

**BE BEE,**  
OR  
**TWO LITTLE WOODEN SHOES.**  
BY OUIDA.  
Continued from last week.

CHAPTER XXIII.  
It was dark. The May days are short in the north land of the Scheldt.

She had her little winter cloak of frise and her green shoes and her little white cap with the sunny curls flying out of it in their pretty rebellion. She had her little lappet, too, and her bunnet, and she had pulled her fringed apron over her bosom with some even hands and the palm about that Father Francis had blessed last Easter—for who could tell, she thought, how it might not be, or how poor?

She barely gave a look to the hat as she went by the garden gate, all her heart was in front, in the vague far country where he lay sick unto death.

She ran fast through the familiar lanes into the city. She was not very sure where Paris was, but she had the name clear and firm, and she knew that people were always coming and going there and thither, so that she had no fear she should not find it.

She went straight to the big, busy, bewildering place in the Louvre square where the iron horses rumbled every day and night along the iron ways. She had never been there before, but she knew it by that great highway that the traffic to Paris was carried on, and she knew that it would carry people also as well.

There were bells clanging, lights flashing, and crowds pushing and shoving as she ran up a wide gray figure, with the lanterns gleaming, like any tiny glow worm away in a gas city.

"In Paris?" she asked, entrancingly, going where she saw others going, to a little grating window in a wall.

"Twenty-seven francs—quick!" they demanded of her.

Let her have a great cry, and stood still, trembling and trying not to sob. She had never thought of money, she had forgotten that youth and strength and love and willing feet and pious prayers—all were for nothing in this world as this.

test until and then, yet did not dare to knock at any one of the closed doors—she had no money.

She walked on for the first ten unknown miles, her feet aching, and her body, and being altogether unaccustomed—a small gray figure, trotting in two little wooden shoes.

They thought her a peasant going to a fair or a festival, and no one did her more harm than to turn to her, to get a sight in rough Flemish.

When the dawn began to white across the plains of the east, she saw an empty cot and a bedstead, and she saw a little old man, with a white beard and a white hair, and she saw a young fellow might have been in the dried cloak, for she knew that she must keep her strength and her power, or never reach across the dreary length of the foreign land to Paris.

But by full sunrise she was on her way again, bathing her face in a bucket and buying a few worth of bread and salt milk at the first tavern that she passed with a light, but lowered head.

The forest was still all around her, and with its exquisite life of lough and blossom, and murmur of insect and bird, she felt her head, glowing as she went, and was almost blind with love.

God would not let him die. Oh, no, not still she had kissed him once more, and could do no more.

She ran across the path, and the blue butterfly flew above her. There were purple glows of pines and, sparkling verdure of spruce and elm. There were distant church spires ringing, and straight golden shafts of sunlight from the sky.

She often felt tired, and her wooden shoes were wearing so thin that the hot dust of the road at noonday burnt her feet through them. Sometimes, too, she felt a curious and unknown pain, as she had never known, for the lack of food and the long fatigue began to tell on her body.

But she would not be weary, rarely doing less than her twenty miles a day, and sometimes more, walking often in the night to save time, and lying down in cow sheds or under haystacks in the woods.

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