



# Story of My Life: The Autobiography of George Sand

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This book is more than the autobiography of an extraordinary woman. It is also the story of a century of French history as lived through the experiences and fates of three generations, the tumultuous history of the birth of modern France and the transformation of a society. "

## Story of My Life: The Autobiography of George Sand Details

Date : Published July 3rd 1991 by State University of New York Press (first published 1854)

ISBN : 9780791405819

Author : George Sand , Thelma Jurgrau (Editor)

Format : Paperback 1168 pages

Genre : Biography, Nonfiction, Classics, Autobiography, Memoir, Cultural, France

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# From Reader Review Story of My Life: The Autobiography of George Sand for online ebook

## Hermien says

I enjoyed the beginning where she describes her childhood and youth. I enjoyed the bits of French history that played a part. The latter half of the book is a lot more philosophical and I found this less interesting. Maybe I had hoped for some more juicy bits about her liaisons!

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## Paula Dembeck says

This translation of George Sand's autobiography by Dan Hofstadter is divided into three parts. Part One is her autobiography, Part Two contains letters between George and her lover Alfred de Musset as well as extracts from her journal from the period November 15 to 28 1834, and Part Three describes time she spent on the island of Majorca with Fredric Chopin.

In the autobiography, heavily weighted to her early years, George Sand recounts her life story through three generations. Aurore Dupin, (also later known as George Sand), was born in Paris 1804. Her father Maurice came from a heritage of kings and nobility while her mother Sophie came from very humble and impoverished beginnings. The fact Maurice married so far below his station was a constant irritant in the family dynamic, creating animosity and distrust between Maurice's mother and Sophie, Maurice's wife. When Aurore was four, her father who was a soldier, was killed in battle and Aurore, Sophie and her grandmother moved from Paris to the family home in Nohant. There disharmony between the two women continued with Aurore the pawn in a perpetual and jealous tug of war between her mother and her grandmother. After her father's death, Aurore's grandmother took over guardianship of her granddaughter as she had the funds to raise and educate her as well as place her in a favourable position to ensure a good marriage. Aurore was sent to a religious convent in Paris for three years after which she returned once again to the family home in Nohant. When her grandmother died, Aurore inherited the estate.

She married Casimir Dudevant at the age of nineteen and had two children, a boy Maurice and a girl named Solange. But she was unhappy in her pampered rural setting and at the age of twenty-seven left for Paris in search of independence and personal happiness. She had few funds for her expenses and so she dressed like a man to reduce her clothing costs and to be more comfortable. She also took to smoking cigars.

In Paris she frequented the literary and political events, attended theaters and picture shows and went to the clubs where she met a number of different writers and artists. She relished in her new exciting life and independence and began writing in a very focused and disciplined way. When she fell in love with Jules Sandeau a young writer with whom she wrote collaboratively, she used the pen name "J. Sand" as she wanted to remain anonymous. Later when she published "Indiana" her first novel, she changed her pseudonym once again to "George Sand". After the relationship with Sandeau ended, she met Alfred de Musset a young poet, and they soon became lovers. During this period in Paris and amidst a number of different relationships, Sand separated from her husband and took custody of Solange while her son Maurice remained with her husband Casimir.

There were many other relationships and lovers including her complicated and well known affair with Chopin that signals the end of the first section of the book. She describes that relationship as complex, one that began as friends, progressed to a short period as lovers and was followed by a longer period when she took care of him during his long illness. During that final period she assumed the role of care giver rather than lover.

In Part Two, reading the correspondence between George and Alfred, the reader gets a better sense of Sand's

love life, an entirely different tone than that of the autobiographical section. The shorter part of this section, titled "The Intimate Journal" serves a similar purpose.

In Part Three she describes a winter in 1838-39 that she spent in Majorca with Chopin, although his name is never mentioned. There are beautiful descriptions of the island which many say are still true today, and she also includes some interesting thoughts on religion. But she is embarrassingly critical of the inhabitants, calling them "monkeys" and seems completely devoid of any appreciation or sensitivity to their culture. Like a typical naïve and insensitive tourist, she is full of complaints about the services and accommodations provided on the island.

