier in his career in 1881 compared to *Penguin Island* and *The Revolt of the Angels* written in 1908 and 1912 respectively, both books the majority of which are criticisms on the church and of faith in the divine, *The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard* professes however a faith in the church, and France even goes so far as ending this work by leaving a blessing in the name of God! It is so evident that what faith he had lost through those intervening years was still there. And it is interesting and amazing to experience a writer change and develop, and at times contradict himself, almost like how the young Nietzsche is so different to the old Nietzsche. And I like this kind and warm story, it makes you appreciate life.

Other Books by Anatole France:

Revolt of the Angels(4 Stars)

Penguin Island (3 Stars)

This book forms part of my remarkably extensive reading list on Nobel Prize for Literature Awardees

This review along with my other reviews has been cross-posted at [imbookedindefinitely](#)

Tina says

EL CRIMEN DE UN ACADEMICO
(EL CRIMEN DE SYLVESTRE BONNARD)
AUTOR: ANATOLE FRANCE
NACIONALIDAD: FRANCESA
SIGLO: XIX, PRINCIPIOS DEL XX

EL AUTOR UTILIZA UNA PROSA DESCRIPTIVA, FINA Y MODERADA. EL PERSONAJE CENTRAL ES SYLVESTRE BONNARD, HOMBRE DE EDAD, ERUDITO Y DE GRAN CALIDAD HUMANA; APARECE EN AMBAS HISTORIAS DE LAS QUE SE COMPONE ESTA NOVELA. EN LA PRIMERA ES RECOMPENSADO POR SUS GESTOS DE NOBLEZA HACIA UNA VIUDA DESPROTEGIDA. LA SEGUNDA HISTORIA ES MÁS LARGA, MUY BELLA Y TRATA DE LOS ESFUERZOS QUE REALIZA ESTE HOMBRE DOCTO POR CONVERTIRSE EN TUTOR DE UNA JOVENCITA POBRE Y HUERFANA QUE LA RODEA LA ADVERSIDAD, A PESAR DE QUE LO LOGRA, ES VICTIMA DE CIERTAS INJUSTICIAS QUE SE ACLARARÁN. SIN EMBARGO LOS ACONTECIMIENTOS LLEVAN A UN FINAL TRISTE. HA SIDO UN DELEITE ESTA LECTURA.

Bettie? says

Read Here

Opening: **PART I—THE LOG: December 24, 1849: I had put on my slippers and my dressing-gown. I wiped away a tear with which the north wind blowing over the quay had obscured my vision. A bright fire was leaping in the chimney of my study. Ice-crystals, shaped like fern-leaves, were sprouting over the windowpanes and concealed from me the Seine with its bridges and the Louvre of the Valois.**

I drew up my easy-chair to the hearth, and my table-volante, and took up so much of my place by the fire as Hamilcar deigned to allow me. Hamilcar was lying in front of the andirons, curled up on a cushion, with his nose between his paws. His think find fur rose and fell with his regular breathing. At my coming, he slowly slipped a glance of his agate eyes at me from between his half-opened lids, which he closed again almost at once, thinking to himself, "It is nothing; it is only my friend."

Is 'think find fur' supposed to be: 'thick, fine fur'? Looks as if this Gutenberg file needs some work.

Stephen O'Connor says

One of the few books I read twice. I love the voice of the main character, an aging bibliophile and member of the French Academy.

Vicky Hunt says

This is not what you expect.

Filled with family, and love, and friendship; it is a tale of life itself through the eyes of an old man living in Nineteenth Century Paris. It is a warm and heartfelt story that will likely bring you to tears and laughter in

equal measure. In the process of following the narrative, I couldn't help but learn much about the history of France and Italy as well. It's only the 2nd of Anatole France's books that I've read, and I look forward to the next chance I get to savor every word of one of his novels.

It is written in the format of occasional journal entries. Never once is the train of thought lost or confused, though the Kindle edition I read was rife with both grammatical and typographical errors, as well as likely translation errors. I recommend *The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard* be read in a bound book, rather than a haphazardly thrown together electronic version which can be obtained free online. In this case it was not even proof-read. That's not usually the case with Kindle, or most e-books I've read. Fortunately, I was able to salvage the meaning in all cases.

