

## QUOTATION

### DE MAUPASSANT ON STIMULUS CONTROL OF AGGRESSION

The widow of Paolo Saverini lived . . . alone with her son Antoine and their dog Semillante, a great, thin beast with long, coarse hair. . . .

One evening after a dispute, Antoine Saverini was killed traitorously with a blow of a knife by Nicolas Ravolati who, the same night, went over to Sardinia.

When the old woman received the body of her child . . . she did not weep but remained a long time motionless, looking at him. Then, extending her wrinkled hand upon the dead body, she promised revenge. . . .

She had in her yard an old barrel. . . . She emptied it and turned it over, making it fast to the soil by means of some stakes and stones; then she chained Semillante in this niche. . . .

The dog howled all day and all night. The old woman carried her some water in the morning in a bowl. But nothing more; no soup, no bread. . . . The beast became furious, baying with raucous voice. . . . Mother Saverini went to the house of a neighbor and begged him to give her two bundles of straw. She took some old clothes . . . and filled them full of the fodder to stimulate a human body. . . . Having stuck a stick in the ground before Semillante's niche, she bound the manikin to it. . . . Then the old woman went to the butcher's and bought a long piece of black pudding. She returned home, lighted a wood fire in her yard and cooked this pudding. Semillante, excited, bounded about and frothed at the mouth, her eyes fixed upon the meat. . . .

Next the woman made a cravat for the straw man of this smoking sausage. She wound it many times around his neck. . . . When this was done she unchained the dog.

With a formidable leap the beast reached the manikin's throat and, her paws upon his shoulders, began to tear him to pieces. . . .

The old woman, mute and motionless, looked on, her eyes lighting up. She rechained the beast, made her fast two days again and repeated this strange operation.

For three months she accustomed the dog to this kind of struggle. . . . She did not chain her now but set her upon the manikin with a gesture.

She taught her to tear him, to devour him, even without anything eatable hung around his throat. She would give her afterward, as a recompense, the pudding she had cooked for her.

Whenever she perceived the manikin Semillante growled and turned her eyes toward her mistress who would cry: "Go!" in a whistling tone, at the same time raising her finger.

When she thought the right time had come, Mother Saverini, . . . clothed . . . in male attire so that she looked like a feeble old man, . . . went [to Sardinia].

She presented herself at a baker's and asked where Nicolas Ravolati lived. . . . He was working alone at the back of his shop.

The old woman opened the door and called:

"Hey, Nicolas!"

He turned around; then, loosing the dog, she cried out:

"Go! Go! Devour him! Devour him!"

The animal, excited, threw herself upon him and seized him by the throat. The man extended his arms, clinched her and rolled upon the floor. For some minutes he twisted himself . . . then he remained motionless, while Semillante dug at his neck until it was in shreds. . . .

That evening the old woman returned to her house. She slept well that night.

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