

**Émile Erckmann**

The Mysterious Sketch

**[ze słownikiem]**

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C1

Arkana szkicu

Z PODRĘCZNYM SŁOWNIKIEM ANGIELSKO-POLSKIM

dla osób znających język angielski co najmniej na poziomie C1

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Ruda Śląska, 2024

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# The Mysterious Sketch

## Chapter I

Opposite the **chapel** of Saint Sebalt in Nuremberg, at the corner of Trabaus Street, there stands a little **tavern**, tall and narrow, with a toothed **gable** and **dusty** windows, whose roof is **surmounted** by a **plaster Virgin**.

It was there that I spent the unhappiest days of my life. I had gone to Nuremberg to study the old German masters; but in default of ready money, I had to paint portraits-and such portraits!

Fat old women with their cats on their laps, **big-wigged aldermen**, **burgomasters** in **three-cornered** hats-all **horribly** bright with **ochre** and **vermilion**.

From portraits I descended to sketches, and from sketches to **silhouettes**.

Nothing is more annoying than to have your landlord **come to** you every day with **pinched** lips, **shrill** voice, and **impudent** manner to say: "Well, sir, how soon are you going to pay me? Do you know how much your bill is? No; that doesn't worry you! You eat, drink, and sleep **calmly** enough. God feeds the **sparrows**."

Your bill now amounts to two hundred **florins** and ten kreutzers-it is not worth talking about."

Those who have not heard any one talk in this way can form no idea of it; love of art, imagination, and the sacred enthusiasm for the beautiful are blasted by the breath of such an attack. You become awkward and **timid**; all your energy **evaporates**, as well as your feeling of personal dignity, and you **bow respectfully** at a distance to the **burgomaster** Schneegans.

**chapel** - kaplica

**tavern** - tawerna, karczma, austeria

**gable** - wzniesienie, szczyt

**dusty** - zakurzony, pylisty, zgaszony, złamany

**surmounted** - zwieńczyć, przewyciężyć

**plaster** - gips, tynk

**virgin** - prawiczek, dziewiczy, dziewica

**big-wigged** - wielkoduszny

**aldermen** - radny, ławnik

**burgomasters** - burmistrz

**three-cornered** - trójkątny; trójramienny; trójstronny

**horribly** - strasznie, przeraźliwie

**ochre** - ochra, czerwono-żółty kolor

**vermilion** - cynamon

**silhouettes** - zarys, kontur, sylwetka

**come to** - przyjść

**pinched** - szczypać, uszczypnąć, szczypanie

**shrill** - piskliwy, przeszywający, przenikliwy

**impudent** - bezczelny

**calmly** - spokojnie

**sparrows** - wróbel, trznadel

**florins** - floren

**timid** - bojaźliwy, płochliwy, nieśmiały

**evaporates** - wyparowywać, wyparować

**bow** - zginać się, uklonić się, kłaniać się, łuk, kokarda, dziób statku

**respectfully** - z szacunkiem

**burgomaster** - burmistrz

One night, not having a **sou**, as usual, and threatened with imprisonment by this worthy Mister **Rap**, I determined to make him a **bankrupt** by cutting my throat. Seated on my narrow bed, opposite the window, in this **agreeable** mood, I gave myself up to a thousand philosophical reflections, more or less comforting.

"What is man?" I asked myself. "An **omnivorous** animal; his **jaws**, provided with **canines**, **incisors**, and **molars**, prove it. The canines are made to tear meat; the incisors to bite fruits; and the molars to **masticate**, grind, and **triturate** animal and vegetable substances that are pleasant to smell and to taste.

But when he has nothing to masticate, this being is an **absurdity** in Nature, a **superfluity**, a **fifth wheel** to the coach."

Such were my reflections. I dared not open my **razor** for fear that the **invincible** force of my logic would inspire me with the courage to make an end of it all. After having argued so **finely**, I blew out my candle, postponing the **sequel** till the **morrow**.

That **abominable** Rap had completely **stupefied** me. I could do nothing but silhouettes, and my sole desire was to have some money to rid myself of his **odious** presence. But on this night a **singular** change **came over** my mind.

I **awoke** about one o'clock-I lit my lamp, and, enveloping myself in my grey **gabardine**, I drew upon the paper a rapid sketch after the **Dutch** school-something strange and bizarre, which had not the slightest **resemblance** to my ordinary conceptions.

Imagine a **dreary courtyard enclosed** by high **dilapidated** walls. These walls are **furnished** with hooks, seven or eight feet from the ground. You see, at a glance, that it is a **butchery**.