Matthew Gatheringwater says

I haven't met a fictional character more gentle since dear Miss Matty in *Cranford*. The chief pleasure of the book's title is to speculate on what sort of crime such a kindly old gentleman could commit. It will not spoil your pleasure in guessing to tell you that he actually commits two: one act that is a crime in the eyes of the world and another self-confessed crime, which I am sure you will understand and forgive. You will forgive, I think, because just reading about the possibility of such a good nature is bound to inspire your own better feelings.

Jim says

This book is characterized by a certain sweetness. Its author, Anatole France, was only in his thirties when he undertook to write *The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard* about an old bachelor who is a philologist and an honored member of the Academie Francaise.

What we have here are two stories, both about Bonnard's sentimental attempts to help much younger damsels in distress. The first is the widow of an impoverished bookseller, who later marries a Russian nobleman and helps Bonnard obtain a treasured manuscript he had been searching for. In the second, he finds the daughter of the girl whom he had loved as a child, and who is cruelly suppressed by an evil guardian and one Mlle Prefere, who persecutes the young girl at her school as a charity case.

At one point, the young girl and her schoolmistress are invited to M Bonnard's flat:

"What a lot of books!" [Mlle Prefere] screamed. "And have you really read them all, Monsieur Bonnard?"

"Alas! I have," I replied, "and that is just the reason that I do not know anything; for there is not a single one of those books which does not contradict some other book; so that by the time one has read them all one does not know what to think about anything."

The novel's sentimentality is laid on a bit thick at times, but the old man's sincerity and goodness makes it come out all right in the end.

Chris says

Warm and fuzzy while somehow being simultaneously classical and austere. I probably missed something. The copy I read was old and pleasantly floppy and smelled really good.

Pat Murphy says

I am reading a collection of books which have become available to me and they are all old. Some written well over 100 years ago. This is one of them and was copyrighted in 1890. I don't enjoy all the books. I am reading them because I think I should. Some are difficult, and read slowly. They include stuff by Tolstoy, Dickens, and Dostoevsky. This preface is to this review is to show that surprises occur in this situation. I loved this book. It did not read slowly. It didn't fly either. The writing was clever, and the subject was very human and related to any time period. There was suspense, light adventure, intelligence, conflict, young and old characters, romance, and human feelings which were well related in the writing. If you are looking for a book that is fast paced with lots of danger and fighting or one with frightening crime then I would not recommend this for you. If you are patient and have a desire to learn about the narrator's life and complications told in a beautiful manner then I would. The main character is a learned old man who studies books and writing and the occurrences in his life. It is a short book and a was a delight for me to read.

Adi says

Ah, Sylvestre.

On aimerait pouvoir le rencontrer, Sylvestre, discuter avec lui dans la cité des livres - et laisser les heures se perdre jusque tard dans la nuit. Lui faire un cadeau, aussi, et lui dire qu'il est quelqu'un de bien ; sauf qu'on n'oserait peut-être pas, parce qu'il est trop grand, trop délicat dans son humanité, et qu'on resterait simplement, stupidement, à l'admirer un peu et à avoir la gorge nouée.

Mais, comme on ne peut pas faire tout ça, on reste frustré(e), et, pour punir les questions que soulèvent ce livre, on n'esquisse que 4 étoiles.

Gary says

I remember picking this book at random from my local library. I can still see it on the shelf. I wasn't much of a reader at the time, but I liked the paper and font. It was old and felt good in my hands. It was the first American edition. I began to read and was instantly swept up in France's description of the protagonist's "City of Books" (his living room) and the second-hand booksellers on the quay. It was a beautiful story, visually evocative. I am sure it lit some sort of fire for me, a love of books that has never left. I was a late starter. Ever since, I feel I've been playing catch-up: there are so many books to read - so many I want to read - I'll never read them all.

This book changed my life, although I didn't know it at the time. It led me on a path to my current profession and to this moment right here, right now, writing this review. It did it subtly, not like a bolt of lightning.

If you read this book, be sure to get a nice old edition from the library or a used book dealer, not a modern paperback or reprint. Make sure the copy you read is from the 19th century. You'll be transported back in

time.
