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Savonnerie  
DES  
Diligences

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This story takes place in Eastman, or more precisely Dingman's Flat, as it was known at the end of the 19th century, named for John Dingman, owner of a splendid equestrian farm. As he owned several valuable thoroughbreds, Mr. Dingman needed a groom. He hired Édouard Petitpas. Every day, Petitpas would toil from dawn to dusk, then retire for the night to his modest abode near the stable. Although he loved caring for the spirited animals, his true longing was to become a coachman. Even as a young child, he had dreamed about being the smartly dressed driver of an eight-horse carriage, admired by all for his careful negotiation of the stagecoach road, Chemin des Diligences.

One Thanksgiving, Mr. Dingman, a man given to grand gestures, gave a huge reception for his family and friends at the Silver Valley Hotel and invited his loyal employee. Although intimidated by the prospect, Édouard happily accepted. A sumptuous meal awaited the guests, and he made sure to try everything. His favourite were the delightfully aromatic and juicy oranges. Since he couldn't buy oranges on his modest salary, he thought he could take some home, on the pretext that they had quite simply seduced him.

At the stroke of midnight, having imbibed too much, he was closer than ever to realizing his dream. Come what may, he hitched the two finest stallions to Dingman's carriage. Just as he was leaving the farm's main entrance, the two horses bolted, causing Édouard to lose his balance and strike his head on the trunk of an ancient white pine. He awoke in the infirmary and was strongly scolded by Dingman... for stealing his oranges!

The incident helped Dingman see that his conscientious groom had not unjustified ambitions. A few years later, Édouard became the village coachman and could afford as many oranges as he wanted.

Although you won't find the Dingman farm in Eastman, a visit to Écurie des Diligences, right across from the Savonnerie, will help bring the Coachman's story to life!