**sou** - grosz, mała ilość pieniędzy  
**rap** - ostro krytykować, stukanie, stuknięcie, pukanie, oskarżenie  
**bankrupt** - bankructwo, zbankrutowany, bankrut, bankrutka  
**agreeable** - zgoda, miły, przyjemny, zgodny

**omnivorous** - wszystkożerny  
**jaws** - szczeka  
**canines** - kły, psi  
**incisors** - siekacz  
**molars** - trzonowce, trzonowy  
**masticate** - żuć, przeżuwać  
**triturate** - sproszkować, rozcierać na proszek

**absurdity** - absurd, bezsens, absurdalność, niedorzeczność, bezsensowność  
**superfluity** - zbędność, nadmiar  
**fifth wheel** - piąte koło

**razor** - brzytwa, szabla  
**invincible** - niezwyciężony  
**finely** - dokładnie, drobno, cienko, precyzyjnie, świetnie  
**sequel** - sequel  
**morrow** - nazajutrz, jutro

**abominable** - obrzydliwe, ohydny, odrażający, plugawy, niegodziwy  
**stupefied** - oszołomiony, ogłuszać, ogłuszyć  
**odious** - wstrętny, ohydny  
**singular** - w liczbie pojedynczej, osobliwy, pojedynczy, nieodwracalna, osobliwa  
**came over** - nagle się poczuć inaczej (np. słabo); ogarniać kogoś (uczucie)

**awoke** - obudził się, budzić się, uświadomić sobie, obudzić, przebudzony  
**gabardine** - gabardyna  
**dutch** - niderlandzki, holenderski, (język) holenderski, Holendrzy, Niderlandczycy  
**resemblance** - podobieństwo

**dreary** - ponury  
**courtyard** - dziedziniec, podwórze, dwór  
**enclosed** - otoczyć, mieścić w sobie, załączyć  
**dilapidated** - zniszczyć, zniszczony  
**furnished** - meblować, umeblować, dostarczyć, dostarczać, zaopatrzyć, zaopatrywać  
**butchery** - rzeźnictwo, masakra

On the left, there extends a **lattice** structure; you perceive through it a quartered beef suspended from the roof by enormous **pulleys**. Great pools of blood run over the **flagstones** and unite in a **ditch** full of **refuse**.

The light falls from above, between the **chimneys** where the **weathercocks** stand out from a bit of the sky the size of your hand, and the roofs of the neighbouring houses throw bold shadows from story to story.

At the back of this place is a shed, beneath the shed a pile of wood, and upon the pile of wood some ladders, a few **bundles** of **straw**, some **coils** of rope, a **chicken-coop**, and an old dilapidated **rabbit-hutch**.

How did these **heterogeneous** details suggest themselves to my imagination? I don't know; I had no **reminiscences**, and yet every stroke of the pencil seemed the result of observation, and strange because it was all so true. Nothing was lacking.

But on the right, one corner of the sketch remained a blank. I did not know what to put there.... Something suddenly seemed to **writhe** there, to move! Then I saw a foot, the sole of a foot. **Notwithstanding** this **improbable** position, I followed my inspiration without reference to my own criticism.

This foot was joined to a leg-over this leg, stretched out with effort, there soon floated the skirt of a dress. In short, there appeared **by degrees** an old woman, pale, **dishevelled**, and wasted, **thrown down** at the side of a well, and struggling to free herself from a hand that **clutched** her throat.

It was a murder scene that I was drawing. The pencil fell from my hand.

This woman, in the boldest attitude, with her **thighs** bent on the **curb** of the well, her face contracted by terror, and her two hands grasping the **murderer's** arm, frightened me. I could not look at her. But the man-he, the person to whom that arm belonged-I could not see him. It was impossible for me to finish the sketch.

"I am tired," I said, my forehead **dripping** with **perspiration**; "there is only this figure to do; I will finish it tomorrow. It will be easy then."

And again I went to bed, thoroughly frightened by my vision.

The next morning, I got up very early. I was dressing in order to resume my interrupted work, when two little knocks were heard on my door.

"Come in!"

**lattice** - kratownica, krata  
**pulleys** - blok, koło pasowe  
**flagstones** - kamień brukowy  
**ditch** - zerwać, puścić, porzucić, pozbyć, wymknąć, rozwalić, rów  
**refuse** - odmówić, odmawiać, odpadki

**chimneys** - komin, dymnik  
**weathercocks** - wiatrowskazy, kurek

**bundles** - w pakiecie, wiązka, pęk, zawiniątko  
**straw** - słomka, słoma, słomiany  
**coils** - cewki, zwinąć, owinać, wici się, zwój, krag, lok, spirala  
**chicken-coop** - kurник  
**rabbit-hutch** - budka dla królika, klatka z królikami

**heterogeneous** - heterogeniczny  
**reminiscences** - wspomnienia, reminiscencja

**writhe** - wije się, wici się  
**notwithstanding** - mimo wszystko  
**improbable** - nieprawdopodobne, nieprawdopodobny

**by degrees** - stopniowo, powoli  
**dishevelled** - rozczochrać  
**thrown down** - zrzucony  
**clutched** - zaciśnięty, ścisnąć, trzymać, uchwycić, sprzegło, leg, grupa, portmonetka

**thighs** - udo  
**curb** - powściągnąć, ograniczenie, krawężnik  
**murderer** - morderca, zabójca

**dripping** - (drip) przepuszczać, ociekać, kapać, kropla, ciekący, kapiący, przemoknięty  
**perspiration** - perspiracja, pocenie się

The door opened. An old man, tall, thin, and dressed in black, appeared on the threshold. This man's face, his eyes set close together and his large nose like the **beak** of an **eagle**, surmounted by a high **bony** forehead, had something severe about it. He **bowed** to me **gravely**.