Part One, the autobiography, is long and at times weighed down by the level of detail such as her descriptions of the convent in Paris, its architecture, gardens, nooks and crannies. Aurore's early life and that of her parents takes up most of the focus of the storyline which falters after the death of her grandmother. Descriptions of the later part of her life appear rushed with large gaps in the narrative. Regrettably, the reader is almost finished the entire autobiographical section before Sand talks about her literary career, and even then we do not get a lot of detail about her life as a writer. This is a major disappointment as that is specifically why many of us are reading this book. Sand does concede her account does not include all her poignant sorrows as she does not feel it serves any purpose. Perhaps that is why the last forty years of her life is covered in only two chapters. However, Sand makes no apologies to the reader for these lapses as she says the purpose of this written account is to "put her souvenirs in order". As perhaps an unintended aside, the entire narrative does give us a sense of what it was like living in France in the first half of the 19th century, as it is an important background to several events.

The final two parts of the book give quite a different understanding of Sand than her autobiography and her personality is much more evident in her letters and the excerpt from her journals. She covered little of her romances or relationships with other writers and artists in the main text, so without this section the reader would certainly not get a sense of this side of her personality. Sand has also completely ignored a discussion of any of the issues generated by her quirky lifestyle or any of the problems that were brought on by fame. This is an interesting omission as she was renowned for her unique and bohemian way of life.

This is a very readable text and for that credit is due to the translator as well as Sand's writing.

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## **Coconut Hunter says**

the amazing way, Aurore talks about her mother, her family, nature, France!! I love this book!! I need more time..its a book that for sure you will wanna read again as soon as you can!!

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## **Laura says**

Free download available at Project Gutenberg - Histoire de ma Vie, Livre 1 (Vol.1 to 4).

Free download available at Project Gutenberg - Histoire de ma Vie, Livre 2 (Vol. 5 to 9).

Free download available at Project Gutenberg - Histoire de ma Vie, Livre 3 (Vol. 10 - 13).

Even if this book is not considered as a true autobiography (it seems the author didn't follow the facts and the corresponding dates), I really liked it.

Her relationship with her grand-mother was stronger than to her mother and she was heartbroken after her death. After that, she was sent to a monastery in order to finish her education.

Unfortunately she didn't describe in details her writing career. On the other hand, she mentioned several of her famous and very known friends, painters and writers of the 19th century French literature.

About Balzac:

Un de mes amis, qui connaissait un peu Balzac, m'avait présentée à lui, non comme une muse de département, mais comme une bonne personne de province très émerveillée de son talent. C'était la vérité. Bien que Balzac n'eût pas encore produit ses chefs-d'œuvre à cette époque, j'étais vivement frappée de sa manière neuve et originale, et je le considérais déjà comme un maître à étudier. Balzac avait été, non pas charmant pour moi, à la manière de Delatouche, mais excellent aussi, avec plus de rondeur et d'égalité de caractère. Tout le monde sait comme le contentement de lui-même, contentement si bien fondé qu'on le lui pardonnait, débordait en lui; comme il aimait à parler de ses ouvrages, à les raconter d'avance, à les faire en causant, à les lire en brouillons ou en épreuves. Naïf et bon enfant au possible, il demandait conseil aux enfans, n'écoutait pas la réponse, ou s'en servait pour la combattre avec l'obstination de sa supériorité. Il n'enseignait jamais, il parlait de lui, de lui seul. Une seule fois il s'oublia pour nous parler de Rabelais, que je ne connaissais pas encore. Il fut si merveilleux, si éblouissant, si lucide, que nous nous disions en le quittant: «Oui, oui, décidément, il aura tout l'avenir qu'il rêve; il comprend trop bien ce qui n'est pas lui, pour ne pas faire de lui-même une grande individualité.»

About Stendhal:

Sur le bateau à vapeur qui me conduisait de Lyon à Avignon, je rencontraï un des écrivains les plus remarquables de ce temps-ci, Bayle, dont le pseudonyme était Stendhal. Il était consul à Civita-Vecchia et retournait à son poste, après un court séjour à Paris. Il était brillant d'esprit et sa conversation rappelait celle de Delatouche, avec moins de délicatesse et de grâce, mais avec plus de profondeur.

