

The Girl with the Golden Eyes



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By Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850)

Translated by Ellen Marriage (1865-1946)

"Give me a feast such as men give when they love," she said, "and whilst I sleep, slay me..."

Listeners who like to plunge straight into a story would do well to skip the lengthy preamble. Here, Balzac the virtuoso satirist depicts the levels of Parisian society as a version of the Inferno of Dante - but perhaps keeps the reader waiting too long for the first act of his operatic extravaganza.

Our beautiful, androgynous hero, Henri de Marsay, is one of the bastard offspring of a depraved Regency milord and himself practises the cynical arts of the libertine. His quarry is the exotic Paquita Valdes, she of the golden eyes.

But there is a mysterious third person in this liaison...

The shocking truth of their interrelationships marks this out at once as one of those French novels that Lady Bracknell would instantly ban from the house. (Summary by Martin Geeson)

Total running time: 04:30:40; read by Martin Geeson. Dedicated Proof-Listener: mim@can. Meta-Coordinator/Cataloging: Ruth Golding.

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