"Mister Christian Vénus, the painter?" said he.

"That is my name, sir."

He bowed again, adding:

"The Baron Frederick Van Spreckdal."

The appearance of the rich amateur, Van Spreckdal, judge of the criminal court, in my poor **lodging**, greatly disturbed me. I could not help throwing a **stealthy** glance at my old **worm-eaten** furniture, my **damp hangings** and my dusty floor. I felt **humiliated** by such **dilapidation**; but Van Spreckdal did not seem to take any account of these details; and sitting down at my little table:

"Mister Vénus," he resumed, "I come--" But at this instant his glance fell upon the **unfinished** sketch-he did not finish his phrase. I was **sitting on** the edge of my little bed; and the sudden attention that this **personage bestowed** upon one of my productions made my **heart beat** with an **indefinable apprehension**.

At the end of a minute, Van Spreckdal lifted his head:

"Are you the author of that sketch?" he asked me with an intent look.

"Yes, sir."

"What is the price of it?"

"I never sell my sketches. It is the plan for a picture."

"Ah!" said he, picking up the paper with the tips of his long yellow fingers.

He took a lens from his **waistcoat** pocket and began to study the design in silence.

The sun was now shining **obliquely** into the **garret**. Van Spreckdal never said a word; the hook of his immense nose increased, his heavy **eyebrows** contracted, and his long pointed chin took a turn **upward**, making a thousand little **wrinkles** in his long, thin cheeks. The silence was so profound that I could **distinctly** hear the **plaintive buzzing** of a fly that had been caught in a spider's web.

**beak** - dziób

**eagle** - orzeł, bielik, dziesięciodolarówka

**bony** - kościsty, ościsty, kostny

**bowed** - zginać się, uklonić się, kłaniać się, łuk, kokarda

**gravely** - poważnie, ogromnie

**lodging** - zakwaterowanie, kwatera, nocleg, (lodge), portiernia, żeremie

**stealthy** - ukradkowy, skradający się

**worm-eaten** - robaczywy; spróchniały, stoczony przez korniki

**damp** - wilgotny

**hangings** - (hang) wisieć, wieszać, powiesić, kotara, wiszące, wywieszone

**humiliated** - upokarzać, upokorzyć, poniżać, poniżyć

**dilapidation** - ruina

**unfinished** - niedokończone

**sitting on** - siedzieć na czymś; ulokować się na; przeciągać coś w czasie

**personage** - osobistość, persona

**bestowed** - obdarzyć, nadać, obdarowywać

**heart beat** - uderzenie serca, bicie serca

**indefinable** - niedający się określić, nieokreślony

**apprehension** - niepokój, zatrzymanie

**waistcoat** - kamizelka, bezrękawnik

**obliquely** - ukośnie

**garret** - poddasze

**eyebrows** - brew

**upward** - w górę, do góry, zwrócony ku górze

**wrinkles** - pokonać trudności, zmarszczyć, pognieść, pokryć, pościagać się

**distinctly** - wyraźnie

**plaintive** - żaloszny, zawodzący, płaczliwy

**buzzing** - (buzz) przelecieć, brzęczeć, buczeć, gwar, brzęczenie, bzyczenie, dzwonienie



"And the dimensions of this picture, Mister Vénus?" he said without looking at me.

"Three feet by four."

"The price?"

"Fifty **ducats**."

**ducats** - dukat

Van Spretckdal laid the sketch on the table, and drew from his pocket a large **purse** of green silk shaped like a **pear**; he drew the **rings** of it--

**purse** - portmonetka, portfel, torebka

**pear** - gruszka, grusza

**rings** - dźwięczeń, dzwonić, pierścień, kółko

"Fifty ducats," said he, "here they are."

I was simply **dazzled**.

**dazzled** - osłepić, oszalać, olśnić, blask, jaskrawe światło

The Baron rose and bowed to me, and I heard his big **ivory-headed cane** **resounding** on each step until he reached the bottom of the stairs. Then recovering from my **stupour**, I suddenly remembered that I had not thanked him, and I flew down the five flights like **lightning**; but when I reached the bottom, I **looked to** the right and left; the street was deserted.

**ivory-headed** - kości słoniowej

**cane** - laska, chłostać

**resounding** - dudnić, dźwięczeń, rozbrzmiewać

**stupour** - ośpienie

**lightning** - błyskawica, piorun, grom,

błyskawiczny, błyskawicowy

**looked to** - oczekiwać czegoś, liczyć na coś (np. pomoc)

"Well," I said, "this is strange."

And I went upstairs again **all out** of breath.

**all out** - powszechny, generalny; zmasowany; zdecydowany