About Musset:

Alfred de Musset subit bien plus gravement que moi l'effet de l'air de Venise qui foudroie beaucoup d'étrangers, on ne le sait pas assez. Il fit une maladie grave; une fièvre typhoïde le mit à deux doigts de la mort. Ce ne fut pas seulement le respect dû à un beau génie qui m'inspira pour lui une grande sollicitude et qui me donna, à moi très malade aussi, des forces inattendues; c'était aussi les côtés charmans de son caractère et les souffrances morales que de certaines luttres entre son cœur et son imagination créaient sans cesse à cette organisation de poète.

About Sainte-Beuve:

Parmi les hommes d'un talent apprécié, M. Sainte-Beuve, par les abondantes et précieuses ressources de sa conversation, me fut très salutaire, en même temps que son amitié, un peu susceptible, un peu capricieuse mais toujours précieuse à retrouver, me donna quelquefois la force qui me manquait vis-à-vis de moi-même.

About Delacroix:

Eugène Delacroix fut un de mes premiers amis dans le monde des artistes, et j'ai le bonheur de le compter toujours parmi mes vieux amis. Vieux, on le sent, est le mot relatif à l'ancienneté des relations, et non à la personne. Delacroix n'a pas et n'aura pas de vieillesse. C'est un génie et un homme jeune. Bien que, par une contradiction originale et piquante, son esprit critique sans cesse le présent et raille l'avenir, bien qu'il se plaise à connaître, à sentir, à deviner, à chérir exclusivement les œuvres et souvent les idées du passé, il est,

dans son art, l'innovateur et l'oseur par excellence. Pour moi, il est le premier maître de ce temps-ci, et, relativement à ceux du passé, il restera un des premiers dans l'histoire de la peinture. Cet art n'ayant pas généralement progressé depuis la renaissance, et paraissant moins goûté et moins compris relativement par les masses, il est naturel qu'un type d'artiste comme Delacroix, longtemps étouffé ou combattu par cette décadence de l'art et par cette perversion du goût général, ait réagi, de toute la force de ses instincts, contre le monde moderne.

About Lamennais:

On l'a dit, et on l'a très bien dit et compris, jusqu'au lendemain de sa mort, les esprits droits et justes ont embrassé d'un coup d'œil cette illustre carrière de travaux et de souffrances; la postérité le dira à jamais, et ce sera une gloire de l'avoir reconnu et proclamé sur la tombe encore tiède de Lamennais: ce grand penseur a été, sinon parfaitement, du moins admirablement logique avec lui-même dans toutes ses phases de développement.

About Chopin:

Le génie de Chopin est le plus profond et le plus plein de sentiments et d'émotions qui ait existé. Il a fait parler à un seul instrument la langue de l'infini; il a pu souvent résumer, en dix lignes qu'un enfant pourrait jouer, des poèmes d'une élévation immense, des drames d'une énergie sans égale. Il n'a jamais eu besoin des grands moyens matériels pour donner le mot de son génie. Il ne lui a fallu ni saxophones ni ophicléides pour remplir l'âme de terreur; ni orgues d'église, ni voix humaines pour la remplir de foi et d'enthousiasme. Il n'a pas été connu et il ne l'est pas encore de la foule. Il faut de grands progrès dans le goût et l'intelligence de l'art pour que ses œuvres deviennent populaires. Un jour viendra où l'on orchestrera sa musique sans rien changer à sa partition de piano, et où tout le monde saura que ce génie aussi vaste, aussi complet, aussi savant que celui des plus grands maîtres qu'il s'était assimilés, a gardé une individualité encore plus exquise que celle de Sébastien Bach, encore plus puissante que celle de Beethoven, encore plus dramatique que celle de Weber. Il est tous les trois ensemble, et il est encore lui-même, c'est-à-dire plus délié dans le goût, plus austère dans le grand, plus déchirant dans la douleur. Mozart seul lui est supérieur, parce que Mozart a en plus le calme de la santé, par conséquent la plénitude de la vie.

A very touching piece of work, a true masterpiece written by George Sand.

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## **Elizabeth says**

Iconoclast that she is, George Sand's independent spirit and astute observatory powers are evident from the first page of her memoirs, which begin with her early childhood and finish up with her affair with Chopin--who sounds like a total sap. (I say that in a fond way, Chopin is one of my favorite composers and I loved the movie *Impromptu*).

