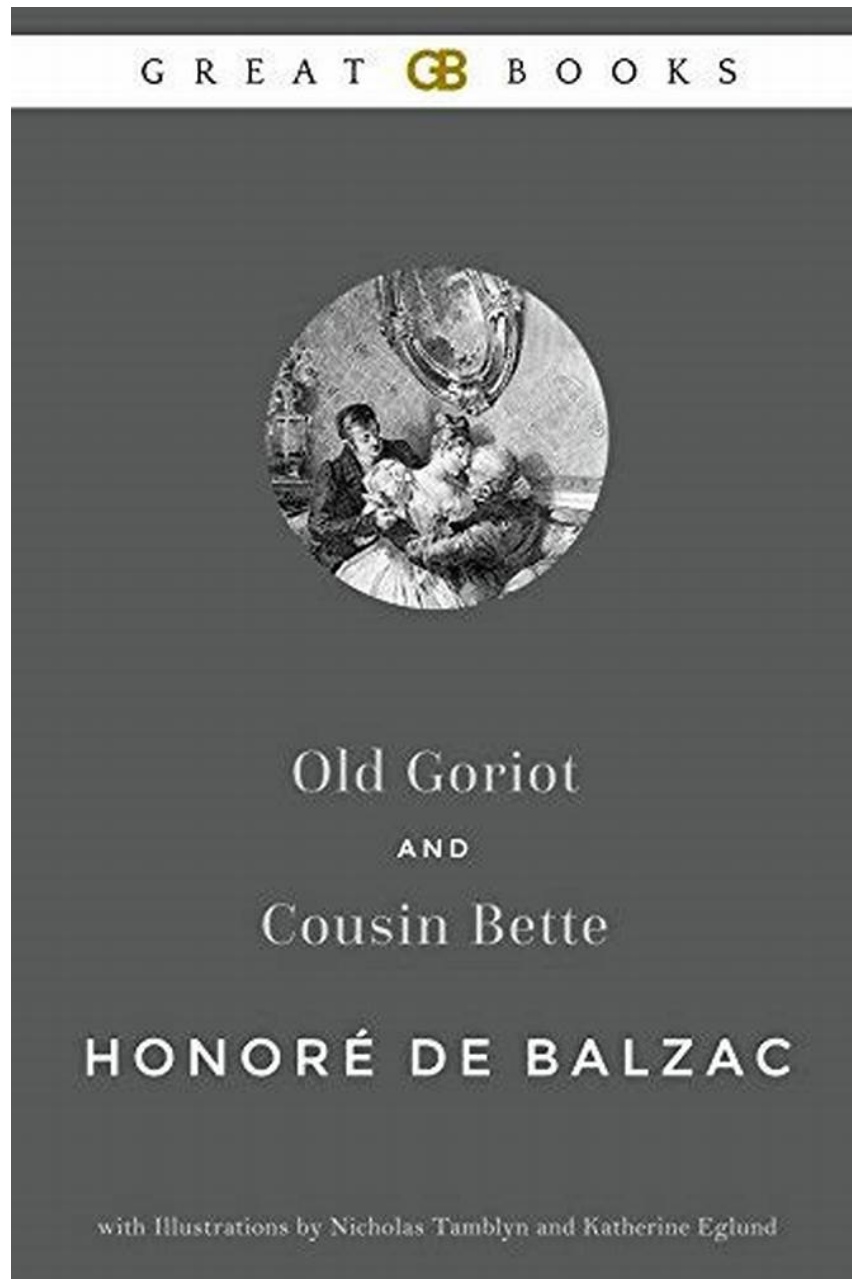


Old Goriot and Cousin Bette Illustrated: A Comparative Analysis of Balzac's Masterpieces



Honoré de Balzac's *Old Goriot* and *Cousin Bette* are two of the most renowned novels of the 19th century. Both works explore the themes of

family, love, and betrayal, but they do so in very different ways. *Old Goriot* is a tragedy, while *Cousin Bette* is a comedy. The former focuses on the destructive power of greed and selfishness, while the latter satirizes the hypocrisy and vanity of the bourgeoisie.



Old Goriot and Cousin Bette (Illustrated) by S.D. Metcalfe

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 2528 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 424 pages
Hardcover	: 240 pages
Item Weight	: 15 ounces
Dimensions	: 6 x 0.73 x 9 inches



In this essay, we will compare and contrast these two great works, exploring their similarities and differences in terms of plot, character, and theme.

Plot

Old Goriot tells the story of Jean-Joachim Goriot, a retired vermicelli manufacturer who has sacrificed everything for his two daughters. He has given them all of his money and property, and he has even moved into a cheap boarding house so that he can be near them. However, his daughters are ashamed of their father and they neglect him shamefully.

Cousin Bette tells the story of Liselotte "Bette" Fischer, a poor and sickly cousin of the Hulot family. Bette is a bitter and resentful woman who has been treated badly by her wealthy relatives. She vows to get revenge on them, and she sets out to destroy their lives.

Characters

The characters in *Old Goriot* are complex and tragic. Goriot is a pitiable figure who is ultimately destroyed by the selfishness of his daughters. Rastignac, a young student who befriends Goriot, is also a tragic figure. He is torn between his desire for a better life and his loyalty to Goriot.

The characters in *Cousin Bette* are more satirical. Bette is a grotesque figure who is both pitiable and repulsive. The Hulot family is a microcosm of the bourgeoisie, and they are all depicted as hypocritical and greedy.

Theme

The central theme of *Old Goriot* is the destructive power of greed and selfishness. Goriot's daughters are so blinded by their desire for wealth and status that they are willing to abandon their own father. Rastignac is also tempted by greed, and he ultimately succumbs to its corrosive influence.

The central theme of *Cousin Bette* is the hypocrisy and vanity of the bourgeoisie. The Hulot family is obsessed with appearances, and they are willing to do anything to maintain their social status. Bette is a victim of their hypocrisy, and she uses her own cunning to expose their true nature.

Old Goriot and *Cousin Bette* are two of the most important novels of the 19th century. They are both masterpieces of French literature, and they offer valuable insights into the human condition. *Old Goriot* is a tragedy that

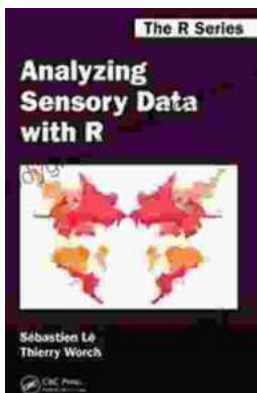
explores the destructive power of greed and selfishness, while *Cousin Bette* is a comedy that satirizes the hypocrisy and vanity of the bourgeoisie. These two novels are essential reading for anyone who wants to understand the complexities of human nature.



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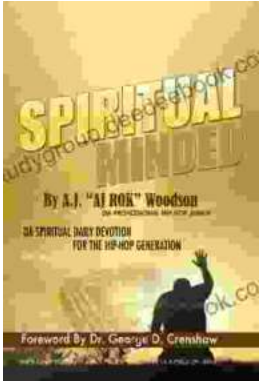
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