It's interesting to read about Sand's contempt for the Ton of the 19th century, people who sound like they've taken a few too many ballet lessons. There is a one description of an elderly lady who is quite fond of her

pale arms and feels the need to expose them at dinner parties that feels as contemporary as a description of an aging actress with a close, personal relationship with Botox. Sand's teenage travails in a convent in Paris are equally terrifying. Life without central heating must have been terrible indeed!

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### **Andreea Drăgan says**

Foarte remarcabil? gândirea autoarei. Îmi pare rău că un suflet atât de bun ca al său a trebuit să îndure atâta nefericire. Am izbucnit în plâns când am văzut că nu mai am ce să mai citesc. Merit? fiecare cuvânt a?ternut de ea pe hârtie.

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### **Doria O'stark says**

Couldn't finish it.

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### **Alex says**

quite strange autobiography of the 19th century french female novelist Aurore Dupin, penname George Sand. the majority of the book details her life before the age of 8! the last forty years of her life, including all the years of her career, fame, and romance with famous writers and artists of her day, take up 2 short chapters.

anyway, it's well written and most of the book describes a somewhat interesting power struggle between competing matriarchs in a semi-aristocratic family during the author's childhood.

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### **Nathan says**

this book is very nice and good...it's broken into 3 sections, the first of which is a little boring and i secretly skipped alot of it...but the 2nd and 3rd parts are just great, and the descriptions of childhood and how it feels to be little are wonderful! that was my favorite part.

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### **Anne says**

Spotty

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## **Amélie says**

There's a lot of things in this book : indeed, George Sand keeps shifting the subject, so that it can get a bit confusing at times... and even frustrating, when pages upon pages are spent on the smallest details while other things that might interest the reader (like how she met Chopin !) are not even mentioned.

However, she was not looking to please the reader, simply to "put her souvenirs in order", and in that we can respect her choices. And it still leaves some (very) interesting things, like the story of her parents, her life in a religious boarding school, or her input on this and that event in history.

All in all, it's quite a long read, and I did get bored sometimes, but it was still worth it.

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## **?Misericordia? ~ The Serendipity Aegis ~ ?????? ✨\*♥♥ says**

A story of a beautiful strongwilled woman, who knew what she wanted, who was passionate and loving, who knew how to create wonderful things, who loved to use her voice and who was an inspiration to many (even under the guise of her nom de plume).

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## **H.A. Fowler says**

This was a GREAT book. Or rather, the first 3/4 of it was. Ms. Sands talks in charming, sometimes depressing, detail about her childhood, but with an intriguing style that kept me interested and entertained throughout. It was fascinating to learn about the people and places that influenced such an interesting life. It's unfortunate that the book sort of peters out at the end, and short shrift is given to all the events of her life after the death of her grandmother -- including her marriage, career, children. I believe that the volume only covers her life until her affair with Chopin, but it all seemed very choppy and skimpy toward the end.

Nevertheless, I love George Sand and find her a fascinating historical figure and writer, and it was fun to read her tell her own life's story.

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## **E.J. Matze says**

Œuvres [modifier:]  
GEORGE SAND

manuscrit de Un hiver à Majorque.  
Le Commissionnaire (avec Jules Sandeau) (1830).  
Rose et Blanche (avec Jules Sandeau, roman, 1831)  
La Fille d'Albano (1831)  
Valentine (roman, 1831)  
Indiana (roman, 1832)



Lélia (roman, 1833)  
Aldo le Rimeur (1833)  
Une conspiration en 1537 (1833)  
Journal intime (1834)  
Jacques (roman, 1834)  
Le Secrétaire intime (roman, 1834)  
La Marquise (roman, 1834)  
Garnier (conte, Urbain Canel / Adolphe Guyot 1834)  
Lavinia (1834)  
Métella (1834)  
André (roman, 1835)  
Mattéa (1835)  
Leone Leoni (roman, 1835)  
Simon (roman, 1836)  
Mauprat (1837)  
Dodecation, ou le Livre des douze. Le Dieu inconnu (1837)  
Les Maîtres mozaïstes (roman, 1838)  
La Dernière Aldini (roman, 1838)  
L'Orco (1838)  
L'Uscoque (roman, 1838)  
Gabriel (dialogue, 1839) [lire en ligne:]  
Spiridion (roman, 1839)  
Les Sept Cordes de la lyre (théâtre, 1840)  
Cosima, ou la Haine dans l'amour (théâtre, 1840)  
Pauline. Les Mississipiens (roman, 1840)  
Le Compagnon du tour de France (roman, 1841)  
Mouny Roubin (1842)  
Georges de Guérin (1842)  
Horace (1842)  
Un hiver à Majorque (récit, 1842)  
La Comtesse de Rudolstadt (roman, 1843)  
La Sœur cadette (1843)  
Kouroglou (1843)  
Carl (1843)  
Jean Zizka (roman historique sur la vie de Jan Žižka, chef de guerre hussite, 1843)  
Consuelo (roman, 1843)  
Jeanne (roman, 1844)  
Le Meunier d'Angibault (roman, 1845)  
La Mare au diable (roman, 1846)  
Isidora (roman, 1846)  
Teverino (roman, 1846)  
Les Noces de campagne (roman, 1846)  
Evenor et Leucippe. Les Amours de l'Âge d'or (1846)  
Le Péché de M. Antoine (1847)  
Lucrezia Floriani (roman, 1847)  
Le Piccinino (roman, 1847)  
La Petite Fadette (roman, 1849)  
François le Champi (roman, 1850)  
Le Château des Désertes (roman, 1851)

Histoire du véritable Gribouille (1851)  
Le Mariage de Victorine (théâtre, 1851)  
La Fauvette du docteur (1853)  
Mont Revèche (1853)  
La Filleule (1853)  
Les Maîtres sonneurs (1853)  
Adriani (1854)  
Flaminio (théâtre, 1854)  
Histoire de ma vie (autobiographie, 1855)  
Autour de la table (1856)  
La Daniella (1857)  
Le Diable aux champs (1857)  
Promenades autour d'un village (1857)  
Ces beaux messieurs de Bois-Doré (1858)  
Elle et lui (récit autobiographique sur ses relations avec Musset, 1859)  
Jean de la Roche (1859)  
L'Homme de neige (1859)  
Narcisse (1859)  
Les Dames vertes (1859)  
Constance Verrier (1860)  
La Ville noire (1861)  
Valvèdre (1861)  
La Famille de Germandre (1861)  
Le Marquis de Villemer (1861)  
Tamaris (1862)  
Mademoiselle La Quintinie (1863)  
Les Dames vertes (1863)  
Antonia (1863)  
La Confession d'une jeune fille (1865)  
Laura (1865)  
Monsieur Sylvestre (1866)  
Le Don Juan de village (théâtre, 1866)  
Flavie (1866)  
Le Dernier Amour (1867)  
Cadio (théâtre, 1868)  
Mademoiselle Merquem (1868)  
Pierre qui roule (1870)  
Le Beau Laurence (1870)  
Malgré tout (1870)  
Césarine Dietrich (1871)  
Journal d'un voyageur pendant la guerre (1871)  
Francia. Un bienfait n'est jamais perdu (1872)  
Nanon (1872)  
Contes d'une grand'mère vol. 1 (1873)  
Ma sœur Jeanne (1874)  
Flamarande (1875)  
Les Deux Frères (1875)  
La Tour de Percemont (1876)  
Contes d'une grand'mère vol. 2 (1876)

Marianne (1876)

Légendes rustiques (La Reine Mab. La Fée qui court. Fanchette) (1877)

L'Orgue du Titan (1873)

Les Ailes du courage

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## **Susu says**

Erster Band der Lebensgeschichte von George Sand - mit Rückblick auf die Geschichte ihres Vaters und die Verwandtschaft im Adel von Sachsen. Es wird fleißig aus Briefen zitiert und geschichtliche Anspielungen häufen sich - da tut es gut, wenn man über die Zeit der Revolution und Napoleons etwas mehr parat hat als gesundes Halbwissen. Die Ausgabe besteht aus vier Bänden - bis hin zu Chopin und der Reise nach Mallorca. Der vierte Band beschäftigt sich dann auch mit dem Werk. Man muss autobiographien mögen - und erst recht sich für George Sand und ihre Zeit interessieren. An manchen Stellen überwiegt das Gefühl, dass die Autorin da eine Selbstdarstellung unternimmt, um ihr Image zu pflegen - an anderen Stellen scheint sie sehr direkt und ehrlich zu schreiben. Jedenfalls lohnt sich das Lesen.

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